













HOME-FOLKS







Books by  
James Whitcomb Riley



NEIGHBORLY POEMS  
SKETCHES IN PROSE, WITH  
INTERLUDING VERSES  
AFTERWHILES  
PIPES O' PAN (Prose and Verse)  
RHYMES OF CHILDHOOD  
FLYING ISLANDS OF THE  
NIGHT  
GREEN FIELDS AND RUN-  
NING BROOKS  
ARMAZINDY  
A CHILD-WORLD  
HOME-FOLKS  
OLD-FASHIONED ROSES  
(English Edition)  
THE GOLDEN YEAR  
(English Edition)  
POEMS HERE AT HOME  
RUBÁIYÁT OF DOC SIFERS  
CHILD-RHYMES, WITH  
HOOSIER PICTURES  
RILEY LOVE-LYRICS  
(Pictures by Dyer)









# HOME-FOLKS

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY



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TO  
MYRON W. REED



. . . "In this business I knew that I had the world, the planets, and the myriad stars for my companions, and we were all journeying along together fulfilling the same divine order."

—JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.



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HOME-FOLKS





PROEM

*You Home-Folks:—Aid your grateful guest—  
Bear with his pondering, wandering ways:  
When idlest he is busiest,  
Being a dreamer of the days.*

*Humor his silent, absent moods—  
His restless quests along the shores  
Of the old creek, wound through the woods,  
The haws, pawpaws and sycamores:*

*The side-path home—the back-way past  
The old pump and the dipper there;  
The afternoon of dreamy June—  
The old porch, and the rocking-chair.*

*Yea, bear with him a little space—  
His heart must smoulder on a while  
Ere yet it flames out in his face  
A wholly tearless smile.*



## HOME-FOLKS

HOME-FOLKS!—Well, that-air name, to me,  
Sounds jis the same as *poetry*—  
That is, ef poetry is jis  
As sweet as I've hearn tell it is!

Home-Folks—they're jis the same as *kin*—  
All brung up, same as *we* have bin,  
Without no overpowerin' sense  
Of their oncommon consequence!

They've bin to school, but not to git  
The habit fastened on 'em yit  
So as to ever interfere  
With *other* work 'at's waitin' here:

Home-Folks has crops to plant and plow,  
Er lives in town and keeps a cow;  
But whether country-jakes er town-,  
They know when eggs is up er down!

## HOME-FOLKS

La! can't you *spot* 'em—when you meet  
'Em *anywheres*—in field er street?  
And can't you see their faces, bright  
As circus-day, heave into sight?

And can't you hear their "Howdy!" clear  
As a brook's chuckle to the ear,  
And allus find their laughin' eyes  
As fresh and clear as morning skies?

And can't you—when they've gone away  
Jis feel 'em shakin' hands, all day?  
And feel, too, you've bin higher raised  
By sich a meetin'?—God be praised!

Oh, Home-Folks! you're the best of all  
'At ranges this terestchul ball,—  
But, north er south, er east er west,  
It's home is where you're at your best.—

HOME-FOLKS

It's home—it's home your faces shine,  
In-nunder your own fig and vine—  
Your fambly and your neighbors 'bout  
Ye, and the latchstring hangin' out.

. . . . .

Home-Folks—*at home*,—I know o' one  
Old feller now 'at haint got none.—  
Invite him—he may hold back some—  
But *you* invite him, and he'll come.

## THE NAME OF OLD GLORY

1898

### I

OLD GLORY! say, who,  
By the ships and the crew,  
And the long, blended ranks of the gray and the  
blue,—

Who gave you, Old Glory, the name that you bear  
With such pride everywhere  
As you cast yourself free to the rapturous air  
And leap out full-length, as we're wanting you  
to?—

Who gave you that name, with the ring of the  
same,

And the honor and fame so becoming to you?—  
Your stripes stroked in ripples of white and of red,  
With your stars at their glittering best overhead—  
By day or by night  
Their delightfulest light

THE NAME OF OLD GLORY

Laughing down from their little square heaven of  
blue!—

Who gave you the name of Old Glory?—say,  
who—

Who gave you the name of Old Glory?

*The old banner lifted, and faltering then  
In vague lisps and whispers fell silent again.*

II

Old Glory,—speak out!—we are asking about  
How you happened to “favor” a name, so to say,  
That sounds so familiar and careless and gay  
As we cheer it and shout in our wild breezy way—  
We—the *crowd*, every man of us, calling you that—  
*We*—Tom, Dick and Harry—each swinging his hat  
And hurrahing “Old Glory!” like you were our  
kin,

When—*Lord!*—we all know we’re as common as  
sin!

And yet it just seems like you *humor* us all  
And waft us your thanks, as we hail you and fall  
Into line, with you over us, waving us on  
Where our glorified, sanctified betters have gone.—

THE NAME OF OLD GLORY

And this is the reason we're wanting to know—  
(And we're wanting it *so!*—  
Where our own fathers went we are willing to  
go.)—  
Who gave you the name of Old Glory—O-ho!—  
Who gave you the name of Old Glory?

*The old flag unfurled with a billowy thrill  
For an instant, then wistfully sighed and was  
still.*

III

Old Glory: the story we're wanting to hear  
Is what the plain facts of your christening were,—  
For your name—just to hear it,  
Repeat it, and cheer it, 's a tang to the spirit  
As salt as a tear;—  
And seeing you fly, and the boys marching by,  
There's a shout in the throat and a blur in the eye  
And an aching to live for you always—or die,  
If, dying, we still keep you waving on high.  
And so, by our love  
For you, floating above,



THE NAME OF OLD GLORY

And the scars of all wars and the sorrows thereof,  
Who gave you the name of Old Glory, and why  
    Are we thrilled at the name of Old Glory?

*Then the old banner leaped, like a sail in the blast,  
And fluttered an audible answer at last.—*

IV

And it spake, with a shake of the voice, and it  
    said:—

By the driven snow-white and the living blood-red  
Of my bars, and their heaven of stars overhead—  
By the symbol conjoined of them all, skyward cast,  
As I float from the steeple, or flap at the mast,  
Or droop o'er the sod where the long grasses nod,—  
My name is as old as the glory of God.

. . . . So I came by the name of Old Glory.

## MISTER HOP-TOAD

Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad! Glad to see you out!  
Bin a month o' Sund'ys sence I seen you hereabout.  
Kind o' bin a-layin' in, from the frost and snow?  
Good to see you out ag'in, it's bin so long ago!  
Plows like slicin' cheese, and sod's loppin' over  
even;

Loam's like gingerbread, and clods's softer 'n de-  
ceivin'—

Mister Hop-Toad, honest-true — Springtime —  
don't you love it?

You old rusty rascal you, at the bottom of it!

Oh, oh, oh!

I grabs up my old hoe;

But I sees *you*,

And s' I, "Ooh-oo!"

Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad! How-dee-do!"

MISTER HOP-TOAD

Make yourse'f more comfo'bler—square 'round at  
your ease—

Don't set saggin' slanchwise, with your nose below  
your knees.

Swell that fat old throat o' yourn and lemme see  
you swaller;

Straighten up and h'ist your head!—*You* don't  
owe a dollar!—

Hain't no mor'gage on your land—ner no taxes,  
nuther;

*You* don't haf to work no roads, even ef you'd  
ruther.

'F I was you, and *fixed* like you, I raily wouldn't  
keer

To swop fer life and hop right in the presidential  
cheer!

Oh, oh, oh!

I hauls back my old hoe;

But I sees *you*,

And s' I, "Ooh-oo!"

Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad? How-dee-do!"

MISTER HOP-TOAD

'Long about next Aprile, hoppin' down the furry,  
Won't you mind I ast you what 'peared to be the  
hurry?—

Won't you mind I hooked my hoe and hauled you  
back and smiled?—

W'y, bless you, Mister Hop-Toad, I love you like  
a child!

S'pose I'd want to 'flict you any more'n what you  
air?—

S'pose I think you got no rights 'cept the warts  
you wear?

Hulk, sulk, and blink away, you old bloat-eyed  
rowdy!—

Hain't you got a word to say?—Won't you tell  
me "Howdy"?

Oh, oh, oh!

I swish round my old hoe;

But I sees *you*,

And s' I, "Ooh-ooh!

Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad! How-dee-do!"

## OUR BOYHOOD HAUNTS

Ho! I'm going back to where  
We were youngsters.—Meet me there,  
Dear old barefoot chum, and we  
Will be as we used to be,—  
Lawless rangers up and down  
The old creek beyond the town—  
Little sunburnt gods at play,  
Just as in that far-away:—  
Water nymphs, all unafraid,  
Shall smile at us from the brink  
Of the old millrace and wade  
Tow'rd us as we kneeling drink  
At the spring our boyhood knew,  
Pure and clear as morning-dew:  
And, as we are rising there,  
Doubly dow'rd to hear and see,  
We shall thus be made aware  
Of an eerie piping, heard  
High above the happy bird

OUR BOYHOOD HAUNTS

In the hazel: And then we,  
Just across the creek, shall see  
(Hah! the goaty rascal!) Pan  
Hoof it o'er the sloping green,  
Mad with his own melody,  
Aye, and (bless the beastly man!)  
Stamping from the grassy soil  
Bruisèd scents of *fleur-de-lis*,  
Boneset, mint and pennyroyal.

## THE HOME-VOYAGE

GENERAL HENRY W. LAWTON—FELL AT SAN  
MATEO, DEC. 19, 1899. IN STATE, IN-  
DIANAPOLIS, FEB. 6, 1900.

BEAR with us, O Great Captain, if our pride  
Show equal measure with our grief's excess  
In greeting you in this your helplessness  
To countermand our vanity or hide  
Your stern displeasure that we thus had tried  
To praise you, knowing praise was your distress :  
But this homecoming swells our hearts no less—  
Because for love of home you proudly died.  
Lo! then, the cable, fathoms 'neath the keel  
That shapes your course, is eloquent of you ;  
The old flag, too, at half-mast overhead—  
We doubt not that its gale-kissed ripples feel  
A prouder sense of red and white and blue,—  
The stars—Ah, God, were *they* interpreted!

THE HOME-VOYAGE

In strange lands were your latest honors won—  
In strange wilds, with strange dangers all beset;  
With rain, like tears, the face of day was wet,  
As rang the ambushed foeman's fateful gun:  
And as you felt your final duty done,  
We feel *that* glory thrills your spirit yet,—  
When at the front, in swiftest death, you met  
The patriot's doom and best reward in one.  
And so the tumult of that island war,  
At last, for you, is stilled forevermore—  
Its scenes of blood blend white as ocean foam  
On your rapt vision as you sight afar  
The sails of peace, and from that alien shore  
The proud ship bears you on your voyage home.

Or rough or smooth the wave, or lowering day  
Or starlit sky—you hold, by native right,  
Your high tranquillity—the silent might  
Of the true hero—so you led the way  
To victory through stormiest battle-fray,  
Because your followers, high above the fight,  
Heard your soul's lightest whisper bid them smite  
For God and man and space to kneel and pray.



## THE HOME-VOYAGE

And thus you cross the seas unto your own  
Beloved land, convoyed with honors meet,  
Saluted as your home's first heritage—  
Nor salutation from your State alone,  
But *all* the States, gathered in mighty fleet,  
Dip colors as you move to anchorage.

## UNCLE SIDNEY'S LOGIC

PA wunst he scold' an' says to me,—

“Don't *play* so much, but try  
To *study* more, and nen you'll be  
A great man, by an' by.”

Nen Uncle Sidney says, “You let  
Him *be* a boy an' play.—

The greatest man on earth, I bet,  
'Ud trade with him today!”

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

AS CREATED

*There's a space for good to bloom in  
Every heart of man or woman,—  
And however wild or human,  
Or however brimmed with gall,  
Never heart may beat without it;  
And the darkest heart to doubt it  
Has something good about it  
After all.*

## CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

*Scene—Hoosier R. R. station, Washout Glen.*

*Night—Interior of Telegraph Office—Single operator's table in some disorder—lunch-basket, litter of books and sheet-music—a flute and a guitar—Rather good-looking young man, evidently in charge, talking to commercial traveler.*

*JUNCTION-Station—Pilot Knob—*

Say "the operator there

Is a *girl*—with auburn hair

And blue eyes, and purty, too,

As they make 'em!"—That'll do!—

They *all* know her 'long the Line—

Railroad men, from President

Of the road to section-hand!—

And she knows *us*—the whole mob

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

Of us *lightnin'-slingers*—Shoo!—  
*Brownie's* got us all down fine!  
Though she's *business*, understand,  
Brownie she just beats the band!  
Brownie she's held up that job  
Five or six years anyhow—  
Since her *father's* death, when all  
The whole road decided now  
Was no time for nothin' small,—  
It was *Brownie's* job! Since ten  
Years of age she'd been with *him*  
In the office. Now, I guess,  
She was sixteen, more or less—  
Just a girl, but strong and trim,  
And as independent, too,  
And *reliable* clean through  
As the old man when he died  
Two mile' up the track beside  
His red-light, one icy night  
When the line broke down—and yet  
He got there in time, you bet,  
To shut off a wreck all right!

