

**GLEANINGS FROM
LIFE'S WAYSIDE**

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Gleanings from Life's Wayside by H. S. Alshouse

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—BY—

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Quest. Dec. 26, 1879. M. A. J.

THE GLEANERS.

The harvest time was past, the summer ended,
And all the ripened grain was reaped,
When through the barren fields a stranger
wended

His way where once their wealth was heaped;
And where some scattered grain was intermin-
gled

With stubble, creeping vine, or thorn,
From out the dross the gold he slowly singled—
All in the early autumn morn.

The chilling winds had come, and all the flowers
Had heard the knell and sank to rest;
When slowly, sadly through the leafless bowers—
That once the faint and weary blessed—
There walked a lover young, and plucked un-
bidden

Some truant blossoms by his side—
That, nestled in a nook, from frosts lay hidden—
And wove a garland for his bride.

A dreamer passed o'er life's uncertain high-
way,

With downcast eyes and faltering tread,
And by the wayside of a narrow by-way,
Where rays of light were rarely shed,
Some grain he found in stony places dying,
Some lingering flowers still abloom;
And in the pebbled way some jewels lying
Concealed from others by the gloom.

IN THE WOODS.

I've bidden the world adieu to-day,
And, leaving my burdens all behind,
Happy and free to the woods I stray
To find a balm for my fevered mind,
And to read in the book divine.

In the woods is a pleasant spot I know,
Where the dark green ferns and the daisies
hide;
Where the pure white flowers of laurel blow
The maple and hemlock and birch beside,
And a brooklet murmurs near,

Up in a skyward maple branch
A warbler carols forever unseen,
And the oven-bird, like an avalanche,
Poureth his song through the leafy screen
In a climax loud and clear,

The woodthrush's ringing, silvery tone
Chaseth the remnants of care's alloy,
And I think that Eden has never flown—
With nothing forbidden I taste its joy,
And no tempter need me allure.

I'm gay as the white moth sailing there,
Or the butterfly resting on yonder fern;

Or the bee that is sipping the wine so rare
That is hidden within the laurel's urn
By yon stately beech so tall.

Some one has summed up life in this:
To eat, to work, to sleep and die;
But I find his reasoning all amiss—
He premises wrong and concludes a lie—
For existence is not life.

There is something more in this life of ours
Than sensuous pleasure and drudging toil;
I find it in birds and trees and flowers,
In beauty, in love, in harmony's coil—
And most in the soul of man.

I have castles and palaces all I choose,
And riches unmeasured my argosies bring;
I'm a prince, my kingdom I'll never lose,
For am I not son of a greater King
Than ever this earth has seen?

MY LOST CHILDHOOD.

West of the cabin home was a thicket of sumac
and locust
Twined with the vine of the grape, while the
massive rocks underneath it
Were hidden by ivy and fern, as sin is by char-
ity hidden.
Just at the thicket's edge a row of fruit trees ex-
tended ;
Here an abandoned cave, whose walls were crum-
bling and falling,
Formed a palace of pleasure, an Aden regained,
for the children—
Scene of orgies as wild as those of Arabian fan-
cies.
East of the cabin gurgled a spring with the
clearness of crystal,
Roofed with the wild-grape vine, forming a Chi-
nese pagoda.
Somewhat east of the spring a brooklet gleamed
in the sunshine—
Here many cataracts foamed and infant Niaga-
ras thundered ;
Fultons invented their boats and sailed them on
miniature oceans,
Needing no mariner's chart, nor compass, nor
stars to guide them,

FROM LIFE'S WAYSIDE. 7

For Acolus, pleased with their sport, sent his
lightest zephyrs to waft them;
Yet many a bark was wrecked and derelicts cov-
ered the waters,
Many a life-line was thrown to rescue the storm-
tossed sailor,
Crusoes were cast ashore and pined on their des-
olate islands—
Sweet indeed are the fancies of youth and the
make-believes of childhood,
Sweeter still when seen through the vista of
years that have faded!