

TWELVE YEARS OF SILENCE.*

BY ALICE C. JENNINGS, BOSTON, MASS.

FATHER, who in love unerring
 Hast my life in silence veiled,
 Hushed be every faithless murmur,
 For that love has never failed ;
 Twelve long years a spell unbroken
 Has o'er ear and voice been thrown,
 Yet the Saviour's voice hath spoken
 To my heart with clearer tone.

Eight bright years their course had numbered,
 All undimmed by care or pain :
 Though those sounds so long have slumbered,
 Yet their *echoes* still remain.
 In my fancy still I hear them,
 And a gleam of light they throw
 O'er a path whose lonely sorrow
 Only "silent ones" can know.

As the bird at midnight singeth
 In its purest, clearest strain,
 Music sweet our Father bringeth
 From the discipline of pain :
 On my heart His peace bestowing,
 Better far than earthly bliss,
 Soul and mind and heart are growing
 As they might not, but for this.

What of life to me remaineth,
 Lord, I consecrate to Thee ;
 Silent still, but working ever,
 Like the light my life shall be,
 Till, the shadow from it lifted,
 Sound once more shall God bestow,
 In that world whose ceaseless music
 Pause and discord ne'er shall know.

* From "Heart Echoes," published by Rand, Avery & Co., Boston.
 The accomplished author lost her hearing in childhood.—ED. ANNALS.