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

Yes, *some* life here, and romance—  
Pilot Knob, though, and Roachdale,  
And this little eight-by-ten  
Dinky town of Washout Glen  
Have to pool inhabitants  
Even for enough young men  
To fill out a country dance,—  
All chip in on some joint-date,  
And whack up and pony down  
And *combine* and celebrate,—  
Say, on Decoration Day—  
Fourth o' July—Easter, or  
Circus-Day, or *Christmas*, say—  
All *three* towns, and right-o'-way  
For two extrys,—one from here—  
One down from the Knob. Well, then  
Roachdale is herself again!  
Like *last* Christmas, when all three  
Towns collogued, and far and near  
Billed things for a Christmas-tree  
At old Roachdale. Now mark here:—

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

I had leave, last Holidays,  
And was goin' home, you see,  
Two weeks—and the Company  
Sent a man to fill my place—  
An old *chum* of mine, in fact,  
I'd been coaxin' to arrange  
Just to have his dressin'-case  
And his latest music packed  
And come on here for a change.  
He'd been here to visit me  
Once before—in *summer then*,—  
Come to stay “just two or three  
Days,” he said—and he staid *ten*.  
When he left here *then*—Well, he  
Was clean gone on Brownie—wild  
And plum silly as a child!  
Name—MacClintock. Most young men  
Stood 'way back when Mac was round.  
Fact is, he was *fine*, you know—  
Silver-tenor voice that went  
Up among the stars, and sent  
The girls back to higher-tone'  
Dreams than they had ever known!  
A good-looker—stylish—slim—



CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

And wore clothes that no man downed—  
Yes, and smoked a good cigar  
And smelt right; and used to blow  
A smooth flute—And a *guitar*  
No man heard till he heard *him!*—  
Say, some midnight serenade—  
*Oomh!* how drippin'-sweet he played!  
*Boys*, though, wasn't stuck on Mac  
So blame much,—especially  
*Roachdale* operator.—He  
Kind o' had the inside-track  
On *all* of us, as to who  
Got most talk from Brownie, when  
She had nothin' else to do  
But to buzz us now and then  
Up and down the wires, you know;  
And we'd jolly back again  
'Bout some dance—and "Would she go  
With *us* or her *Roachdale* beau?"  
(Boys all called him "Roachy"—see?)—  
Wire her, "Was she 'Happy now?' "  
And "How's 'Roachy,' anyhow?"  
Or, "Say, Brownie, who's the jay  
You was stringin' yesterday?"

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

And I've sat here when this key  
Shot me like a battery,  
Just 'cause Brownie wired to say  
That "That box o' fruit, or flowers,  
That 'I'd' sent her came O K,—  
To beguile the weary hours  
Till we met again!"—Then break  
Short off—for the Roachdale cuss  
Callin' her, and onto us.

'Course *he'd* sent 'em—no mistake!

*Lord, she kept that man awake!*

Yet he kept *her* fooled: His cheek  
And pure goody-goody gall

Hid from *her*—if not from all—

A quite vivid "*yellow streak.*"—

Awful' jealous, don't you see?—

Felt he had a *right* to be,

Maybe, bein' *engaged.*—And they

*Were* engaged—that's straight.—"G A!"\*—

Well: MacClintock when *he* come

Down from York to take this job,

*And stopped off at Pilot Knob*

---

\*Telegraphers' abbreviation for "Go ahead."

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

For "*instructions*," there was some  
Indications of unrest  
At *Roachdale* right from the start,—  
"Roachy" wasn't *awful* smart,  
Maybe, but he done his best—  
With such brains as he possessed,—  
Anyway he made *one* play  
That was brilliant—of its kind—  
And *maintained* it—From the day  
That MacClintock took my key  
And I left on No. 3,  
"Roachy" opened up on Mac  
And just *loved* him!—purred and whined  
'Cross the wires how tickled he  
Was to hear that *Mac* was back,  
And how glad the *girls* would be  
And the young-folks everywhere,  
As he'd reason to believe,—  
And how, even *then*, they were  
'Shapin' things at old *Roachdale*  
For a blow-out, Christmas-eve,  
That would turn all others pale!—  
First a *Christmas-Tree*, at old

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

Armory Hall, and then the floor  
Cleared, and—”

“Come in out the cold!”  
Breaks MacClintock—“Don’t I know?—  
Dancin’, say, from ten till four—  
Maybe *daylight* ’fore we go!—  
With Ben Custer’s Band to pour  
Music out in swirlin’ rills  
And back-tides o’ waltz-quadrilles  
Level with the window-sills!—  
Roachy, you’re a *bird*!—But, say,—  
How am I to get away  
From the office here?”

Well, then  
“Roachy” wires him back again:—  
“That’s O K,—I call a *man*  
Up from *Dunkirk*; got it all  
Fixed.—So Christmas-eve, you can  
Collar the seven-thirty train  
For Roachdale—the same that *he*  
Comes on.—Leave your office-key  
In the door: he’ll do the rest.”  
Then “old Roachy” rattled through  
A long list of who’d be there,—

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

Boys and girls that Mac knew best—  
*One* name, though, that had no bare  
Little mention anywhere!  
Then he shut off, as he said,  
For his supper . . . . About ten  
Minutes *Mac* was *called* again—  
With a click that flushed him red  
As the signal-flag—and then  
Came like music in the air—  
“Yes, and *Brownie* will be there!”

---

Folks tell *me*, that Christmas-Tree,  
Dance and whole blame jamboree,  
Looked like it was goin' to be  
A blood-curdlin' tragedy.  
People 'long the *roads*, you know—  
Well, they've had experience  
With all sorts of *accidents*,  
And they've learnt *some* things,—and so  
When an accident or wreck  
Happens, they know *some man's* “*break*”  
Is responsible, and hence—  
Well—they want to *break* his *neck*!

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

So it happened, Christmas-eve,  
At *Roachdale*,—MacClintock there  
Cocked back in the barber-chair  
At eight-forty, and no train  
Down yet from the Knob, and it  
Due at eight-ten sharp. The strain  
Was a-showin' quite a bit  
On the general crowd; and when  
Purty soon the rumor spread—  
*Wreck* had probably occurred—  
Someone said somebody said  
That he'd heard somebody say,  
“*Operator* at the *Glen*  
Was to blame for the delay—  
Fact is, he had run away  
From his office—Even then  
Was in *Roachdale*—there to be  
Present at the Christmas-Tree  
And the ‘shindig’ afterward,  
Wreck or *no wreck!*” . . . *Mac* sat up,  
Whiter than the shavin'-cup. . . .  
Back of *his* face in the glass  
He stared into he could see

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

A big crowd there—and, alas!  
Not in all that threatening throng  
One friend's face of sympathy—  
One friend knowin' right from wrong!  
He got on his feet—erect—  
Nervy ;—faced the crowd, and then  
Said: “*I* am MacClintock from  
The Glen-office, and I've come  
To your Christmas festival  
By request of one that all  
Of you honor, gentlemen,—  
Your most trusted citizen—  
Your own operator here  
At the station-office—where  
He'll acquit *me* of neglect,  
And will make it plain and clear  
Who the sub. is he sent there  
To my office at the Glen—  
Or, if *not* one there,—who then  
Is indeed the criminal? . . .  
I am going now to call  
On him.—Join me, gentlemen.—

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

I insist you come with me.”  
Well, a sense of some respect  
Caught 'em,—and they followed, all,  
Silently, though sullenly.

Fortunately, half a square  
Brought 'em to the station and  
The crowd there that packed the small  
Waiting-room on every hand,  
With a kind o' general stand  
Round the half-door window through  
Which “old Roachy,” in full view,  
Sat there, smilin' in a sick  
Sort o' way, yet gloryin', too,  
In the work he had to do.  
Mac worked closer, breathin' quick  
At the muttered talk of some  
Of the toughest of the crowd;  
Till, above the growl and hum  
Of the ominous voices, he  
Heard the click of “Roachy's” key,—  
And his heart beat 'most out 'loud  
As he heard him wirin':—“Yes,



CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

Trouble down at *Glen*, I guess.  
Glen's fool-operator *here*—  
What's-his-name?—MacClintock.—Fear  
Mob will hang him.—Mob knows he  
Left his office.—And no doubt  
Wreck there on account of it.  
People worked-up here—and shout  
Now and then to 'Take him out!'—  
'Hang him'!—and so forth." . . . Mac lit  
Through the half-door window at  
'Roachy's' table like a cat:—  
*He* was *white*, but '*Roachy's*' face  
Made a brunette out o' *his*! . . .  
Mac had pinned him in his chair  
Helpless—and a message there  
Clickin' back from Pilot Knob.—  
"Tell these people, word for word,"  
Mac says, "what this message is!—  
*Tell 'em.—Hear me?*" 'Roachy' heard  
And obeyed:—" 'We sized your job  
On MacClintock.—*Knob* here sent  
A sub. there.—And all O K  
At Glen office.—Tie-up *here*—  
One hour's wait—all fault of *mine*.

CHRISTMAS ALONG THE WIRES

‘*Hang* MacClintock,’ did you say?  
‘*Hang* MacClintock?’—Certainly,—  
Hang him on the Christmas-Tree,  
With a label on for *me*,—  
I’ll be there on Number Nine.’”

## LET SOMETHING GOOD BE SAID

WHEN over the fair fame of friend or foe  
The shadow of disgrace shall fall; instead  
Of words of blame, or proof of thus and so,  
Let something good be said.

Forget not that no fellow-being yet  
May fall so low but love may lift his head:  
Even the cheek of shame with tears is wet,  
If something good be said.

No generous heart may vainly turn aside  
In ways of sympathy; no soul so dead  
But may awaken strong and glorified,  
If something good be said.

And so I charge ye, by the thorny crown,  
And by the cross on which the Savior bled,  
And by your own souls' hope of fair renown,  
Let something good be said!

## MY DANCIN'-DAYS IS OVER

WHAT is it in old fiddle-chunes 'at makes me ketch  
my breath

And ripples up my backbone tel I'm tickled most  
to death?—

Kindo' like that sweet-sick feelin', in the long  
sweep of a swing,

The first you ever swung in, with yer first sweet-  
heart, i jing!—

Yer first picnic—yer first ice-cream—yer first o'  
*ever'thing*

'At happened 'fore yer dancin'-days wuz over!

I never understood it—and I s'pose I never can,—  
But right in town here, yisterd'y, I heerd a pore  
blind-man

A-fiddlin' old "Gray Eagle"—*And-sir!* I jes  
stopped my load

O'hay and listened at him—yes, and watched the  
way he "bow'd,"—

MY DANCIN'-DAYS IS OVER

And back I went, plum forty year', with boys  
and girls I knowed  
And loved, long 'fore my dancin'-days wuz  
over!—

At high noon in yer city,—with yer blame Mag-  
netic-Cars  
A-hummin' and a-screetchin' past—and bands and  
G. A. R.'s  
A-marchin'—and fire-ingines.—*All* the noise,  
the whole street through,  
Wuz lost on me!—I only heerd a whipperwill  
er two,  
It 'peared-like, kindo' callin' 'cross the darkness  
and the dew,  
Them nights afore my dancin'-days wuz over.

T'uz Chused'y-night at Wetherell's, er We'nsd'y-  
night at Strawn's,  
Er Fourth-o'-July-night at uther Tomps's house  
er John's!—

MY DANCIN'-DAYS IS OVER

With old Lew Church from Sugar Crick, with  
that old fiddle he  
Had sawed clean through the Army, from At-  
lanty to the sea—  
And yit he'd fetched her home ag'in, so's he  
could play fer me  
Onc't more afore my dancin'-days wuz over!

The woods 'at's all ben cut away wuz growin'  
same as then ;  
The youngsters all wuz boys ag'in 'at's now all  
oldish men ;  
And all the girls 'at *then* wuz girls—I saw 'em,  
one and all,  
As *plain* as then—the middle-sized, the short-  
and-fat, and tall—  
And, 'peared-like, I danced "Tucker" fer 'em  
up and down the wall  
Jes like afore my dancin'-days wuz over!

. . . . .

MY DANCIN'-DAYS IS OVER

Yer *po-leece* they can holler "Say! *you*, Uncle!  
drive ahead!—

You can't use *all* the right-o'-way!"—fer that wuz  
what they said!—

But, jes the same,—in spite of all 'at you call  
"interprise

And prog-gress of *you*-folks Today," we're all  
of *fambly-ties*—

We're all got feelin's fittin' fer the *tears* 'at's in  
our eyes

Er the *smiles* afore our dancin'-days is over.

