

RANDOM RHYMES

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Random Rhymes by William Hazeltine

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WILLIAM HAZELTINE

**RANDOM
RHYMES**

PREFACE.

In compliance with the wishes of his relatives and friends, the author of the following lines has consented to the collection and publication of such of his productions in verse as are deemed worthy of preservation. They are not many nor of a sufficiently high order to be designated as poems, yet may not be altogether without some value as keepsakes. Should their perusal afford the reader a tithe of the pleasure that their composition gave the writer, then will have been accomplished all that may reasonably be expected by

THE AUTHOR,

William Hazeltine.

R A N D O M R H Y M E S .

A DREAM OF YOUTH.

I slept. I dreamed. Methought, a boy again,
I roamed o'er hill and field and flowery plain ;
'Mong sunny bowers ; beside the rippling rill
That danced in glee adown the mossy hill ;
Along old paths, beside familiar rocks
Where oft, in youth, I watched my father's flocks.
Methought I saw the same old cot that stood
Close by the merry, music-haunted wood ;
And wandered through its halls, a child again,
And listened to the old familiar strain
My mother sang while swinging swift the reel
That gathered from the spindle of the wheel
Threads blue and white. And then I stood beside
My father pleading for a "pig-back" ride
Just round the corner by the towering stack,
When, with a laugh, he placed me on his back
And cantered off with all his manly mien,
While mother, from the window, watched the scene.
Again methought along the grassy shore
Of babbling brook I wandered, as of yore,
While ever and anon the timid trout,
Alarmed at my advances, darted out
To seek some other quiet, lone retreat,

Beyond the jarring of intruding feet.

The same old mound, within the meadow, where
A century past, have been preserved with care
The rough-hewn stones that mark the lonely bed
Of maid and sire met my advancing tread.

I saw the elm that stood above the spring,
And in its branches hung the same old swing
I prized so much in youth—in days gone by—
And with a happy, wild, exultant cry,
I leaped upon the board to ride again
Like bird upon the air. My giddy brain
Lost all its nerve; I fell; and, with a scream,
Awoke to find 'twas but an idle dream.

1859.

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

Ah, Death! why stretch thy ruthless hand
And pluck from out our social band
So bright a bud, just set to bloom,
And lay within the silent tomb?
Oh, is it true! and can it be
That one so full of life, that she,
The fondest of our little band,
Has gone—gone to the spirit land?

That voice we loved so oft to hear
Ring forth in accents sweet and clear,
No more will lend its charms to ease
A suffering world, nor yet to please
The willing ear of such as throng
To hear the sweeter chords of song.

Farewell, loved one! from us departed;
So loving, generous and true-hearted;
Yet memory lives to shed a tear
For thee we loved and prized so dear.
Farewell! On earth we meet no more;
Yet we may hope, 'yond Jordan's shore,
To meet thee there and hear again
Thy voice in never-ending strain,
Made perfect now, in Christ above,
To sing His everlasting love.

THE WEB OF LIFE.

A weaver sat weaving a web of life.
As he labored, with patient care,
I minded his scanty locks were rife
With many a silvery hair.

"What do you here, good toiler," I said,
"You seem to be sorely tried ;
What signifies all this confusion of thread ?"
To which the weaver replied :

"This web is composed of a warp and woof,
And I weave them together, so ;"
And with skillful hand the weaver, for proof,
Threw his shuttle-stick to and fro.

"These threads," he resumed, "are what we term
The warp, or, in other phrase,
"The 'Natural Man,' and we trace their germ
Far back to primeval days.

"The woof is a texture of intricate hue,
And threads from necessity spun ;
Art, Science, Religion, these serve to endue
It with strength, and combine it in one."

And the weaver wove his Web of Life,
And his face was furrowed with care ;
While his locks, as he bent in the toilsome strife,
Showed many a silvery hair.

AT THE RIVER.

Cold hang the mists over Jordan's dark billow,
Weeping I stand on the shadowy shore,
Wet with the dew-drops that fall from the willow,
Listening the dip of the mystical oar.

Words are but idle, arranged though in numbers;
Earth has no language befitting, at best,
The expressions of peace I could wish to the slumbers
Of one who in Jesus is taking her rest.

Few are the years since, rejoicing, we started
On life's hopeful journey together below ;
And now she is gone while I live, broken-hearted,
To wander alone through this valley of woe.

Like tendrils of comfort around me are twining
The arms of our darling and motherless one ;
A solace in sorrow too deep for repining ;
A star that shines brighter when clouded the sun.

A little more sorrow, a little more sighing,
A little more labor, a little more life,
And I too must know what it is to be dying,
And sadly or joyfully give up the strife.

Though cold are the mists that encompass the billow,
And dark be the shadows that rest on the shore ;
Waiting I stand 'neath the dew-dropping willow,
And list the return of the mystical oar.

September 14, 1869.

LIFE.

Life is like a widening river,
Flowing onward to the sea,
There its waters to deliver
To the great and all-wise giver—
Deity.

We commence its varied journey
Through the little laughing rill,
Growing on whose banks are flowers,
Bidding us these hands of ours
well to fill.

Grasp we at them as, in passing,
We behold them very near,
Opening to the sunbeams early,
Sparkling now with dewdrops pearly,
bright and clear.

Happy we if, when the river
Wider, deeper, darker grows ;
And the distant shores no longer
Seem to check it as it stronger,
sterner flows ;

And the trees upon its margin
Bloom no more for you and me,
We shall find these hands of ours
Laden with its choicest flowers,
happy we.