Classic Poetry Series

Henry Lea Twisleton

- poems -

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To a Cabbage Rose

Thy clustering leaves are steeped in splendour; No evening red, no morning dun, Can show a hue as rich and tender As thine -- bright lover of the sun!

What wondrous hints of hidden glory, Of strains no human lips can sing; What symbols rare of life's strange story, Dost thou from earth's dark bosom bring!

What elements have made thy sweetness, Thy glowing hue, thy emerald stem? What hand has fashioned to completeness From tiny germ, thy diadem?

Thou art the fair earth's fond expression
Of tenderness for heaven above -The virgin blush that yields confession -Thou bright "ambassador of love"!

Fair are thy leaves when summer glowing Lies in the lap of swooning spring; But where art thou when autumn, blowing, Bids youth and tenderness take wing?

Sweet messenger! thou waftest beauty Wherever human lives are sown, Around the peasant's humble duty Or weary grandeurs of a throne.

Transfused through hearts in future ages, Thy glowing power anew may shine Effulgent in the poets' pages Or music's harmony divine.

But not to thee from future glory Can shine one added charm or day; Sweet is thy life's unwritten story Of radiant bloom and swift decay.

Give, then, to vagrant winds thy sweetness, Shine, tearful, in the summer shower; And, heedless of thy season's fleetness, Enrich with joy the passing hour.

Henry Lea Twisleton