HENRY W. GRADY

ATLANTA, DEC. 23, 1889

TRUE-HEARTED friend of all true friendliness!—  
Brother of all true brotherhoods!—Thy hand  
And its late pressure now we understand  
Most fully, as it falls thus gestureless  
And Silence lulls thee into sweet excess  
Of sleep. Sleep thou content!—Thy loved  
Southland  
Is swept with tears, as rain in sunshine; and  
Through all the frozen North our eyes confess  
Like sorrow—seeing still the princely sign  
Set on thy lifted brow, and the rapt light  
Of the dark, tender, melancholy eyes—  
Thrilled with the music of those lips of thine,  
And yet the fire thereof that lights the night  
With the white splendor of thy prophecies.



“O LIFE! O BEYOND!”

STRANGE—strange, O mortal Life,  
The perverse gifts that came to me from you!  
From childhood I have wanted *all* good things:  
    You gave me few.

You gave me faith in One  
Divine—above your own imperious might,  
O mortal Life, while I but wanted you  
    And your delight.

I wanted dancing feet,  
And flowery, grassy paths by laughing streams;  
You gave me loitering steps, and eyes all blurred  
    With tears and dreams.

I wanted love,—and, lo!  
As though in mockery, you gave me loss.  
O'erburdened sore, I wanted rest: you gave  
    The heavier cross.

“O LIFE! O BEYOND!”

I wanted one poor hut  
For mine own home, to creep away into:  
You gave me only lonelier desert lands  
To journey through.

Now, at the last vast verge  
Of barren age, I stumble, reel, and fling  
Me down, with strength all spent and heart athirst  
And famishing.

Yea, now, Life, deal me death,—  
Your worst—your vaunted worst! . . . Across  
my breast  
With numb and fumbling hands I gird me for  
The best.

“HOME AG’IN”

*HIS LOVE OF HOME*

*“As love of native land,” the old man said,  
“Er stars and stripes a-wavin’ overhead,  
Er nearest kith-and-kin, er daily bread,  
A Hoosier’s love is fer the old homestead.”*

## “HOME AG’IN”

I’M a-feelin’ ruther sad,  
Fer a father proud and glad  
As *I* am—my only child  
Home, and all so rickonciled!  
Feel so strange-like, and don’t know  
What the mischief ails me so!  
'Stid o’ bad, I ort to be  
Feelin’ good pertickerly—  
Yes, and extry thankful, too,  
'Cause my nearest kith and kin ,  
My Elviry’s schoolin’ ’s through,  
And I’ got her home ag’in—  
    Home ag’in with me!

Same as ef her mother’d been  
Livin’, I have done my best  
By the girl, and watchfulest;

“HOME AG’IN”

Nussed her—keerful’ as I could—  
From a baby, day and night,—  
Drawin’ on the neighborhood  
And the women-folks as light  
As needssesity ’u’d ’low—  
‘Cept in “teethin’,” onc’t, and fight  
Through black-measles. Don’t know now  
How we ever saved the child!  
Doc *he’d* give her up, and said,  
As I stood there by the bed  
Sort o’ foolin’ with her hair  
On the hot, wet pillar there,  
“Wuz no use!”—And at them-air  
Very words she waked and smiled—  
Yes, and *knowed* me. And that’s where  
I broke down, and simply jes  
Bellered like a boy—I guess!—  
*Women* claimed I did, but I  
Allus helt I didn’t cry  
But wuz laughin’,—and I *wuz*,—  
Men don’t cry like *women* does!  
Well, right then and there I felt  
’T ’uz her mother’s doin’s, and,  
Jes like to myse’f, I knelt

“HOME AG’IN”

Whisperin,’ “I understand.” . . .  
So I’ve raised her, you might say,  
Stric’ly in the narrer way  
’At her mother walked therein—  
Not so quite religiously,  
Yit still strivin’-like to do  
Ever’thing a father *could*  
Do he knowed the *mother* would  
Ef she’d lived—And now all’s through  
And I’ got her home ag’in—  
    Home ag’in with me!

And I’ been so lonesome, too,  
Here o’ late, especially,—  
“Old Aunt Abigail,” you know,  
Ain’t no company;—and so  
Jes the hired hand, you see—  
Jonas—like a relative  
More—sence he come here to live  
With us, nigh ten year’ ago.  
Still he don’t count much, you know,

“HOME AG’IN”

In the way o’ company—  
Lonesome, ’peared-like, ’most as me!  
So, as *I* say, I’ been so  
Special lonesome-like and blue,  
With Elviry, like she’s been,  
’Way so much, last two or three  
Year’—But now she’s home ag’in—  
Home ag’in with me!

Driv in fer her yisterday,  
Me and Jonas—gay and spry,—  
We jes cut up, all the way!—  
Yes, and sung!—tell, blame it! I  
Keyed my voice up ’bout as high  
As when—days ’at I wuz young—  
“Buckwheat-notes” wuz all they sung.  
Jonas bantered me, and ’greed  
To sing one ’at town-folks sing  
Down at Split Stump ’er High-Low—  
Some new “ballet,” said, ’at he’d  
Learnt—about “The Grapevine Swing.”  
And when *he* quit, *I* begun



“HOME AG’IN”

To chune up my voice and run  
Through the what’s-called “scales” and  
“do-  
Sol-me-fa’s” I *ust* to know—  
Then let loose old favorite one,  
“Hunters o’ Kentucky!” *My!*  
Tel I thought the boy would *die!*  
And we *both* laughed—Yes, and still  
Heerd more laughin’, top the hill;  
Fer we’d missed Elviry’s train,  
And she’d lit out ’crosst the fields,—  
Dewdrops dancin’ at her heels,  
And cut up old Smoots’s lane  
So’s to meet us. And there in  
Shadder o’ the chinkypin,  
With a danglin’ dogwood-bough  
Bloomin’ ’bove her—See her now!—  
Sunshine sort o’ flickerin’ down  
And a kind o’ laughin’ all  
Round her new red parasol,  
Tryin’ to git at *her!*—well—like  
*I* jumped out and showed ’em how—  
Yes, and jes the place to strike  
That-air mouth o’ hern—as sweet

“HOME AG’IN”

As the blossoms breshed her brow  
Er sweet-williams round her feet—  
White and blushy, too, as she  
“Howdied” up to Jonas, and  
Jieuked her head, and waved her hand.  
“Hey!” says I, as she bounced in  
The spring-wagon, reachin’ back  
To give *me* a lift, “whoop-ee!”  
I-says-ee, “you’re home ag’in—  
Home ag’in with me!”

Lord! how *wild* she wuz, and glad,  
Gittin’ home!—and things she had  
To inquire about, and talk—  
Plowin’, plantin’, and the stock—  
News o’ neighborhood; and how  
Wuz the Deem-girls doin’ now,  
Sence that-air young chicken-hawk  
They was “tamin’ ” soared away  
With their settin’-hen, one day?—  
(Said she’d got Mame’s postal-card  
'Bout it, very day 'at she

“HOME AG’IN”

Started home from Bethany.)  
How wuz produce—eggs, and lard?—  
Er wuz stores still claimin’ ‘‘hard  
Times,’’ as usual? And, says she,  
Troubled-like, ‘‘How’s Deedie—say?  
Sence pore child e-loped away  
And got back, and goin’ to ’ply  
Fer school-license by and by—  
And where’s ’Lijy workin’ at?  
And how’s ‘Aunt’ and ‘Uncle Jake’?  
How wuz ‘Old Maje’—and the cat?  
And wuz Marthy’s baby fat  
As his ‘Humpty-Dumpty’ ma?—  
Sweetest thing she ever saw!—  
Must run ’crosst and see her, too,  
Soon as she turned in and got  
Supper fer us—smokin’-hot—  
And the ‘dishes’ all wuz through.—’’  
*Sich* a supper! W’y, I set  
There and et, and et, and et!—  
Jes et on, tel Jonas he  
Pushed his chair back, laughed, and says,  
‘‘I could walk *his* log!’’ and we  
All laughed then, tel ’Viry she

“HOME AG’IN”

Lit the lamp—and I give in!—  
Riz and kissed her: “Heaven bless  
You!” says I—“you’re home ag’in—  
Same old dimple in your chin,  
Same white apern,” I-says-ee,  
“Same sweet girl, and good to see  
As your *mother* ust to be,—  
And I’ got you home ag’in—  
Home ag’in with me!”

I turns then to go on by her  
Through the door—and see her eyes  
Both wuz swimmin’, and she tries  
To say somepin’—can’t—and so  
Grabs and hugs and lets me go.  
Noticed Aunty’d made a fire  
In the settin’-room and gone  
Back where her p’serves wuz on  
B’ilin’ in the kitchen. I  
Went out on the porch and set,  
Thinkin’-like. And by and by  
Heerd Elviry, soft and low,

“HOME AG’IN”

At the organ, kind o’ go  
A mi-anderin’ up and down  
With her fingers ’mongst the keys—  
“Vacant Chair” and “Old Camp-Groun’.” . . .  
Dusk was moist-like, with a breeze  
Lazin’ round the locus’-trees—  
Heerd the hosses champin’, and  
Jonas feedin’, and the hogs—  
Yes, and katydids and frogs—  
And a tree-toad, som’er’s. Heerd  
Also whipperwills.—*My land!*—  
All so mournful ever’where—  
Them out here, and her in there,—  
’Most like ’tendin’ *services!*  
*Anyway*, I must ’a’ jes  
Kind o’ drapped asleep, I guess;  
’Cause when Jonas must ’a’ passed  
Me, a-comin’ in, I knowed  
Nothin’ of it—yit it seemed  
Sort o’ like I kind o’ dreamed  
’Bout him, too, a-slippin’ in,  
And a-watchin’ back to see  
Ef I *wuz* asleep, and then  
Passin’ in where ’Viry wuz;

“HOME AG’IN”

And where I declare it does  
'Pear to me I heerd him say,  
Wild and glad and whisperin'—  
'Peared-like heerd him say, says-ee,  
“Ah! I'got you home ag'in—  
Home ag'in with me!”

## EMERSON

CONCORD, APRIL 27, 1882

WHAT shall we say? In quietude,  
    Within his home, in dreams unguessed,  
He lies; the grief a nation would  
    Evince must be repressed.

Nor meet is it the loud acclaim  
    His countrymen would raise—that he  
Has left the riches of his fame  
    The whole world's legacy.

Then, prayerful, let us pause until  
    We find, as grateful spirits can,  
The way most worthy to fulfill  
    The tribute due the man.

Think what were best in his regard  
    Who voyaged life in such a cause:  
Our simplest faith were best reward—  
    Our silence, best applause.





## THE ONWARD TRAIL

MYRON W. REED, DENVER, JAN. 30, 1899

JUST as of old,—with fearless foot  
And placid face and resolute,  
He takes the faint, mysterious trail  
That leads beyond our earthly hail.

We would cry, as in last farewell,  
But that his hand waves, and a spell  
Is laid upon our tongues: and thus  
He takes unworded leave of us.

And it is fitting:—As he fared  
Here with us, so is he prepared  
For any fortuning the night  
May hold for him beyond our sight.

The moon and stars they still attend  
His wandering footsteps to the end,—  
He did not question, nor will we,  
Their guidance and security.

THE ONWARD TRAIL

So, never parting word nor cry:—  
We feel, with him, that by and by  
Our onward trails will meet and then  
Merge and be ever one again.

## LINCOLN

A PEACEFUL LIFE;—just toil and rest—

All his desire;—

To read the books he liked the best

Beside the cabin fire—

God's word and man's;—to peer sometimes

Above the page, in smouldering gleams,

And catch, like far heroic rhymes,

The onmarch of his dreams.

A peaceful life;—to hear the low

Of pastured herds,

Or woodman's ax that, blow on blow,

Fell sweet as rhythmic words.

And yet there stirred within his breast

A fateful pulse that, like a roll

Of drums, made high above his rest

A tumult in his soul.

LINCOLN

A peaceful life! . . . . They haled him even  
As One was haled  
Whose open palms were nailed toward Heaven  
When prayers nor aught availed.  
And, lo, he paid the selfsame price  
To lull a nation's awful strife  
And will us, through the sacrifice  
Of self, his peaceful life.

## YOUR HEIGHT IS OURS

TO RICHARD HENRY STODDARD, AT THE STODDARD  
BANQUET BY THE AUTHORS' CLUB,  
NEW YORK, MARCH 25, 1897

O PRINCELY poet!—kingly heir  
Of gifts divinely sent,—  
Your own!—nor envy anywhere,  
Nor voice of discontent.

Though, of ourselves, all poor are we,  
And frail and weak of wing,  
Your height is ours—your ecstasy—  
Your glory, when you sing.

Most favored of the gods, and great  
In gifts beyond our store,  
We covet not your rich estate,  
But prize our own the more.—

YOUR HEIGHT IS OURS

The gods give as but gods may do—  
We count *our* riches thus,—  
They gave their richest gifts to you,  
And then gave you to us.

## HYMN EXULTANT

FOR EASTER

VOICE of Mankind, sing over land and sea—

Sing, in this glorious morn!

The long, long night is gone from Calvary—

The cross, the thong and thorn;

The sealed tomb yields up its saintly guest,

No longer to be burdened and oppressed.

