

## The Relic

Oh I could gaze with pleasure on this relic of the past,  
If o'er the mirror of the mind no sombre shades were cast,  
If memory's time reviewing power recalled those scenes again  
Which tell of love and innocence and not of crime and pain.

Did it but serve to bring to me remembrances of those  
Whose lives were spent in acts of good to lighten human woes.  
If a Reynold's† or a Howard's† hand had graced it with a touch,  
I would look upon this relic then and honour it as such.

Or were it but a fragment of the tiny bark which bore  
A fearless maiden‡ o'er the deep, amid the tempest's roar  
And told of her whose feeble form could toil and danger brave  
To answer wail of hopeless hearts; to succour and to save;

Then truly would it seem time worth more than pearl or gem  
That flashes forth from warrior's hilt, or regal diadem;  
High thoughts of mercy and of love, turned to the heart convey  
The gems but bring the barren one, of glitter and display.

But why preserve a souvenir to tell to other times  
Of a fellow sinner's frailties, his errors and his crimes;  
No—rather leave the record to heaven above to keep  
And in thy bosom's secret care, in mercy let it sleep.

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These lines were written upon being offered a fragment of the pirate ship Saladin.  
The crew of which were tried and executed in Halifax, many years ago.

† Celebrated philanthropists.

‡ Grace Darling.