

EROS
AND OTHER
POEMS

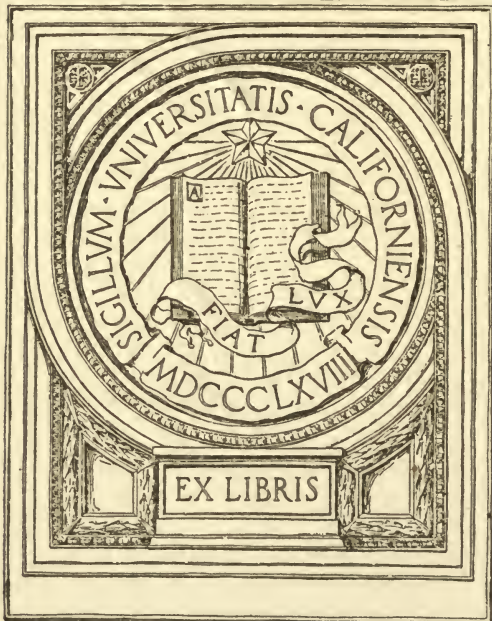
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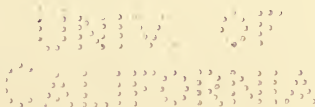


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EROS
AND OTHER POEMS

EROS AND OTHER POEMS

BY
EDMUND DEACON PETERSON



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1912

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TO THE
ASSOCIATION

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MAIN

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PREFACE

Herewith the author submits to the public his first book — being a collection of his verses, which were written at intervals through a number of years, some of them having already been published from time to time in newspapers, magazines, etc., in different parts of the country where he happened to be living, as he was somewhat of a wanderer.

And he here extends his thanks to the *Boston Post* for copies of certain poems (namely “Virtue and Vice,” “The Man Who Knows It All,” “Lally,” “Equality” and “Puritan and Quaker” — to be found on pages 44-48 of this volume, which were published in that newspaper during the year 1883 — twenty-nine years ago.

As to his early poems, it is hoped that if they have the faults of youth, they have the merits of youth also.

And in regard to his Character Pieces, the discerning reader can readily understand that the views thus expressed are quite often not a complete statement of the views of the author, as Truth is many-sided.

EROS

EROS

PROEM

THEY err who deem the old gods dead,
All round the world they still hold sway,—
On all their altars fires are fed
By zealous devotees to-day.

Great Jupiter, Odin and Thor,—
Apollo, Mammon, Venus, Pan,
Bacchus and Mars, and many more,
Are they not worshiped still by man?

Within the heart, behind the veil
And mask of all the make-believe
Their altars flame and ne'er grow pale,
They still their victories achieve.

I

“Venus!” “Eros!” “Cupid!” cried
The happy Greeks in song and prayer;
And Love their sculptors deified
In statues wondrous fair.

In Greece and Rome by many a name
In ancient times men worshiped thee,
O Love! and still to-day the same
Before thy shrine we bend the knee.

II

From center to circumference
Life's citadel doth shake,—
And what it is, or why, or whence,
We scarce can answer make.

It is the tidal wave of love,
With all its mighty throes! —
But if it cometh from above
Or from below — God knows.

O magic spark that kindleth love,
To fill our hearts with ecstasy,—
If from below or from above,
Divine indeed thou sure must be!

III

Though uncontrollable thy flame,
That burns like straw our doubts and fears,—
We cannot thy fine frenzy blame,
That such a noble palace rears.

The poor in purse are poor no more,—
The beggar eats his crust and smiles;
The sorrow of the sad is o'er,—
The weary rise and travel miles.

The proud man's pride is vanquished quite,—
He shakes the humble by the hand;
And many a nightmare dream takes flight
When love flies through the land.

Yet, brothers, I am well aware
This selfsame flame of love devours
Full many a structure bright and fair,
With all its towers and bowers.

Ah, me! for waste and wilderness
That witness love's destroying flame,—
What villainy and heart's distress,—
What wreck of lives and sin and shame!