Heart of Mankind, thrill answer to His own,

So human, yet divine!

For earthly love He left His heavenly throne—

For love like thine and mine—

For love of us, as one might kiss a bride,

His lifted lips touched death's, all satisfied.

Soul of Mankind, He wakes—He lives once more!

O soul, with heart and voice

Sing! sing!—the stone rolls chorus from the door—

Our Lord stands forth.—Rejoice!

Rejoice O garden-land of song and flowers;

Our King returns to us, forever ours!

## A SONG OF THE ROAD

O I WILL walk with you, my lad, whichever way  
you fare,

You'll have me, too, the side o' you, with heart  
as light as air;

No care for where the road you take's a-leadin'—  
—*anywhere*,—

It can but be a joyful jant the whilst *you* journey  
there.

The road you take's the path o' love, an' that's  
the bridth o' two—

And I will walk with you, my lad—O I will walk  
with you.

Ho! I will walk with you, my lad,

Be weather black or blue

Or roadsides frost or dew, my lad—

O I will walk with you.



A SONG OF THE ROAD

Aye, glad, my lad, I'll walk with you, whatever  
winds may blow,  
Or summer blossoms stay our steps, or blinding  
drifts of snow;  
The way that you set face and foot's the way that  
I will go,  
And brave I'll be, abreast o' you, the Saints and  
Angels know!  
With loyal hand in loyal hand, and one heart  
made o' two,  
Through summer's gold, or winter's cold, it's I  
will walk with you.

Sure, I will walk with you, my lad,  
As love ordains me to,—  
To Heaven's door, and through, my lad,  
O I will walk with you.

## RED RIDING HOOD

SWEET little myth of the nursery story—  
Earliest love of mine infantile breast,  
Be something tangible, bloom in thy glory  
Into existence, as thou art addressed!  
Hasten! appear to me, guileless and good—  
Thou art so dear to me, Red Riding Hood!

Azure-blue eyes, in a marvel of wonder,  
Over the dawn of a blush breaking out;  
Sensitive nose, with a little smile under  
Trying to hide in a blossoming pout—  
Couldn't be serious, try as you would,  
Little mysterious Red Riding Hood!

Hah! little girl, it is desolate, lonely,  
Out in this gloomy old forest of Life!—  
Here are not pansies and buttercups only—  
Brambles and briars as keen as a knife;  
And a Heart, ravenous, prowls in the wood  
For the meal he must,—Red Riding Hood!

## THE MOTHER SAINTED

AND yet she does not stir,—  
Such silence weighs on her  
    We hear the drip  
Of teardrops as we press  
Our kisses answerless  
    On brow and lip.

Not even the yearning touch  
Of lips she loved so much  
    She made their breath  
One with her own, will she  
Give answer to and be  
    Wooed back from death.

And though he kneel and plead  
Who was her greatest need,  
    And on her cheek  
Lay the soft baby-face  
In its old resting-place,  
    She will not speak.

## THE CHRIST

“FATHER!” (so The Word) he cried,—  
“Son of Thine, and yet denied;  
By my brothers dragged and tried,  
Scoffed and scourged, and crucified,  
With a thief on either side—  
Brothers mine, alike belied,—  
Arms of mercy open wide,  
Father! Father!” So he died.

TO "UNCLE REMUS"

WE LOVE your dear old face and voice—  
We're *all* Miss Sally's Little Boys,  
    Climbin' your knee,  
    In ecstasy,  
Rejoicin' in your Creeturs' joys  
    And trickery.

The Lord who made the day and night,  
He made the Black man and the White;  
    So, in like view,  
    We hold it true  
That He haint got no *favorite*—  
    Unless it's you.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON—

ON HIS FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON!  
Blue the lift and braw the dawn  
O' ye'r comin' here amang  
Strangers wha hae luv'd ye lang!  
Strangers tae ye we maun be,  
Yet tae us ye're kenned a wee  
By the writin's ye hae done,  
Robert Louis Stevenson.

Syne ye've pit ye'r pen tae sic'  
Tales it stabbt us tae the quick—  
Whiles o' tropic isles an' seas  
An' o' gowden treesuries—  
Tales o' deid men's banes; an' tales  
Swete as sangs o' nightingales  
When the nune o' mirk's begun—  
Robert Louis Stevenson.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Sae we hail thee! nane the less  
For the "burr" that ye caress  
Wi' ye'r denty tongue o' Scots,  
Makin' words forget-me-nots  
O' ye'r bonnie braes that were  
Sung o' Burns the Poemer—  
And that later lavrock, one  
Robert Louis Stevenson.

ON A YOUTHFUL PORTRAIT OF  
STEVENSON

A FACE of youth mature; a mouth of tender,  
Sad, human sympathy, yet something stoic  
In clasp of lip: wide eyes of calmest splendor,  
And brow serenely ample and heroic:—  
The features—all—lit with a soul ideal . . . .  
O visionary boy! what were you seeing,  
What hearing, as you stood thus midst the real  
Ere yet one master-work of yours had being?

Is it a foolish fancy that we humor—  
Investing daringly with life and spirit  
This youthful portrait of you ere one rumor  
Of your great future spoke that men might hear  
it?—

Is it a fancy, or your first of glories,  
That you were listening, and the camera drew  
you  
Hearing the voices of your untold stories  
And all your lovely poems calling to you?



## THE TRAVELING MAN

### I

COULD I pour out the nectar the gods only can,  
I would fill up my glass to the brim  
And drink the success of the Traveling Man,  
And the house represented by him ;  
And could I but tincture the glorious draught  
With his smiles, as I drank to him then,  
And the jokes he has told and the laughs he has  
laughed,  
I would fill up the goblet again—

And drink to the sweetheart who gave him good-  
bye  
With a tenderness thrilling him this  
Very hour, as he thinks of the tear in her eye  
That salted the sweet of her kiss ;  
To her truest of hearts and her fairest of hands  
I would drink, with all serious prayers,  
Since the heart she must trust is a Traveling Man's,  
And as warm as the ulster he wears.

THE TRAVELING MAN

II

I would drink to the wife, with the babe on her  
knee,  
Who awaits his returning in vain—  
Who breaks his brave letters so tremulously  
And reads them again and again!  
And I'd drink to the feeble old mother who sits  
At the warm fireside of her son  
And murmurs and weeps o'er the stocking she  
knits,  
As she thinks of the wandering one.

I would drink a long life and a health to the friends  
Who have met him with smiles and with cheer—  
To the generous hand that the landlord extends  
To the wayfarer journeying here:  
And I pledge, when he turns from this earthly  
abode  
And pays the last fare that he can,  
Mine Host of the Inn at the End of the Road  
Will welcome the Traveling Man!

## FROM DELPHI TO CAMDEN

### I

FROM Delphi to Camden—little Hoosier towns,—  
But here were classic meadows, blooming dales  
and downs;

And here were grassy pastures, dewy as the leas  
Trampled over by the trains of royal pageantries!

And here the winding highway loitered through  
the shade

Of the hazel-covert, where, in ambushade,  
Loomed the larch and linden, and the greenwood-  
tree

Under which bold Robin Hood loud hallooed to  
me!

Here the stir and riot of the busy day  
Dwindled to the quiet of the breath of May;

FROM DELPHI TO CAMDEN

Gurgling brooks, and ridges lily-marged and  
spanned  
By the rustic bridges found in Wonderland!

II

From Delphi to Camden,—from Camden back  
again!—  
And now the night was on us, and the lightning  
and the rain;  
And still the way was wondrous with the flash of  
hill and plain,—  
The stars like printed asterisks—the moon a murky  
stain!

And I thought of tragic idyl, and of flight and hot  
pursuit!  
And the jingle of the bridle, and cuirass, and spur  
on boot,  
As our horses' hooves struck showers from the  
flinty boulders set  
In freshet-ways of writhing reed and drowning  
violet.

FROM DELPHI TO CAMDEN

And we passed beleaguered castles, with their  
battlements a-frown;

Where a tree fell in the forest was a turret toppled  
down;

While my master and commander—the brave  
knight I galloped with

On this reckless road to ruin or to fame was—  
Dr. Smith!

## THE BALLADE OF THE COMING RAIN

WHEN the morning swoons in its highest heat,  
And the sunshine dims, and no dark shade  
Streaks the dust of the dazzling street,  
And the long straw splits in the lemonade;  
When the circus lags in a sad parade,  
And the drum throbs dull as a pulse of pain,  
And the breezeless flags hang limp and frayed—  
O then is the time to look for rain.

When the man on the watering cart bumps by,  
Trilling the air of an old fife-tune,  
With a dull, soiled smile, and one shut eye,  
Lost in a dream of the afternoon;  
When the awning sags like a lank balloon,  
And a thick sweat stands on the window-pane,  
And a five-cent fan is a priceless boon—  
O then is the time to look for rain.

THE BALLADE OF THE COMING RAIN

When the goldfish tank is a grimy gray,  
And the dummy stands at the clothing store  
With a cap pulled on in a rakish way,  
And a rubber-coat with the hind before ;  
When the man in the barber chair flops o'er  
And the chin he wags has a telltale stain,  
And the bootblack lurks at the open door—  
O then is the time to look for rain.

## TO THE JUDGE

A VOICE FROM THE INTERIOR OF OLD HOOP-POLE  
TOWNSHIP

FRIEND of my earliest youth,

Can't you arrange to come down  
And visit a fellow out here in the woods—

Out of the dust of the town?

Can't you forget you're a Judge

And put by your dolorous frown  
And tan your wan face in the smile of a friend—

Can't you arrange to come down?

Can't you forget for a while

The arguments prosy and drear,—  
To lean at full-length in indefinite rest  
In the lap of the greenery here?



TO THE JUDGE

Can't you kick over "the Bench,"  
And "husk" yourself out of your gown  
To dangle your legs where the fishing is good—  
Can't you arrange to come down?

Bah! for your office of State!  
And bah! for its technical lore!  
What does our President, high in his chair,  
But wish himself low as before!  
Pick between peasant and king,—  
Poke your bald head through a crown  
Or shadow it here with the laurels of Spring!—  
Can't you arrange to come down?

"Judge it" out *here*, if you will,—  
The birds are in session by dawn;  
You can draw, not *complaints*, but a sketch of the  
hill  
And a breath that your betters have drawn;  
You can open your heart, like a case,  
To a jury of kine, white and brown,  
And their verdict of "Moo" will just satisfy you!—  
Can't you arrange to come down?

TO THE JUDGE

Can't you arrange it, old Pard?—

Pigeonhole Blackstone and Kent!—

Here we have "Breitmann," and Ward,

Twain, Burdette, Nye, and content!

Can't you forget you're a Judge

And put by your dolorous frown

And tan your wan face in the smile of a friend—

Can't you arrange to come down?

## A FEEL IN THE CHRIS'MAS-AIR

THEY's a kind o' *feel* in the air, to me,  
When the Chris'mas-times sets in,  
That's about as much of a mystery  
As ever I've run ag'in!—  
Fer instunce, now, whilse I gain in weight  
And ginerall health, I swear  
They's a *goneness* somers I can't quite state—  
A kind o' *feel* in the air.

They's a feel in the Chris'mas-air goes right  
To the spot where a man *lives* at!—  
It gives a feller a' appetite—  
They ain't no doubt about *that*!—  
And yit they's *somepin'*—I don't know what—  
That follers me, here and there,  
And ha'nts and worries and spares me not—  
A kind o' feel in the air!

A FEEL IN THE CHRIS'MAS-AIR

They's a *feel*, as I say, in the air that's jest  
As blame-don sad as sweet!—  
In the same ra-sho as I feel the best  
And am spryest on my feet,  
They's allus a kind o' sort of a' *ache*  
That I can't lo-cate no-where;—  
But it comes with *Chris'mas*, and no mistake!—  
A kind o' feel in the air.

Is it the racket the childern raise?—  
W'y, *no!*—God bless 'em!—*no!*—  
Is it the eyes and the cheeks ablaze—  
Like my *own* wuz, long ago?—  
Is it the bleat o' the whistle and beat  
O' the little toy-drum and blare  
O' the horn?—*No! no!*—it is jest the sweet—  
The sad-sweet feel in the air.

## ON A FLY-LEAF

IN JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY'S POEMS

SINGERS there are of courtly themes—

*Drapers* in verse—who would dress their rhymes

In robes of ermine; and singers of dreams

Of gods high-throned in the classic times;

Singers of nymphs, in their dim retreats,

Satyrs, with scepter and diadem;

But the singer who sings as a man's heart beats

Well may blush for the rest of them.

I like the thrill of such poems as these,—

All spirit and fervor of splendid fact—

Pulse, and muscle, and arteries

Of living, heroic thought and act!—

Where every line is a vein of red

And rapturous blood all unconfined

As it leaps from a heart that has joyed and bled

With the rights and the wrongs of all mankind.

