

Good old Parson Flagg didn't let business lag,
But soon to position the couple he brought,
The groom and the bride standing each side by side,
While he made preparations for "tying the knot."

With that solemn demeanor the case did demand,
With a serious look, and a dignified tone,
To Josiah he said, "Emma take by the hand;
Wilt thou cleave unto her all thy days—her alone—

For better, for worse, yea, in sickness and health,
And leaving all others, take her to thy heart,
'In poverty's vale or abounding in wealth,'
Adhere to her always, till death doth you part?"

The same being said to the maid by his side,
With trust in the other, each answered, "I will,"
And the knot of their wedlock not yet being tied,
The parson proceeded his work to fulfill:

"As both have now promised each other for life,
In the presence of witnesses here and above,
I pronounce you united as husband and wife;
Let no man put asunder what God doth approve."

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The scene is now changed as we meet here to-day;
The faces then youthful are youthful no more;
The locks that were auburn are tintured with gray,
And life's busy labors ere long will be o'er.

The years have departed—yea, rapidly fled,
The hours of existence have hurriedly flown;
Some, gay that May morning, now sleep with the dead;
The mounds where they rest are with grass overgrown.

The power of invention has brought to the world
Great changes in letters, and science, and art;
The banner of progress is boldly unfurled,
The new must advance, and the old must depart.

One-fourth of a century! gone to the past—
A new generation on life's busy stage!
How great time's mutations, life's changes how vast!
Yet short the transition from youth to old age.

The Spring-time has come, as on that bridal day:
Kind hearts beat responsive, kind faces are seen;
We are greeted as then with the bird-songs of May,
And all nature, as then, wears a garment of green.

May no cloud float above us with lowering portent,
Unless with a lining of *silver* arrayed!
Kind hearts and kind voices with honest intent,
Now greet us, with tokens of friendship displayed.