IV

"'Tis Venus!" cried the ancient Greeks,
"Who moveth hearts to love—'tis she!—
From lovers' lips 'tis she who speaks,
And blinds them so they cannot see.

"Helena who with Paris flew,
And caused the Trojan war, the same,—
Who can believe fair Helen knew
Her folly? Venus was to blame."

O goddess of the blindfold eye
And mystery of hearts that burn!—
We follow thee e'en though we die—
And e'en in death to thee we turn!

The world grows stale as on we grope,
And e'en the sun in heaven palls!—
When, lo, we love—and then we hope!—
And then ambition calls!

At once around us rise full fair
 Shapes and images divine,—
 'Tis now another earth and air,
 And we no longer pine:—

And we Agnostics sour that were,
 Who scorned the truths the sages held,
 Believe in all things bright and fair,
 And all the mighty truths of eld.

EARLY POEMS

THE WISSAHICKON

A SONNET

ROMANTIC Wissahickon! thee I love!
 I love thy great gray, wrinkled rocks, grown hoar
 With centuries—I love thy savage lore.
 What need have I of books while now above
 Beams the blue sky; the thristle and the dove
 Soar by together, and vague voices call
 From out the forest aisles, so still and tall?
 Methinks these voices vague, that through the
 grove
 Are murmurous, must be the echoes vast
 Of human voices sounding from the past.
 For once where now I walk with staff and
 book—
 A student with a dreamy, listless look—
 The Indian warrior strode to hunt the deer,
 Or stopt his foe with the shrill war-whoop here.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW

BLUE is the sky ; and white clouds chase
Each other merrily over the face
Of the warm, bright, smiling sun!
'Tis noon ; and in a valley none
Has ever seen more fair!
Oh! here is beauty freed from care!
Creation yet with blissful dreams
Is wrapped in sleep! Here limpid streams
Run laughing through the wood!
The great trees stand as they have stood
For ages — looking grandly down
On all below ; and high cliffs frown
Above you! But the sullen brow
Is lit and cheered with flowers now.
Look out upon the sunny plain!
The reapers reap the yellow grain!
They bend and sway, and bend and sway,
In brave work all the summer's day!
The tall corn waves on many a hill,
Or stands up proud where winds are still!
The quiet kine on acres wide
Are grazing soberly side by side.
All, all is beauty! All is peace!
Surely naught will break the lease
Of Heaven reigning here this day —
Oh! angels o'er me tell me nay!

But hark! What noise is that afar?
King Thunder drives his battle-car
Over the mountain's crest!
Over the mountain, with lightnings bale,
A storm comes booming down the vale,

Disturbing all, where all was rest!
The terrible King, with terrible ire,
Flings down his bolts of forkéd fire;
And wind and rain and driving hail
Leave devastation in their trail!
The grain, which shone as bright as gold,
Lies on the earth, a prey to mold!
The corn is bowed upon the hills;
In funeral dirges flow the rills!
The reapers gaze, grim-browed, sad-eyed,
Upon the ruin stalking wide!
The monarch trees look down and wail;
Low gasps of death are o'er the vale!

Thus it is in our earthly life —
Sunshine and shadow, peace and strife.
What does it mean? What is it for?
Ah! none knows now! None knew of yore!

THE POET AND THE WORLD

DEAR Lord, how I do love to lay me down
A little brook beside to hear it sing! —
To hear it sing in its small, lispíng voice,
So like a child's, so tender and so sweet.

Then is the world's harsh clarion forgot
That wakes me evermore from pleasant dreams;
Then drops from off my mind the load of care
Which hath oppressed me long, and that dull pain,
The dreary ghost that haunts it, for a space
Doth laggingly depart, and I have peace.

MEMORIES

(Inscribed to Lady Betty L——.)

THERE are memories sweet and sour,
Born of the bright or gloomy hour;
They hang like pictures round the heart,
And, loved or loathed, will not depart.

The words we speak, the deeds we do,
The thoughts that thrill us through and through;
However high or sunk in sin,
All lie safe-lodged and sure within.