## THE SERMON OF THE ROSE

WILLFUL we are, in our infirmity  
Of childish questioning and discontent.  
Whate'er befalls us is divinely meant—  
Thou Truth the clearer for thy mystery!  
Make us to meet what is or is to be  
With fervid welcome, knowing it is sent  
To serve us in some way full excellent,  
Though we discern it all belatedly.  
The rose buds, and the rose blooms, and the rose  
Bows in the dews, and in its fulness, lo,  
Is in the lover's hand,—then on the breast  
Of her he loves,—and there dies.—And who  
          knows

What fate of all a rose may undergo  
Is fairest, dearest, sweetest, loveliest?

Nay, we are children: we will not mature.  
A blessed gift must seem a theft; and tears  
Must storm our eyes when but a joy appears  
In drear disguise of sorrow; and how poor  
We seem when we are richest,—most secure

THE SERMON OF THE ROSE

Against all poverty the lifelong years  
We yet must waste in childish doubts and fears  
That, in despite of reason, still endure!  
Alas! the sermon of the rose we will  
Not wisely ponder; nor the sobs of grief  
Lulled into sighs of rapture, nor the cry  
Of fierce defiance that again is still.  
Be patient—patient with our frail belief,  
And stay it yet a little ere we die.

O opulent life of ours, though dispossessed  
Of treasure after treasure! Youth most fair  
Went first, but left its priceless coil of hair—  
Moaned over, sleepless nights, kissed and caressed  
Through drip and blur of tears the tenderest.  
And next went Love—the ripe rose glowing there,  
Her very sister! . . . *It* is here, but where  
Is *she*, of all the world the first and best?  
And yet how sweet the sweet earth after rain—  
How sweet the sunlight on the garden-wall  
Across the roses—and how sweetly flows  
The limpid yodel of the brook again!  
And yet—and yet how sweeter, after all,  
The smoldering sweetness of a dead red rose.

OSCAR C. McCULLOCH

INDIANAPOLIS, DEC. 12, 1891

WHAT would best please our friend, in token of  
The sense of our great loss?—Our sighs and  
tears?

Nay, these he fought against through all his  
years,

Heroically voicing, high above

Grief's ceaseless minor, moaning like a dove,

The pæan triumphant that the soldier hears,

Scaling the walls of death, midst shouts and  
cheers,

The old flag laughing in his eyes' last love.

Nay, then, to pleasure him were it not meet

To yield him bravely, as his fate arrives?—

Drape him in radiant roses, head and feet,

And be partakers, while his work survives,

Of his fair fame,—paying the tribute sweet

To all humanity—our nobler lives.



## THE LOVING CUP

TRANCED in the glamor of a dream  
Where banquet-lights and fancies gleam  
And ripest wit and wine abound,  
And pledges hale go round and round,—  
Lo, dazzled with enchanted rays—  
As in the golden olden days  
Sir Galahad—my eyes swim up  
To greet your splendor, Loving Cup!

What is the secret of your art,  
Linking together hand and heart  
Your myriad votaries who do  
Themselves most honor honoring you?  
What gracious service have you done  
To win the name that you have won?—  
Kissing it back from tuneful lips  
That sing your praise between the sips!

Your spicy breath, O Loving Cup,  
That, like an incense steaming up,

## THE LOVING CUP

Full-freighted with a fragrance fine  
As ever swooned on sense of mine,  
Is rare enough.—But then, ah me!  
How rarer every memory  
That, rising with it, wreathes and blends  
In forms and faces of my friends!

O Loving Cup! in fancy still,  
I clasp their hands, and feel the thrill  
Of fellowship that still endures  
While lips are theirs and wine is yours!  
And while my memory journeys down  
The years that lead to Boston Town,  
Abide where first were rendered up  
Our mutual loves, O Loving Cup!

## SAY SOMETHING TO ME

SAY something to me! I've waited so long—  
    Waited and wondered in vain;  
Only a sentence would fall like a song  
    Over this listening pain—  
Over a silence that glowers and frowns,—  
    Even my pencil to-night  
Slips in the dews of my sorrow and wounds  
    Each tender word that I write.

Say something to me—if only to tell  
    Me you remember the past;  
Let the sweet words, like the notes of a bell,  
    Ring out my vigil at last.  
O it were better, far better than this  
    Doubt and distrust in the breast,—  
For in the wine of a fanciful kiss  
    I could taste Heaven, and—rest.

SAY SOMETHING TO ME

Say something to me! I kneel and I plead,  
In my wild need, for a word;  
If my poor heart from this silence were freed,  
I could soar up like a bird  
In the glad morning, and twitter and sing,  
Carol and warble and cry  
Blithe as the lark as he cruises awing  
Over the deeps of the sky.

A WHOLLY UNSCHOLASTIC OPINION

PLAIN hoss-sense in poetry-writin'  
Would jes knock sentiment a-kitin'!  
Mostly poets is all star-gazin'  
And moanin' and groanin' and paraphrasin'!

A SHORT'NIN' BREAD SONG—PIECED  
OUT

BEHINE de hen-house, on my knees,  
Thought I hearn a chickin sneeze—  
Sneezed so hard wi' de whoopin'-cough  
I thought he'd sneeze his blame head off.

CHORUS

Fotch dat dough f'um de kitchen-shed—  
Rake dem coals out hot an' red—  
Putt on de oven an' putt on de led,—  
Mammy's gwineter cook some short'nin'-  
bread.

O I' got a house in Baltimo'—  
Street-kyars run right by my do'—  
Street-kyars run right by my gate,  
Hit's git up soon and set up late.

CHORUS

A SHORT'NIN' BREAD SONG—PIECED OUT

De raincrow hide in some ole tree  
An' holler out, all hoarse, at me—  
Sayes, "When I sing, de rain hit po'  
So's you ain't 'bleedged to plow no mo'!"

CHORUS

Ole man Toad, on High-low Hill,  
He steal my dram an' drink his fill,—  
Heels in the path, an' toes in the grass—  
Hit ain't de fus' time an' shain't be de las'!

CHORUS

When corn-plantin' done come roun',  
Blackbird own de whole plowed-groun',—  
Corn in de grain, as I've hearn said,  
Dat's de blackbird's short'nin' bread.

CHORUS

De sweetes' chune what evah I heard  
Is de sairanade o' de mockin'-bird;  
Whilse de mou'nfullest an' de least I love  
Is de Sund'y-song o' de ole woods-dove.

CHORUS

A SHORT'NIN' BREAD SONG—PIECED OUT

I nevah ain't know, outside o' school,  
A smartah mare dan my ole mule,—  
I holler "Wo," an' she go "gee,"  
Des lak' de good Lord chast'nin' me.

CHORUS

Hit's no houn'-pup I taken to raise  
Hain't nevah jes'ly airn' my praise:  
Dé mo' cawn-pone I feed dat pup,  
De mo' he des won't fatten up.

CHORUS

I hangs a hoss-shoe ovah my head,  
An' I keeps a' ole sieve under de bed,  
So, quinchiquently, I sleep soun',  
Wid no ole witches pester'n' roun'.

CHORUS

I jine de chu'ch las' Chuesday night,  
But when Sis Jane ain't treat me right  
I 'low her chu'ch ain' none o' mine,  
So I 'nounce to all I done on-jine.

CHORUS



## CASSANDER

“CASSANDER! O, Cassander!”—her mother’s  
voice seems cle’r

As ever, from the old back-porch, a-hollerin’ fer  
her—

Especially in airly Spring—like May, two year’  
ago—

*Last* time she hollered fer her,—and Cassander  
didn’t hear!

Cassander wuz so chirpy-like and sociable and free,  
And good to ever’body, and wuz even good to me

Though *I* wuz jes a common—well, a farm-  
hand, don’t you know,

A-workin’ on her father’s place, as pore as pore  
could be!

Her bein’ jes a’ only child, Cassander had her way  
A good-’eal more’n other girls; and neighbors ust  
to say

CASSANDER

She looked most like her Mother, but wuz turned  
most like her Pap,—  
Except *he* had no use fer *town*-folks then—ner *yit*  
*to-day!*

I can't claim she encouraged *me*: She'd let me  
drive her in  
To town sometimes, on Saturd'ys, and fetch her  
home ag'in,  
Tel onc't she 'scused "Old Moll" and me,—  
and some blame city-chap,  
*He* driv her home, two-forty style, in face o' kith  
and kin.

She even tried to make him stay fer supper, but  
I 'low  
He must 'a'-kindo' 'spicioned some objections.—  
Anyhow,  
Her mother callin' at her, whilse her father  
stood and shook  
His fist,—the town-chap turnt his team and made  
his partin' bow.

CASSANDER

“Cassander! *You*, Cassander!” — hear her  
mother jes as plain,  
And see Cassander blushin’ like the peach-tree  
down the lane,  
Whilse I sneaked on apast her, with a sort o’  
hangdog look,  
A-feelin’ cheap as sorghum and as green as sugar-  
cane!

(You see, I’d *skooted* when she met her *town-*  
*beau*—when, in fact,  
Ef I’d had sense I’d *stayed* fer her.—But sense  
wuz what I lacked!  
So I’d cut home ahead o’ her, so’s I could tell  
’em what  
Wuz keepin’ her. And—*you* know how a jealous  
fool ’ll act!)

I past her, I wuz sayin,’—but she never turnt her  
head;  
I swallered-like and cle’red my th’oat—but that  
wuz all I said;

CASSANDER

And whilse I hoped fer some word back, it  
wuzn't what I got.—  
That girl 'll not stay stiller on the day she's layin'  
dead!

Well, that-air silence *lasted!*—Ust to listen ever'-  
day  
I'd be at work and hear her mother callin' thata-  
way;  
I'd *sight* Cassander, mayby, cuttin' home acrost  
the blue  
And drizzly fields; but nary answer—nary word  
to say!

Putt in about two weeks o' that—two weeks o'  
rain and mud,  
Er mostly so: I couldn't plow. The old crick  
like a flood:  
And, lonesome as a borried dog, I'd wade them  
old woods through—  
The dogwood blossoms white as snow, and red-  
buds red as blood.

*Last* time her mother called her—sich a morning  
like as now:

The robins and the bluebirds, and the blossoms on  
the bough—

And this wuz yit 'fore brekfust, with the sun  
out at his best,

And hosses kickin' in the barn—and dry enough  
to plow.

“Cassander! O, Cassander!” . . . And her only  
answer—What?—

A letter, twisted round the cookstove-damper,  
smokin'-hot,

A-statin': “I wuz married on that day of all  
the rest,

The day my husband fetched me home—ef you  
ain't all fergot!”

“Cassander! O, Cassander!” seems, allus, 'long  
in May,

I hear her mother callin' her—a-callin', night and  
day—

CASSANDER

“Cassander! O, Cassander!” allus callin’, as I  
say,  
“Cassander! O, Cassander!” jes a-callin’ that-  
away.

## EUGENE FIELD

WITH gentlest tears, no less than jubilee  
Of blithest joy, we heard him, and still hear  
Him singing on, with full voice, pure and clear,  
Uplifted, as some classic melody  
In sweetest legends of old minstrelsy;  
Or, swarming Elfin-like upon the ear,  
His airy notes make all the atmosphere  
One blur of bird and bee and lullaby.  
His tribute:—Luster in the faded bloom  
Of cheeks of old, old mothers; and the fall  
Of gracious dews in eyes long dry and dim;  
And hope in lovers' pathways midst perfume  
Of woodland haunts; and—meed exceeding  
all,—  
The love of little children laurels him.

## A BALLAD—

WITH A SERIOUS CONCLUSION

CROWD about me, little children—  
Come and cluster 'round my knee  
While I tell a little story  
That happened once with me.

My father he had gone away  
A-sailing on the foam,  
Leaving me—the merest infant—  
And my mother dear at home;

For my father was a sailor,  
And he sailed the ocean o'er  
For full five years ere yet again  
He reached his native shore.

And I had grown up rugged  
And healthy day by day,  
Though I was but a puny babe  
When father went away.



A BALLAD

Poor mother she would kiss me  
And look at me and sigh  
So strangely, oft I wondered  
And would ask the reason why.

And she would answer sadly,  
Between her sobs and tears,—  
“You look so like your father,  
Far away so many years!”

And then she would caress me  
And brush my hair away,  
And tell me not to question,  
But to run about my play.

Thus I went playing thoughtfully—  
For that my mother said,—  
“*You look so like your father!*”  
Kept ringing in my head,—

So, ranging once the golden sands  
That looked out on the sea,  
I called aloud, “My father dear,  
Come back to ma and me!”

A BALLAD

Then I saw a glancing shadow  
On the sand, and heard the shriek  
Of a seagull flying seaward,  
And I heard a gruff voice speak:—

“Aye, aye, my little shipmate,  
I thought I heard you hail;  
Were you trumpeting that seagull,  
Or do you see a sail?”

And as rough and gruff a sailor  
As ever sailed the sea  
Was standing near grotesquely  
And leering dreadfully.

I replied, though I was frightened,—  
“It was my father dear  
I was calling for across the sea—  
I think he didn’t hear.”

