

In Memoriam--A Tribute of Love

To Mrs. Mattie Edmonds McElroy, Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. Edmonds, and
Wife of Mr. Samuel G. McElroy; Born, Dec. 18, 1843; Graduated,
June 4, 1861; Married, Oct. 30, 1862; Died, Dec. 22, 1863.

Sister, dear, thou learned to woo us
In your girlhood's happy hour,
And the cords with which you drew us
Strengthened with each passing hour,
Till thy life-star, in its cheerings,
Ere it reached its noontide ray,
Was as life-blood to our being,
Or as sun-light to our day.
Had thy star but lingered near us,
Till it spanned the ark of life,
What a noontide it had gilded
For the sister, daughter, wife.
But thy morn, so full of promise,
Ere it reached the hour of noon,
Was o'ercast by Death's dark pinion,
And it faded, oh, how soon!
Now, alas, what hopes lie buried
'Neath the dusky wing of death?
All the joys that round thee clustered
Faded with thy parting breath,
Leaving us in deepest sadness
Our bereavement to deplore—
Softened by a last endearment,
To recount thy virtues o'er—
Virtues, which, would fill a volume,
If recorded, every one;
In the varied relations .
Of a life so quickly run:
Yet, not short, if we would measure
Time by what thou didst achieve;
Or, the great and costly treasure,
Lost, by those who for thee grieve.

Gifted by the God of Nature,
With a mind, acute and strong;
And by Fortune greatly favored
In its culture, close and long
Thou hadst gained a store of knowledge,
Of no ordinary kind.
No gross culture marred the beauty
Of this gem from nature's mine;
But a polish, true and faithful,
Which did show its native worth,

Promptings of affection due;
Ranging with an air of comfort,
As befits a queenly host—
Pride of home and joy of kindred—
Such a sister who can boast?
As a wife, devoted wholly,
Heart and soul, and all of life,
Nearing to the perfect ONENESS
Of the husband and the wife.
Not a word, or thought, or feeling,
Adverse to thy husband's weal,
Not a pain, or loss, or insult,
His, but thou didst keenly feel.
What would make thy home attractive
To thy husband when he came—
What would make thyself his idol,
Was thy highest earthly aim.
Thou with ease and grace presided
As the mistress of his fare,
Giving all a home-like welcome
Who would in his bounty share.
Such a wife would grace a palace,
And the halls of taste refine;
Or, in humble walks, thy graces
Would with equal lustre shine.
As a christian, ever faithful
In the service of thy God,
Not from hope of proffered favor,
Nor from fear of threatened rod;
But from settled, firm conviction
Of the truth, and what was right;
With a heart bent on pursuing
Wisdom's ways as best it might.
Hence thou kept the even tenor
Of an earnest christian's race,
From thy Savior and His Grace;
Hence not often much elated
With the rapture felt by some;
Never in thy Savior's praises
Has thy tongue or heart been dumb.
Always in thy place at worship;
Always in thy place at the week

And portrayed its pristine beauty;
Calling all its graces forth.
Graces, which adorn the woman,
Fostered with assiduous care,
Cluster'd thick around thy heart-strings,
Breathing all their fragrance there.
Thou didst sit among the Muses,
Drinking in their grace of song;
And didst learn with flying fingers
To the loving strain prolong;
Tripping o'er the keys with magic,
Till the soul of music woke,
And the keys themselves grew active,
Scarcely waiting for thy stroke.
Thou didst range the fields of Science;
Gathered pearls from every stream;
~~Plucked the flowers along their margin;~~
Culled the dew drops from the sown;
Wove them in a blazing chaplet
Which thou placed upon thy brow,
And unscathed in death's dark transit,
Brighter shines in glory now.
As a daughter thou wast lovely,
And beloved by parents, too;
Kind, affectionate and faithful—
Ever trusty, ever true.
Never did thy father call thee,
To perform a filial part,
But it met a quick responsive
From thy ever-loving heart.
As a sister, pure and noble,
Kind, affectionate and true,
Winning all by arts of kindness—

On the Sabbath, or the week
No gay place of vain amusement
Wouldst thou leave the church, to seek.
We will miss thee, dearest sister—
Peace, vain wishes, peace be still—
Listen, for my Savior whispers,
All these vacancies I'll fill.
Then we ask thee not to linger,
Since thy Savior bids thee come,
Higher glories far await thee
In thy bright, angelic home.
Saints and angels join to hail thee
To thy Father's house above,
Where a Crown of Glory waits thee,
Radiant with a Savior's Love.
~~Yet thy body still must linger~~
For a little here below;
But how long will be that waiting,
None but God himself can know.
Then, dear sister, let it slumber,
In the silence of the tomb—
Quickly will those hours be numbered,
And the day of God be come,
When in triumph He will bid thee,
In thy Savior's image rise—
Hail thee to himself in glory,
Then descending from the skies.
No vain wish of mine recall thee
Till that trump of God shall sound;
Then, with all the saints in glory,
Thou shalt come with victory crowned.
Lebanon, Ky., December 25th, 1863.