

**AT THE BEAUTIFUL
GATE: AND OTHER
SONGS OF FAITH**

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At the Beautiful Gate: And Other Songs of Faith by Lucy Larcom

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LUCY LARCOM

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June 21st 1893
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AND

OTHER SONGS OF FAITH

BY

LUCY LARCOM



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1892

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E. A. S.

Passed hence, Sunday, July 17, 1892.

My Sister-Spirit, given to me
To love me with an angel's love,
Whom I no more on earth shall see,
I claim thee, in thy house above!

Our love had roots beyond the earth,
Though planted by one roof-tree here;
Where now thou art it had its birth, —
Beside Life's River, cool and clear.

And by its fragrance in my heart —
The breath of an immortal flower —
I know we are not far apart;
So life grows sweeter, hour by hour.

God gives to us the Love He is:
No spray of this true Vine can die:
Loving as He loves, we are His;
This is our immortality. —

Dear Saviour-Friend, Immanuel,
In whom all other friends we find,
With us as with our angels dwell,
Nor let them leave us far behind!

So well she knew Thy Face Divine,
We felt her life Thy Presence prove:
O hide our lives with hers, in Thine!
For Thou art Heaven, since Thou art Love!

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE suggestion by friends, that such of the writer's lyrics as are of an especially serious and devotional character should be brought together in a small volume, has led to the following collection. Many of these — more than a third, perhaps — have been written since the complete (Household) edition of her poems was published, about ten years ago, and are not included in that edition. Others are now for the first time in print. In selecting from her more recent verses, as well as from those which have become somewhat familiar, choice has been made chiefly of such as may be called hymns, being at once lyrical and devotional; and also of such as have borne the test of a somewhat wide approval.

They do not claim to be songs or hymns in any restricted sense, although a number of them have been included in hymn-books, both here and in England. The themes of some of them are drawn from nature and from friendship, as well as from

religion; and some of them may be regarded simply as meditations. But hymns may be written either to read or to sing; and sometimes not even to read aloud, but only for the wordless response of feeling and thought, — the truest singing being indeed but a voice-rendering of this silent inner melody. That nature and human affection belong to our most sacred inspirations, scarcely needs to be affirmed.

Just as this book was ready for the press, the sad tidings came of the withdrawal from earth of one from whom the writer received her earliest encouragement to publish her collected verses, — one whose approbation has always been far more to her than any public recognition. It is with deep regret that this volume is sent forth lacking the personal word of benediction from our beloved poet Whittier, never hitherto withheld from a book of hers, — with sincere sorrow that the friendly counsel and sympathy, always so generously given, can never again be expected or received. In adding the verses upon the concluding page, the volume is associated, in the only way now possible, with a friendship which has given her whole life a stronger hold upon immortality, — with a memory most hallowed and most dear.

The poem entitled "Elizabeth," though hardly to be classified as song or hymn, seems naturally to

find a place beside "Withdrawal," thus linking the memory of two lives always thought of as one by those who knew them best, now reunited beyond the Beautiful Gate that opens into the Unseen.

The poet's last word to the writer — in an unfinished letter — was a warm approval of her recent volumes, "As it is in Heaven," and "The Unseen Friend." To know this may add to the value of those little books with readers who have given them so cordial a welcome; some of whom may make a place beside the two for this collection of the author's verses on sacred themes, as a not unfitting companion.

BEVERLY, MASS., October, 1892.

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