And then the sailor leered again  
In such a frightful way,  
And made so many faces  
I was little loath to stay.

A BALLAD

But he started fiercely toward me—  
Then made a sudden halt  
And roared, “*I* think he heard you!”  
And turned a somersault.

Then a wild fear overcame me,  
And I flew off like the wind,  
Shrieking “*Mother!*”—and the sailor  
Just a little way behind!

And then my mother heard me,  
And I saw her shade her eyes,  
Looking toward me from the doorway,  
Transfixed with pale surprise

For a moment—then her features  
Glowed with all their wonted charms  
As the sailor overtook me,  
And I fainted in her arms.

When I awoke to reason  
I shuddered with affright  
Till I felt my mother’s presence  
With a thrill of wild delight—

A BALLAD

Till, amid a shower of kisses  
Falling glad as summer rain,  
A muffled thunder rumbled,—  
“Is he coming 'round again?”

Then I shrieked and clung unto her,  
While her features flushed and burned  
As she told me it was father  
From a foreign land returned.

I said—when I was calm again,  
And thoughtfully once more  
Had dwelt upon my mother's words  
Of just the day before,—

“I *don't* look like my father,  
As you told me yesterday—  
I know I don't—or, father  
Would have run the other way.”

## THE GREEN GRASS OF OLD IRELAND

THE green grass av owld Ireland!

Whilst I be far away,  
All fresh an' clean an' jewel-green  
It's growin' there to-day.  
Oh, it's cleaner, greener growin'—  
All the grassy worrld around,  
It's greener yet nor any grass  
That grows on top o' ground!

The green grass av owld Ireland,

Indade, an' balm 't 'u'd be  
To eyes like mine that drip wid brine  
As salty as the sea!  
For still the more I'm stoppin' here,  
The more I'm sore to see  
The glory av the green grass av owld Ireland

Ten years ye've paid my airnin's—

I've the l'avin's on the shelf,  
Though I be here widout a queen  
An' own meself meself:

THE GREEN GRASS OF OLD IRELAND

I'm comin' over steerage,  
But I'm goin' back firrst-class,  
Patrolin' av the foremost deck  
For firrst sight av the grass.

God bless yez, free Ameriky!  
I love yez, dock and shore!  
I kem to yez in poverty  
That's worstin' me no more.  
But most I'm lovin' Erin yet,  
Wid all her graves, d'ye see,  
By reason av the green grass av owld Ireland.

## AT HIS WINTRY TENT

SAMUEL RICHARDS—ARTIST—DENVER, COLORADO

Not only master of his art was he,  
But master of his spirit—winged indeed  
For lordliest height, yet poised for lowliest need  
Of those, alas! upheld less buoyantly.  
He gloried even in adversity,  
And won his country's plaudits, and the meed  
Of Old World praise, as one loath to succeed  
While others were denied like victory.  
Though passed, I count him still my master-friend,  
Invincible as through his mortal fight,—  
The laughing light of faith still in his eye  
As, at his wintry tent, pitched at the end  
Of life, he gaily called to me "Good-night,  
Old friend, good-night—for there is no good-bye."

## OUR QUEER OLD WORLD

*Fer them 'at's here in airliest infant stages,*

*It's a hard world:*

*Fer them 'at gits the knocks of boyhood's ages,*

*It's a mean world:*

*For them 'at nothin's good enough they're gittin',*

*It's a bad world:*

*Fer them 'at learns at last what's right and fittin',*

*It's a good world.*

THE HIRED MAN.

It's a purty hard world you find, my child—

It's a purty hard world you find!

You fight, little rascal! and kick and squall,

And snort out medicine, spoon and all!

When you're here longer you'll change yer mind

And simmer down sorto' half-rickonciled.

But *now*—Jee!-

*My!*-mun-nee!

It's a purty hard world, my child!



OUR QUEER OLD WORLD

It's a purty mean world you're in, my lad—

It's a purty mean world you're in!

We know, of course, in your schoolboy-days

It's a world of too many troublesome ways

Of tryin' things over and startin' ag'in,—

Yit *your* chance beats what your *parents* had.

But *now*—O!

Fire-and-tow!

It's a purty mean world, my lad!

It's a purty bad world you've struck, young chap—

It's a purty bad world you've struck—

But *study* the cards that you hold, you know,

And your hopes will sprout and your mustache  
grow,

And your store-clothes likely will change your  
luck,

And you'll rake a rich ladybird into yer lap!

But *now*—Doubt

All things out.—

It's a purty mean world, young chap!

OUR QUEER OLD WORLD

It's a purty good world this is, old man—

I's a purty good world this is!

For all its follies and shows and lies—

It's rainy weather, and cheeks likewise,

And age, hard-hearin' and rheumatiz.—

*We're* not a-faultin' the Lord's own plan—

All things jest

At their best.—

It's a purty good world, old man!

## THE UNHEARD

### I

ONE in the musical throng  
    Stood forth with his violin;  
And warm was his welcome, and long  
    The later applause and the din.—  
He had uttered, with masterful skill,  
    A melody hailed of men;  
And his own blood leapt a-thrill,  
        As they thundered again.

### II

Another stood forth.—And a rose  
    Bloomed in her hair—likewise  
One at her tremulous throat—  
    And a *rapture* bloomed in her eyes.  
Tempests of cheers upon cheers,  
    Praises to last a life long;  
Roses in showers of tears—  
        All for her song.

THE UNHEARD

III

One sat apart and alone,  
Her lips clasped close and straight,  
Uttering never a tone  
That the World might hear, elate—  
Uttering never a low  
Murmurous verse nor a part  
Of the veriest song—But O  
The song in her heart!

## THE RHYMES OF IRONQUILL

I'VE allus held—till jest of late—  
That *Poetry* and me  
Got on best, not to 'sociate—  
That is, *most* poetry ;  
But t'other day my *son-in-law*,  
Milt—ben in town to mill—  
Fetched home a present-like, fer Ma,—  
The Rhymes of Ironquill.

Milt ust to teach ; and, 'course, *his* views  
Ranks over *common* sense ;—  
That's *biased* me, till I refuse  
'Most all he rickommends.—  
But Ma *she* read and read along  
And cried, like women will,  
About that "Washerwoman's Song"  
In Rhymes of Ironquill.

THE RHYMES OF IRONQUILL

And then she made *me* read the thing,  
And found my specs and all:  
And I jest leant back there—i jing—  
My cheer ag'inst the wall—  
And read and *read*, and read and *read*,  
All to myse'f—ontil  
I lit the lamp and went to bed  
With Rhymes of Ironquill!

I propped myse'f up there, and—*durn!*—  
I never shet an eye  
Till daylight!—hogged the whole concern  
Tee-total, mighty nigh!—  
I'd sigh sometimes, and cry sometimes,  
Er laugh jest fit to kill—  
Clean *captured*-like with them-air rhymes  
O' that-air Ironquill!

Read that-un 'bout old "Marmaton"  
'At hain't ben ever "sized"  
In Song before—and yit's rolled on  
Jest same as 'postrophized!—

THE RHYMES OF IRONQUILL

Putt me in mind o' *our* old crick  
At *Freeport*—and the *mill*—  
And Hinchman's Ford—till jest *homesick*—  
Them Rhymes of Ironquill!

Read that-un, too, 'bout "Game o' Whist,"  
And likenin' Life to fun  
Like *that*—and playin' out yer fist,  
However cards is run:  
And them "Tobacker-Stemmers' Song"  
They sung with sich a will  
Down 'mongst the misery and wrong—  
In Rhymes of Ironquill.

And old John Brown, who broke the sod  
Of Freedom's fallor field  
And sowed his *heart* there, thankin' God  
Pore slaves would git the yield—  
Rained his last tears fer them and *us*  
To irrigate and till  
A crop of Song as glorious  
As Rhymes of Ironquill.

THE RHYMES OF IRONQUILL

And—sergeant, died there in the War,  
'At talked, out of his head . . .  
He went “back to the Violet Star,”  
I'll bet—jest like he said!—  
Yer Wars kin riddle bone and flesh,  
And blow out brains, and spill  
Life-blood,—but *Somepin'* lives on, fresh  
As Rhymes of Ironquill.



## EQUITY—?

THE meanest man I ever saw  
Allus kep' inside o' the law;  
And ten-times better fellers I've knowed  
The blame gran'-jury's sent over the road.

## THE SMITTEN PURIST

AND THE CHARMING MISS SMITH'S EFFECT UPON HIM

THWEET Poethy! let me *lithp* forethwith,  
That I may thhing of the name of Smith—  
    Which name, alath!  
    In Harmony hath  
No adequate rhyme, leht you grant me thith,—  
That the thimple thibillant thound of *eth*—  
(Which to thave my thoul, I can not expreth!)  
    Thuth I may thhingingly,  
    Wooing and winningly  
    Thu—thu—thound in the name of Smith.

O give me a name that will rhyme with Smith,—  
For wild and weird ath the sthrange name ith,  
    I would sthrangle a sthrain  
    And a thad refrain

THE SMITTEN PURIST

Faint and sthweet ath a whithpered kissth ;  
I would thhing thome thong for the mythtic mith  
Who beareth the thingular name of Smith—

The sthrangely curiouth,

Rich and luxuriouth

Ap—pup—pellation of Smith!

O had I a name that would rhyme with Smith—  
Thome rythmical tincture of rethonant blith—

Thome melody rare

Ath the cherubth blare

On them little trumpeths they're foolin' with—  
I would thit me down, and I'd thhing like thith  
Of the girl of the thingular name of Smith—

The sthrangely curiouth,

Rich and luxuriouth

Pup—patronymic of Smith!

## IN THE EVENING

### I

IN the evening of our days,  
When the first far stars above  
Glimmer dimmer, through the haze,  
Than the dewy eyes of love,  
Shall we mournfully revert  
To the vanished morns and Mays  
Of our youth, with hearts that hurt,—  
In the evening of our days?

### II

Shall the hand that holds your own  
Till the twain are thrilled as now,—  
Be withheld, or colder grown?  
Shall my kiss upon your brow  
Falter from its high estate?  
And, in all forgetful ways,  
Shall we sit apart and wait—  
In the evening of our days?

IN THE EVENING

III

Nay, my wife —my life!—the gloom  
Shall enfold us velvetwise,  
And my smile shall be the groom  
Of the gladness of your eyes:  
Gently, gently as the dew  
Mingles with the darkening maze,  
I shall fall asleep with you—  
In the evening of our days.

## MOONSHINER'S SERENADE

THE night's blind-black, an' I 'low the stars's  
All skeered at that-air dog's bow-wows!  
I sensed the woods-road, clumb the bars,  
An' arrove here, tromplin' over cows.  
The mist hangs thick enough to cut,  
But there's her light a-glimmerin' through  
The mornin'-glories, twisted shut—  
An' shorely there's her shadder too!

*Ho! hit's good-night,  
My Beauty-Bright!  
The moon cain't match your can'le-light—  
Your can'le-light with you cain't shine,  
Lau-ree! Ladylove! tiptoe-fine!*

Oomh! how them roses soaks the air!—  
Thess drenched with mist an' renched with  
dew!  
They's a smell o' plums, too, 'round somewhere—  
An' I kin smell ripe apples, too.

MOONSHINER'S SERENADE

Mix all them sweet things into one,—

Yer roses, fruit, an' flower an' vine,  
Yit I'll say, "No, I don't choose none,  
Ef I kin git that girl of mine!"

*Ho! hit's good-night,*

*My Beauty-Bright!*

*Primp a while, an' blow out the light—*

*Putt me in your prayers, an' then*

*I'll be twic't as good-again!*

## THE SILENT SINGER

MRS. D. M. JORDAN, APRIL 29, 1895

ALL sudden she hath ceased to sing,  
Hushed in eternal slumbering,  
And we make moan that she is dead.—  
Nay; peace! be comforted.

Between her singing and her tears  
She pauses, listening—and she hears  
The Song we can not hear.—And thus  
She mutely pities us.

Could she speak out, we doubt not she  
Would turn to us full tenderly,  
And in the old melodious voice  
Say: “Weep not, but rejoice.”

Aye, musical as waters run  
In woodland rills through shade and sun,  
The sweet voice would flow on and say,—  
“Be glad with me to-day.—



THE SILENT SINGER

“Your Earth was very dear and fair  
To me—the groves and grasses there;  
The bursting buds and blossoms—O  
I always loved them so!—

“The very dews within them seemed  
Reflected by mine eyes and gleamed  
Adown my cheeks in what you knew  
As ‘tears,’ and not as dew.

“Your birds, too, in the orchard boughs—  
I could not hear them from the house  
But I must leave my work and stray  
Out in the open day

“And the illimitable range  
Of their vast freedom—always strange  
And new to me—It pierced my heart  
With sweetness as a dart!—

“The singing! singing! singing!—All  
The trees bloomed blossoms musical  
That chirped and trilled and warbled till  
My whole soul seemed to fill

THE SILENT SINGER

“To overflow with music, so  
That I have found me kneeling low  
In the lush grass, with murmurous words  
Thanking God and—the birds.

