

**THE SWEEPER OF
THE LEAVES, AND
OTHER POEMS**

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The Sweeper of the Leaves, and Other Poems by Alfred Cochrane

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ALFRED COCHRANE

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BY

ALFRED COCHRANE

AUTHOR OF 'COLLECTED VERSES' ETC.

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NOTE

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A. C.

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THE SWEEPER OF THE LEAVES

WHEN Autumn's misty trail is drawn
In cobwebs on the sodden lawn,
When strewn about the garden ways
Lies the lost pomp of summer days,
The gardener sedulously sweeps
The withered leaves in yellow heaps,
And plies his broom on bed and border,
To bring untidiness to order.

Yet, while he sweeps, the restless breeze,
That whispers mischief in the trees,
Filling the drear October sky
With clouds of dead leaves wandering by,
Strews them afresh upon the soil
As if in mockery of his toil.

Thinking it foolishness to mask
The obvious failure of his task,
To him as one who warred with fate
I deemed it well to demonstrate

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How when his broom and he were gone
The russet windfall still went on.

He heard me, as he swept the walk,
And leaned upon his broom to talk :
While, with an uncomplaining glance,
He watched the dead leaves whirl and dance ;
Then answered ere he bent once more,
To sweeping, 'It were wuss afore !'
He paused again. 'Beside,' said he,
'I'm one as canna let things be.
It ain't much use, this time o' year,
Still, you can tell a broom's bin 'ere.'
He gave his head a thoughtful jerk,
And placidly resumed his work.

Marking his ineffectual zest,
I tried his moral to digest.
The world is full, it seems to me,
Of those who cannot let things be,
And human effort still achieves
Tasks like the sweeping of the leaves.
In every corner of the land
Gather the sweepers, broom in hand,
And still disorder mars the scene
Where they and their Reforms have been ;
And life, the while they travail sore,
Looks as untidy as before.