Then wise the man and happy he
Who hoards not thus his misery;
Whose heart is hung with pictures bright,
And heaped with records of the right.

DOLOROSA

“I DO not blame him,” she said,
“He was poor, we could not wed”;
Blanche bowed her little head
And sighed.

She was young and fair and sweet —
Good God! and now her feet
Had no home but the street
To bide.

Poor little Blanche! and yet,
While her blue eyes with tears were wet,
She never blamed him she had met,
Who had lied.

NEPENTHE

I

I'LL smoke a cigarette,
And forget.
Why should I see that face forever near? —
Why should I hear that laugh so sweet and
clear? —
Why should those tender eyes come haunt me here,
come haunt me here? —
Well, well, alas the day!
They have come, so let them stay.

II

Did I not tell her plain we could not wed? —
She only sighed: "I love you so!" she said;
And then she faded like a flower, and now, and
now she's dead.
Well, well, I love her still —
Could I guess that love would kill?

III

But to remember makes me moan with pain,
And should I see that phantom face again,
(By heaven!) I fear that it would turn my brain,
turn my brain:
I dread to meet those tender eyes,
So full of tears and sad surprise:
I'll smoke a cigarette,
And forget.

HER QUESTION AND HIS ANSWER

I

HER QUESTION

SWEETHEART, I cannot think, I cannot think,
Why thou dost love me, sweetheart — not another :

I cannot think why thou dost love me more
Than that maid, or than that, or that, or
t'other —

For, O! it cannot be I am more fair,
For some have said that I am scarcely comely :
For, O! it cannot be I am more wise,
Or good — why is it, sweetheart, that thou lov'st
me?

II

HIS ANSWER.

And dost thou ask me why I love
Thee, sweetheart — not another?
Sweetheart, I'll tell thee why :
'Tis not that thou art fair, sweetheart,
Though thou dost fill my eye —
'Tis not alone that thou art fair,
But this is why —
But this is why that thee I love,
And not that maid or t'other :
Because of all the maids I've met,
Because of all the maids I've met,
Thou art most like — my mother !

ROOM FOR THE INDIAN

(Lines written after hearing the story of the wrongs of the Poncas, as told by Mr. Tibbles, Bright Eyes and Standing Bear.)

I

TEARS are well, words are well — as far as they
go —
But leave tears for children, put hand to the
wheel;
But leave words for hypocrites — counterfeit
coin —
O, deeds, only deeds the true metal reveal!

Room for the Indian — room! Reach him a hand!
Who brand him unworthy their words I deny;
Say what you will, brothers, but here is a man;
But here is no craven who much fears to die.

He stands on his record. Will it not suffice?
Is it black? Well, ours, we must own, is black
too.
Say what you will, brothers, but here is a man;
Go ask those who know, they will tell you 'tis
true.

If he will his bow and arrows fling down,
Bury the tomahawk; follow the plow;
The path of peace tread. O, shall we not then
All the rights we claim to him too allow?

II

I am for peace, when peace with honor goes ;
But times may come again as oft' before,
So ill, laden so big with wrongs and shames,
The one sufficient remedy is war.

And if such time shall come again, perchance —
(Methinks it well might be) — there will arise
A man from out these red tribes of the West
To lead our armies on to victory's prize.

Room for the Indian — room! reach him a hand!
With lust of gold, at least, he's not possessed ;
And he is brave, and never breaks his word ;
That we have need of such must be confessed.

III

Who is the savage — who civilized — say?
Look on the record and crimson with shame ;
Look on the record and shrink back appalled ;
Is the Indian a savage? well, we are the same.

Food for the starving and care for the sick ;
Justice and mercy to all that draw breath!
We have stricken the bonds from the slave, shall
we still
Hunt down the poor Indian, and do him to death?

LITTLE JEANNETTE

DEAR little Jeannette! Sweet little Jeannette!
Most witching of maidens that man ever met,
Thou art fair to my sight as an angel of light,
And whatever thou doest to me seemeth right.