“So with the ones to me most dear—  
I loved them, as I love them Here:  
Bear with my memory, therefore,  
As when in days of yore,

“O friends of mine, ye praised the note  
Of some song, quavering from my throat  
Out of the overstress of love  
And all the pain thereof.

“And ye, too, do I love with this  
Same love—and Heaven knows all it is,—  
The birds’ song in it—bud and bloom—  
The turf, but not the tomb.”

Between her singing and her tears  
She pauses, listening—and she hears  
The Song we can not hear.—And thus  
She mutely pities us.

## A PEACE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

LOUISVILLE, KY., SEPT. 12, 1895: 29TH ENCAMP-  
MENT—G. A. R.

THERE'S a Voice across the Nation like a mighty  
ocean-hail,  
Borne up from out the Southland as the seas be-  
fore the gale;  
Its breath is in the streaming flag and in the flying  
sail—

As we go sailing on.

'Tis a Voice that we remember—ere its summons  
soothed as now—  
When it rang in battle-challenge, and we answered  
vow with vow,—  
With roar of gun and hiss of sword and crash of  
prow and prow,

As we went sailing on.

A PEACE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Our hope sank, even as we saw the sun sink faint  
and far,—

The Ship of State went groping through the blind-  
ing smoke of War—

Through blackest midnight lurching, all uncheered  
of moon or star,

Yet sailing—sailing on.

As One who spake the dead awake, with life-blood  
leaping warm—

Who walked the troubled waters, all unscathed, in  
mortal form,—

We felt our Pilot's presence with His hand upon  
the storm,

As we went sailing on.

O Voice of passion lulled to peace, this dawning  
of To-day—

O Voices twain now blent as one, ye sing all fears  
away,

Since foe and foe are friends, and lo! the Lord, as  
glad as they.—

He sends us sailing on.

## ONE WITH A SONG

FRANK L. STANTON

He sings: and his song is heard,  
Pure as a joyous prayer,  
Because he sings of the simple things—  
The fields, and the open air,  
The orchard-bough, and the mockingbird,  
And the blossoms everywhere.

He sings of a wealth we hold  
In common ownership—  
The wildwood nook, and the laugh of the  
brook,  
And the dewdrop's drip and drip,  
The love of the lily's heart of gold,  
And the kiss of the rose's lip.

The universal heart  
Leans listening to his lay  
That glints and gleams with the glimmering  
dreams

ONE WITH A SONG

Of children at their play—  
A lay as rich with unconscious art  
As the first song-bird's of May.

Ours every rapturous tone  
Of every song of glee,  
Because his voice makes native choice  
Of Nature's harmony—  
So that his singing seems our own,  
And ours his ecstasy.

Steadfastly, bravely glad  
Above all earthly stress,  
He lifts his line to heights divine,  
And, singing, ever says,—  
This is a better world than bad—  
God's love is limitless.

He sings: and his song is heard,  
Pure as a joyous prayer,  
Because he sings of the simple things—  
The fields, and the open air,  
The orchard-bough, and the mockingbird,  
And the blossoms everywhere.

## MR. FOLEY'S CHRISTMAS

*"There's nothing sweet in the city  
But the patient lives of the poor."*

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

### I

SINCE pick av them I'm sore denied  
Twixt play or work, I say,  
Though it be Christmas, I decide  
I'll work whilst others play:  
I'll whustle, too, wid Christmas pride  
To aim me extry pay.—  
It's like the job's more glorified  
That's done a-holiday!

Dan, dip a coal in dad's pipe-bowl;  
Kate, pass me dinner-can:  
Och! Mary woman, save yer sowl,  
Ye've kissed a workin'-man—  
Ye have, this Christmas mornin',  
Ye've kissed a workin'-man!

II

Whisht, Kate an' Dan!—ten thousan' grates  
There's yon where ne'er a charm  
Av childer-faces sanctuates  
The city-homes from harm:  
It's cold out there the weather waits  
An' bitter whirls the storm,  
But, faith! these arms av little Kate's  
'Ll kape her fayther warm!

Ay, Danny, tight me belt a mite,—  
Kate, aisy wid the can!—  
Sure, I'd be comin' home to-night  
A hungry workin'-man—  
D'ye moind, this Christmas avenin'—  
A howlin'-hungry man!

III

It's sorry for the boss I be,  
Wid new contracts to sign  
An' hire a sub to oversee  
Whilst he lave off an' dine:



MR. FOLEY'S CHRISTMAS

It's sorry for the Company  
That owns the Aarie Line—  
What vasht raasponsibility  
They have, compared wid mine!

There, Katy! git me t'other mitt,  
An' fetch me yon from Dan—  
(Wid each one's "Christmas" hid in it!)  
Lave go me dinner-can!—  
Ye'll have me docked this mornin'—  
This blessed Christmas mornin',—  
A dishgraced workin'-man!

## AT SEA

O WE go down to sea in ships—  
But Hope remains behind,  
And Love, with laughter on his lips,  
And Peace, of passive mind;  
While out across the deeps of night,  
With lifted sails of prayer,  
We voyage off in quest of light,  
Nor find it anywhere.

O Thou who wroughtest earth and sea,  
Yet keepest from our eyes  
The shores of an eternity  
In calms of Paradise,  
Blow back upon our foolish quest  
With all the driving rain  
Of blinding tears and wild unrest,  
And waft us home again.

WHAT THE WIND SAID

THE EDGE OF THE WIND

*Ye stars in ye skies seem twinkling  
In icicles of light,  
And ye edge of ye wind cuts keener  
Than ever ye sword-edge might;  
Ye footsteps crunch in ye courtway,  
And ye trough and ye cask go "ping!"—  
Ye china cracks in ye pantry,  
And ye crickets cease to sing.*

## WHAT THE WIND SAID

*I muse to-day, in a listless way,  
In the gleam of a summer land;  
I close my eyes as a lover may  
At the touch of his sweetheart's hand,  
And I hear these things in the whisperings  
Of the zephyrs 'round me fanned:—*

I am the Wind, and I rule mankind,  
And I hold a sovereign reign  
Over the lands, as God designed,  
And the waters they contain:  
Lo! the bound of the wide world round  
Falleth in my domain!

I was born on a stormy morn  
In a kingdom walled with snow,  
Whose crystal cities laugh to scorn

WHAT THE WIND SAID

The proudest the world can show ;  
And the daylight's glare is frozen there  
In the breath of the blasts that blow.

Life to me was a jubilee  
From the first of my youthful days:  
Clinking my icy toys with glee—  
Playing my childish plays ;  
Filling my hands with the silver sands  
To scatter a thousand ways :

Chasing the flakes that the Polar shakes  
From his shaggy coat of white,  
Or hunting the trace of the track he makes  
And sweeping it from sight,  
As he turned to glare from the slippery stair  
Of the iceberg's farthest height.

Till I grew so strong that I strayed ere long  
From my home of ice and chill ;  
With an eager heart and a merry song  
I traveled the snows until  
I heard the thaws in the ice-crag's jaws  
Crunched with a hungry will ;

WHAT THE WIND SAID

And the angry crash of the waves that dash  
    Themselves on the jagged shore  
Where the splintered masts of the ice-wrecks flash,  
    And the frightened breakers roar  
In wild unrest on the ocean's breast  
    For a thousand leagues or more.

And the grand old sea invited me  
    With a million beckoning hands,  
And I spread my wings for a flight as free  
    As ever a sailor plans  
When his thoughts are wild and his heart beguiled  
    With the dreams of foreign lands.

I passed a ship on its homeward trip,  
    With a weary and toil-worn crew ;  
And I kissed their flag with a welcome lip,  
    And so glad a gale I blew  
That the sailors quaffed their grog and laughed  
    At the work I made them do.

I drifted by where sea-groves lie  
    Like brides in the fond caress  
Of the warm sunshine and the tender sky—

WHAT THE WIND SAID

Where the ocean, passionless  
And tranquil, lies like a child whose eyes  
Are blurred with drowsiness.

I drank the air and the perfume there,  
And bathed in a fountain's spray;  
And I smoothed the wings and the plumage rare  
Of a bird for his roundelay,  
And fluttered a rag from a signal-crag  
For a wretched castaway.

With a seagull resting on my breast,  
I launched on a madder flight:  
And I lashed the waves to a wild unrest,  
And howled with a fierce delight  
Till the daylight slept; and I wailed and wept  
Like a fretful babe all night.

For I heard the boom of a gun strike doom;  
And the gleam of a blood-red star  
Glared at me through the mirk and gloom  
From the lighthouse tower afar;  
And I held my breath at the shriek of death  
That came from the harbor bar.



WHAT THE WIND SAID

For I am the Wind, and I rule mankind,  
And I hold a sovereign reign  
Over the lands, as God designed,  
And the waters they contain:  
Lo! the bound of the wide world round  
Falleth in my domain!

I journeyed on, when the night was gone,  
O'er a coast of oak and pine;  
And I followed a path that a stream had drawn  
Through a land of vale and vine,  
And here and there was a village fair  
In a nest of shade and shine.

I passed o'er lakes where the sunshine shakes  
And shivers his golden lance  
On the glittering shield of the wave that breaks  
Where the fish-boats dip and dance,  
And the trader sails where the mist unveils  
The glory of old romance.

I joyed to stand where the jeweled hand  
Of the maiden-morning lies  
On the tawny brow of the mountain-land,

WHAT THE WIND SAID

Where the eagle shrieks and cries,  
And holds his throne to himself alone  
From the light of human eyes.

Adown deep glades where the forest shades  
Are dim as the dusk of day—  
Where only the foot of the wild beast wades,  
Or the Indian dares to stray,  
As the blacksnakes glide through the reeds and hide  
In the swamp-depths grim and gray.

And I turned and fled from the place of dread  
To the far-off haunts of men,  
“In the city’s heart is rest,” I said,—  
But I found it not, and when  
I saw but care and vice reign there  
I was filled with wrath again:

And I blew a spark in the midnight dark  
Till it flashed to an angry flame  
And scarred the sky with a lurid mark

WHAT THE WIND SAID

As red as the blush of shame:  
And a hint of hell was the dying yell  
That up from the ruins came.

The bells went wild, and the black smoke piled  
Its pillars against the night,  
Till I gathered them, like flocks defiled,  
And scattered them left and right,  
While the holocaust's red tresses tossed  
As a maddened Fury's might.

"Ye overthrown!" did I jeer and groan—  
"Ho! who is your master?—say!—  
Ye shapes that writhe in the slag and moan  
Your slow-charred souls away—  
Ye worse than worst of things accurst—  
Ye dead leaves of a day!"

I am the Wind, and I rule mankind,  
And I hold a sovereign reign  
Over the lands, as God designed,  
And the waters they contain:  
Lo! the bound of the wide world round  
Falleth in my domain!

WHAT THE WIND SAID

*I wake, as one from a dream half done,  
And gaze with a dazzled eye  
On an autumn leaf like a scrap of sun  
That the wind goes whirling by,  
While afar I hear, with a chill of fear,  
The winter storm-king sigh.*

## THE NOBLEST SERVICE

DR. WYCKLIFFE SMITH—LATE SURGEON 161ST REG-  
IMENT IND. VOLS., DELPHI, DEC. 29, 1899

IF all his mourning friends unselfishly  
Might speak, high over grief, in one accord,  
What voice of joy were lifted to the Lord  
For having lent our need such ministry  
As this man's life has ever proved to be!  
Yea, even through battle-crash of gun and sword  
His steadfast step still found the pathway toward  
The noblest service paid Humanity.  
O ye to whose rich firesides he has brought  
A richer light! O watcher at the door  
Of the lone cabin! O kindred! Comrades!—all!  
Since universal good he dreamed and wrought,  
Be brave, to pleasure him, as, on before,  
He leads us, answering Glory's highest call.

## THE OLD GUITAR

NEGLECTED now is the old guitar  
And moldering into decay ;  
Fretted with many a rift and scar  
That the dull dust hides away,  
While the spider spins a silver star  
In its silent lips to-day.

The keys hold only nerveless strings—  
The sinews of brave old airs  
Are pulseless now ; and the scarf that clings  
So closely here declares  
A sad regret in its ravelings  
And the faded hue it wears.

But the old guitar, with a lenient grace,  
Has cherished a smile for me ;  
And its features hint of a fairer face  
That comes with a memory  
Of a flower-and-perfume-haunted place  
And a moonlit balcony.

THE OLD GUITAR

Music sweeter than words confess  
Or the minstrel's powers invent,  
Thrilled here once at the light caress  
Of the fairy hands that lent  
This excuse for the kiss I press  
On the dear old instrument.

The rose of pearl with the jeweled stem  
Still blooms; and the tiny sets  
In the circle all are here; the gem  
In the keys, and the silver frets;  
But the dainty fingers that danced o'er them—  
Alas for the heart's regrets!—

Alas for the loosened strings to-day,  
And the wounds of rift and scar  
On a worn old heart, with its roundelay  
Enthralled with a stronger bar  
That Fate weaves on, through a dull decay  
Like that of the old guitar!

