



A Sonnet and Tribute to May

MARY'S BIRTHDAY.

By John R. Young

*Mary Y. Roberts—Dear May,
This is a warm, beautiful winter day,
And your mother says it's your birthday;
That forty years ago, precisely at dinner time,
Your earthly life began to shine.
Such a tiny, faint little glimmer—*

*A mere dot, a spark dropped from above,
From the mystic, boundless ocean of love,
The mother, and Giver of all creation;
We were waiting, looking, and praying for you;
We wanted you, yet we hardly knew
How to prepare properly for your reception.
But your mother did the best she could,
And with Aunt Marinda's help so clever,
And with your grandpa, kind and good,
They nursed the little feeble flame
To life; helped it gain courage to remain,
And it became a source of joy forever.*

*What ups and downs have passed since then!
Who knew the future, where, how, and when
The lightning's flash from out the storm
Would crush to earth some loved one's form—
Or tear loved branches from the tree,
And shroud the home in misery?*

*For pain and death come to the earth
Unheralded. Not so with birth.
Death comes; we have no power to stay the blow.
It strikes; the dearest ones are first to go,
No matter how firm the heart-strings cling;
'Tis like a bird upon the wing—
Soon 'scapes the reach of our weak hands,
And takes its flight to other lands
While we, held by an unseen power,
Are crushed by the sorrows of the hour;*

*We droop, and like the bird we've caged,
Against our prison bars we wage
A restless warfare, seeking in vain,
Freedom from life that gives us pain.
But freedom's boon will never come,
Until we learn, "Thy will be done,"
And every quiver of the soul
By patient guard has learned control;
And prove another law divine,
That every act reaps of its kind,
And all who sow in purity and love,
Reap a rich harvest from above.*

*You, dear child, born forty years ago,
Have drunk your cup of grief and woe.
This is the arch of the span of life;
It marks the zenith of earthly strife.
For forty years you've climbed and climbed—
It is enough. Hereon the path shall wind
Mid shaded groves of field and flowers,
Bringing bright days, and pleasant hours;
No storm shall rise to cross your path again,
But what the cold shall turn to summer rain,
And every cloud, by children's love dispelled,
Will whisper peace, and, mother, all is well.*

*These are the words a father's lips declare;
From this time on your life shall taste, and share
The peace and love, the joy and bliss
That crowns a life of righteousness*