There is a fond memory shrined in my heart,
It is of the night I first felt Cupid's dart;
We stood 'neath the moon-beams — I looked down
at thee,
And softly thy blue eyes glanced upward to me.

God of my fathers! O how much of bliss,
One swift-fleeting moment may hold in a kiss!
I snatched thy white hand — my lips flew to thine,
And soul spoke to soul in a language divine.

Long, long will that memory lighten my life,
Long, long will it lend me good strength in the
strife;
But that night is gone — ah, sad truth to learn,—
It is gone — it is gone, nevermore to return!

NEW YEAR'S EVE

I

THE horns ring out the "Blue Danube";
'Neath the glittering chandelier
We glide in the waltz through the ballroom,
A charm upon eye and ear.

Bright are the faces around us ;
Sweet maidens smile in glee ;
And ripples blithely on the air,
Light laugh, quick repartee.

Ye memories of the waning year —
Away! the hour is nigh
That ushers in new days, new hopes —
Away! Old year, good-bye!

II

Let us throw off the garment of sadness,
Leave behind us the sorrow and sin ;
Let our hearts rise and sing hallelujahs
For all that shall be and has been.

We stand face to face — man and maiden,
Clasp hands with a hearty good cheer,
And with joy brimming o'er from the soul to the
lips,
We welcome the baby new year.

Ha, ha! my lads and my lassies —
On with the dance! though a tear
Dim the eye for the loved and the lost ones,
Sleeping low on this happy new year.

A SONG OF SUMMER

COME to the wildwoods wild,
Thou city-biding child —
O come to the meadows mild.

Come where the world is still,
Where the eagle swoops at will
O'er green embosomed hill.

Where the great oak rears its head
From cool and mossy bed,
And the earth and sky do wed.

Where the bright sun brightly beams,
And men live on in dreams,
And maidens sing to streams.

Where the jaunty blue-bells nod,
And wand-like waves the golden-rod,
And the blue-eyed violet gems the sod.

Come, ye weary-hearted, come,
And listen to the busy hum
Of bees, and hear the pheasants drum.

Come, ere mind and body molder,—
Swing the rifle to the shoulder,
Tramp the lowlands, climb the boulder.

Come and be free as free can be;
And never mother fondled thee
More fond than will the greenwood tree.

BE TRUE TO THY LIGHT!

PUZZLED soul, wouldst thou know what is right,
And for God-given principles fight?
Then be true, O be true to thy light!

Whatever the whole world may say,
If thine eyes see 'tis wrong, tell them nay,
Speak the word and point out the true way!

O let not the pomp and the din
Of the world, nor the soft smiles of sin,
Blind thine eyes to the pure light within!

Do thou what it bids thee to do!
Be a man, live a faithful life through!
O rise up in thy strength and be true.

THE SPARROW

A BRIGHT oasis in the desert of brick walls,
Across the crowded city street a sparrow calls:

“Tu-wit! Tu-wit! Tu-wee!
Come to the woods with me!”

“But, little bird,” I answer back,
“Sweet little bird, I cannot come —
For I must work, alas, alack!”
Then clear above the busy hum

That sounds forever from the street,
He calls again in accents sweet:

“Tu-wit! Tu-wit! Tu-wee!
Come to the woods with me!”

“O, careless sparrow, listless led;
O, bird without a care —
How can I come, for meat and bread
I cannot gather there?”

But still he calls across the street,
 In accents clear and passing sweet:
 "Tu-wit! Tu-wit! Tu-wee!
 Come to the woods with me!"

ONE OF LIFE'S MYSTERIES

EXPLAIN the panther and expound the cat —
 Whence are they and what for, O, tell me that?
 He who the horse created and the lamb,
 Hath He created these? Is life a psalm

Wherein both good and bad have proper place —
 Both harmony and discord? Can we trace
 God's will and finger to all things that be —
 To rich and poor, to joy and misery —

To Attila as well as Washington?
 Or is there, as some think, an evil One,
 The opposite of God — who worketh aye
 'Gainst God and man in many a subtle way?