## AN IDIOT

I'M on'y thist a' idiot—  
That's what folks calls a feller what  
Ain't got no mind  
Of any kind,  
Ner don't know nothin' he's forgot.—  
I'm one o' *them*—But I know why  
The bees buzz *this* way when they fly,—  
'Cause honey it gits on their wings.  
Ain't thumbs and fingers funny things?

What's money? Hooh! it's thist a hole  
Punched in a round thing 'at won't roll  
'Cause they's a string  
Poked through the thing  
And fastened round your neck—that's all!  
Ef I could git my money off,  
I'd buy whole lots o' whoopin'-cough  
And give it to the boy next door  
Who died 'cause he ain't got no more.



AN IDIOT

What is it when you die? *I* know,—  
You can't wake up ag'in, ner go  
    To sleep no more—  
        Ner kick, ner snore,  
Ner lay and look and watch it snow;  
    And when folks slaps and pinches you—  
    You don't keer nothin' *what* they do.  
    No honey on the *angels'* wings!  
    Ain't thumbs and fingers funny things?

## THE ENDURING

A MISTY memory—faint, far away  
And vague and dim as childhood's long-lost day—  
Forever haunts and holds me with a spell  
Of awe and wonder indefinable:—  
A grimy old engraving tacked upon  
A shoeshop wall.—An ancient temple, drawn  
Of crumbling granite, sagging portico  
And gray, forbidding gateway, grim as woe;  
And o'er the portal, cut in antique line,  
The words—cut likewise in this brain of mine—  
“Wouldst have a friend?—Wouldst know what  
friend is best?  
Have GOD thy friend: He passeth all the  
rest.”

Again the old shoemaker pounds and pounds  
Resentfully, as the loud laugh resounds  
And the coarse jest is bandied round the throng  
That smokes about the smoldering stove; and long,

THE ENDURING

Tempestuous disputes arise, and then—  
Even as all like discords—die again;  
The while a barefoot boy more gravely heeds  
The quaint old picture, and tiptoeing reads  
There in the rainy gloom the legend o'er  
The lowering portal of the old church door—  
“Wouldst have a friend?—Wouldst know what  
friend is best?  
Have GOD thy friend: He passeth all the  
rest.”

So older—older—older, year by year,  
The boy has grown, that now, an old man here,  
He seems a part of Allegory, where  
He stands before Life as the old print there—  
Still awed, and marveling what light must be  
Hid by the door that bars Futurity:—  
Though, ever clearer than with eyes of youth,  
He reads with his *old* eyes—and tears forsooth—  
“Wouldst have a friend?—Wouldst know what  
friend is best?  
Have GOD thy friend: He passeth all the  
rest.”

THE HIRED MAN'S FAITH IN CHILDREN

I BELIEVE *all* children's good,  
Ef they're only *understood*,—  
Even *bad* ones, 'pears to me,  
'S jes as good as they kin be!

## THE NATURALIST

OLIVER DAVIE

IN gentlest worship has he bowed  
To Nature. Rescued from the crowd  
And din of town and thoroughfare,  
He turns him from all worldly care  
Unto the sacred fastness of  
The forests, and the peace and love  
That breathes there prayer-like in the breeze  
And coo of doves in dreamful trees—  
Their tops in laps of sunshine laid,  
Their lower boughs all slaked with shade.

With head uncovered has he stood,  
Hearing the Spirit of the Wood—  
Hearing aright the Master speak  
In trill of bird, and warbling creek;  
In lisp of reeds, or rainy sigh  
Of grasses as the loon darts by—

THE NATURALIST

Hearing aright the storm and lull,  
And all earth's voices wonderful,—  
Even this hail an unknown friend  
Lifts will he hear and comprehend.

## AT CROWN HILL

LEAVE him here in the fresh greening grasses and  
trees

And the symbols of love, and the solace of these—  
The saintly white lilies and blossoms he keeps  
In endless caress as he breathlessly sleeps.

The tears of our eyes wrong the scene of his rest,  
For the sky's at its clearest—the sun's at its best—  
The earth at its greenest—its wild bud-and-bloom  
At its sweetest—and sweetest its honied perfume.

Home! home!—Leave him here in his lordly  
estate,

And with never a tear as we turn from the gate!

Turn back to the home that will know him no  
more,—

The vines at the window—the sun through the  
door.—

AT CROWN HILL

Nor sound of his voice, nor the light of his face!

. . . .

But the birds will sing on, and the rose, in his  
place,

Will tenderly smile till we daringly feign  
He is home with us still, though the tremulous rain  
Of our tears reappear, and again all is gloom,  
And all prayerless we sob in the long-darkened  
room.

Heaven portions it thus—the old mystery dim,—  
It is midnight to us—it is morning to him.



## THE BED

### I

“THOU, of all God’s gifts the best,  
Blessèd Bed!” I muse, and rest  
Thinking how it havened me  
In my dazèd Infancy—  
Ere mine eyes could bear the kind  
Daylight through the window-blind,  
Or my lips, in yearning quest,  
Groping found the mother-breast,  
Or mine utterance but owned  
Minor sounds that sobbed and moaned.

### II

Gracious Bed that nestled me  
Even ere the mother’s knee,—  
Lulling me to slumber ere  
Conscious of my treasure there—

## THE BED

Save the tiny palms that kept  
Fondling, even as I slept,  
That rare dual-wealth of mine,—  
Softest pillow—sweetest wine!—  
Gentlest cheer for mortal guest,  
And of Love's fare lordliest.

### III

By thy grace, O Bed, the first  
Blooms of Boyhood-memories burst:—  
Dreams of riches, swift withdrawn  
As I, wakening, find the dawn  
With its glad Spring-face once more  
Glimmering on me as of yore:  
Then the bluebird's limpid cry  
Lulls me like a lullaby,  
Till falls every failing sense  
Back to sleep's sheer impotence.

### IV

Or, a truant, home again,—  
With the moonlight through the pane,

## THE BED

And the kiss that ends the prayer—  
Then the footsteps down the stair;  
And the close hush; and far click  
Of the old clock; and the thick  
Sweetness of the locust-bloom  
Drugging all the enchanted room  
Into darkness fathoms deep  
As mine own pure childish sleep.

## V

Gift and spell, O Bed, retell  
Every lovely miracle—  
Up from childhood's simplest dream  
Unto manhood's pride supreme!—  
Sacredness no words express,—  
Lo, the young wife's fond caress  
Of her first-born, while beside  
Bends the husband, tearful-eyed,  
Marveling of kiss and prayer  
Which of these is holier there.

THE BED

VI

Trace the vigils through the long,  
Long nights, when the cricket's song  
Stunned the sick man's fevered brain,  
As he tossed and moaned in pain  
Piteous—till thou, O Bed,  
Smoothed the pillows for his head,  
And thy soothest solace laid  
Round him, and his fever weighed  
Into slumber deep and cool,  
And divinely merciful.

VII

Thus, O Bed, all gratefully  
I would ever sing of thee—  
Till the final sleep shall fall  
O'er me, and the crickets call  
In the grasses where at last  
I am indolently cast  
Like a play-worn boy at will.—  
'Tis a Bed befriends me still—  
Yea, and Bed, belike, the best,  
Softest, safest, blessèdest.

“THEM OLD CHEERY WORDS”

PAP he allus ust to say,

“Chris’mus comes but onc’t a year!”

Liked to hear him that-a-way,

In his old split-bottomed cheer

By the fireplace here at night—

Wood all in,—and room all bright,

Warm and snug, and folks all here:

“Chris’mus comes but onc’t a year!”

Me and ’Lize, and Warr’n and Jess

And Eldory home fer two

Weeks’ vacation; and, I guess,

Old folks tickled through and through,

Same as *we* was,—“Home onc’t more

Fer another Chris’mus—shore!”

Pap ’u’d say, and tilt his cheer,—

“Chris’mus comes but onc’t a year!”

Mostly Pap was ap' to be  
 Ser'ous in his "daily walk,"  
 As he called it; giner'ly  
 Was no hand to joke er talk.  
 Fac's is, Pap had never be'n  
 Rugged-like at all—and then  
 Three years in the army had  
 Hepped to break him purty bad.

Never *flinched!* but frost and snow  
 Hurt his wownd in winter. But  
 You bet *Mother* knowed it, though!—  
 Watched his feet, and made him putt  
 On his flannen; and his knee,  
 Where it never healed up, he  
 Claimed was "well now—mighty near—  
 Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"

"Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"  
 Pap 'u'd say, and snap his eyes . . .  
 Row o' apples sputter'n' here  
 Round the hearth, and me and 'Lize

THEM OLD CHEERY WORDS

Crackin' hicker'-nuts; and Warr'n  
And Eldory parchin' corn;  
And whole raft o' young folks here.  
"Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"

Mother tuk most comfort in  
    Jest a-heppin' Pap: She'd fill  
His pipe fer him, er his tin  
    O' hard cider; er set still  
And read fer him out the pile  
O' newspapers putt on file  
Whilse he was with Sherman—(She  
Knowed the whole war-history!)

Sometimes he'd git het up some.—  
    "Boys," he'd say, "and you girls, too,  
Chris'mus is about to come;  
    So, as you've a right to do,  
*Celebrate* it! Lots has died,  
Same as Him they crucified,  
That you might be happy here.  
Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"

THEM OLD CHEERY WORDS

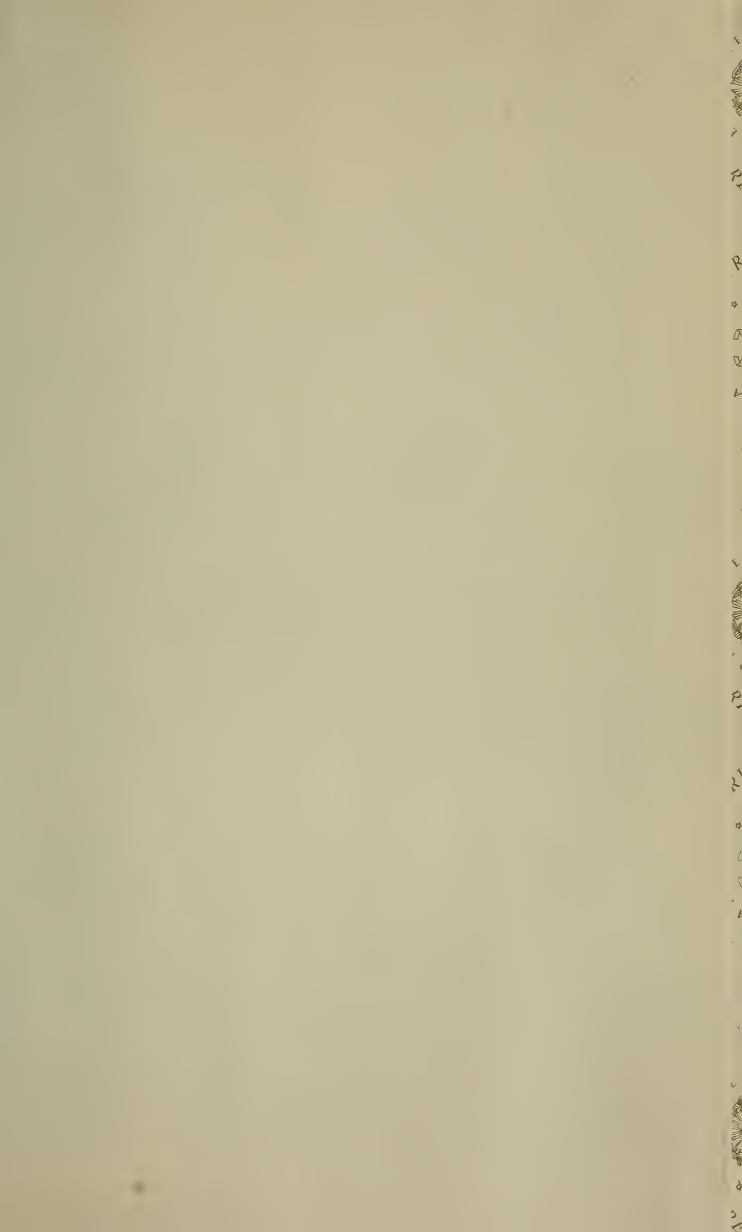
Missed his voice last Chris'mus—missed  
Them old cheery words, you know.  
Mother helt up tel she kissed  
All of us—then had to go  
And break down! And I laughs: "Here!  
'Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!'"  
"Them's his very words," sobbed she,  
"When he asked to marry me."

"Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"—  
"Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"  
Over, over, still I hear,  
"Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"  
Yit, like him, I'm goin' to smile  
And keep cheerful all the while:  
*Allus* Chris'mus *There*—And here  
"Chris'mus comes but onc't a year!"







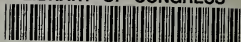






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