CORA'S LAMENT

I

THE soft summer morning is sunlit, and cheery
 With breezes blown fresh from the land of the
 West;
 The birds in the green-mantled tree tops are sing-
 ing

Sweet songs, as they busily build the home nest.
All nature is glad,
But my poor heart is sad;
For what are these summery symbols to me,
When Jamie, my Jamie, is over the sea.

II

O will he come back to me — Jamie, my Jamie!
O will he come back as the Jamie of old —
Come back to whisper above me, "I love thee,"
And come with a heart that has never grown
cold?
On the breeze passing by,
Seeming floats a reply:
"He will, little Cora, he will, he is true!
Homeward bound is the bark that will bear him to
you."

GHERETIEN

O, LIST thee now, my merry queen,
The fair, the lovable Gheretien,
O, hearken to my lay!
And to thy home among the hills
Where purling brook the pure air fills
With music and from tree to tree
The songs of birds make melody —
Thither will the breezes hie,
Thither will sweet echoes fly
Of love-tones far away.

* * *

“O, ever kindly has the sun
 Looked down on thee, my pretty one —
 Looked down and smiled on thee;
 And prodigal has been the flow
 Of blessings he has wrought, I trow: —
 Soft and warm with many a light
 Of heavenly fires thine eyes burn bright,
 And over cheek and brow of snow
 The hues of summer sunsets glow —
 Rare hues that flush and flee.”

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM

LIKE ships that meet and part upon the sea,
 We mortals drift together, drift apart:
 'Tis not for us to guess why such things be —
 'Tis ours to bear the seeming stern decree
 As best we may when heart is torn from heart.

At least this may we do: When on life's sea
 We for a little while together sail,
 A friendly, faithful company let's be —
 Remembering that any moment we
 May drift apart, far out of sight and hail.

MOLLIE

I STAND beside the mossy oak
 Upon the grassy hill,
 And 'mong the branches o'er my head
 Sings wild the whippoorwill,
 His song is mournful-shrill,
 Mollie!
 His song is mournful-shrill.

The sky with clouds is overcast,
The night is closing round ;
The surly east wind rushing past
Snarls like a hungry hound ;
And sad my sighs resound,
Mollie!
And sad my sighs resound.

Not so it was one twilight dim
When we by chance did meet
Beside this tall and ancient tree.
The south wind us did greet ;
The whippoorwill sang sweet,
Mollie!
The whippoorwill sang sweet.

The sun was setting on the right,
And red and round was he ;
The moon was rising on the left —
A crescent moon was she,
When you stood here with me,
Mollie!
When you stood here with me.

'Twas here we told our loves ; 'twas here,
Clasped in a fond embrace,
We kissed and cried with happy tears,
That sanctified the place.
No more I'll see your face,
Mollie!
No more I'll see your face.

Farewell, fair maid! fair maid, farewell!
 Farewell, fair maid, forever!
 Fate frowns on us and we must part —
 To meet again, O, never!
 Never again, O, never,
Mollie!
 Never again, O, never!

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY

(Lines Written in an Album.)

BE careful what you say, my child,
 Words have a kind of life,—
 Some think that they are living things,—
 At least 'tis sure that they have wings
 And teeth sharp as a knife.

And teeth sharp as a knife, some words,
 With power to wound and slay;
 But some have power to heal and bless,
 And with their gentle, soft caress
 Turn winter into May.

Be careful what you say, my child;
 But 'tis a matter slight
 Compared to this I'd now impress
 Upon your mind with strongest stress:—
Be careful what you WRITE!

“CHRIST COMES TO ALL WHO OPE THE
DOOR”

“I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.”
Inscribed to Rev. Mr. Detwiler, Evangelist.

AH, see! and there it is again!
I did not err or make mistake.
The beauteous vision of the Christ
Appeared above him as he spake.

The plain church, unadorned and bare,
With no ecclesiastic show,
In gorgeous beauty radiant gleams,
With mystic grandeur all aglow.

The beauty of the earth and sky,
The glory of the moon and sun,—
Sunrise, sunset, rainbow,— all
In that bright vision’s web are spun.

No gilded cross upon the wall,
Behind the preacher gleams and shines,
But in a vision o’er his head
The Savior on the cross reclines.

It is the Christ,— the very Christ,—
And very voice of God that speaks
From out the preacher’s lips inspired,
And sinners’ souls to save it seeks.

A miracle? — As Shakespeare writ:
More things in heaven and earth there be
Than are in our philosophy
Dreamt of,— wrapped in deep mystery.

Ours is a wonder-working God,
A miracle-working Christ is ours,
And what men call a miracle
May be but law, to Heavenly powers.

“Sweet Christ,” I murmured, “Savior mine,
May never come Millennium day,
But surely thou art here to-night
To comfort us as thou didst say.”

Ah, God, this truth I plainly see:
Christ comes to all who ope the door,—
To Jew and Gentile, and all men
And sects alike,—forevermore.

EQUALITY OF ALL MEN BEFORE GOD

He knows me not, that sleek, rich man,
Puffed up with wind of worldly pride;
The rich and great he only knows —
All else must bend or stand aside.

Himself a tool from first to last —
Knave and sycophant, wondrous sly;
He thinks all men should be the same,
With sinuous course from low to high.

Without a thought of self or pelf?
— Sadly the answer comes, “Not one.”
'S death! is there not one he loves,
For love's or friendship's sake alone —

Himself a tool, all men are tools
To him, to use and cast aside;
And love and friendship are but names —
Self or pelf his only guide.

He knows me not, but what of that?
Before the God who dwells on high
All men have equal claims and rights,
From birth until they die.

God's laws aye operate the same
On those of high and low estate;
He knows me not, that sleek, rich man,
Because I'm neither rich nor great.

But God, the angels and God's laws,
They know me, they distinguish not
'Tween rich and poor or high and low —
Saint, sage or Hottentot.

"I know and love all," saith the Lord,
"That love Me and that do My will;
To them My laws shall aye be kind,
My angels guard them still."

HETTY

THERE is a picture in my mind,
By the spirit's wondrous pencil lined —
Of a beautiful face where flit and flee
Bright smiles, like sunshine on the sea,
And blue eyes waste their witchery;
She is so sweet, she is so fair,
Gay Hetty with the golden hair!

O, beauty thou art priceless! gold,
 Though heaped up high in wealth untold
 Cannot buy thee, queens have prayed
 To win thee, but the scepter swayed
 In vain to lure thy lovely shade;
 Ah, rich indeed is thy estate,
 Sweet maiden, favored thus by fate.

So prize it and be proud, nor sell
 What God has given, but guard it well —
 For men will come and woo to thee,
 Proud men will come and sue to thee,
 And bear the purse and bend the knee;
 But yield to love; 'tis his domain,
 Aught else is want and woe and pain.

DULCE DOMUM

My little sister, loved of yore,
 And now grown older, loved the more,
 It may be that my steps shall roam
 Far from the restful hearth of home;—

It may be, and it doubtless will,
 If comes not death or other ill,
 That thou shalt leave the mother-nest
 At some true lover's high behest:—

Thou may'st be poor, and I be rich,
 Or otherwise, it boots not which,
 Whate'er the wealth, whate'er the name,
 The heart methinks is much the same:

O sister dear, though dark the night
Though wild the woe of blast and blight
May lower in the lapse of years,
Filling my life with gloom and tears,

Still the thought of home shall be
My sad soul's sweetest minstrelsy,
Still thy smile shall cheer me on
Till hope be dead and life be gone.

HOPE AND LOVE

THE wind was cold, the snow fell fast —
But what was that to me?
A fiend was shrieking in the blast —
But what was that to me?
But what was that to me?
For in my heart sweet hope beat high,
And warmed me with her beaming eye;
And in my heart was love divine,
That throbb'd through all my veins like wine.

The sky was blue, the breeze was soft —
But what was that to me?
The birds were singing up aloft —
But what was that to me?
But what was that to me?
For in my heart sweet hope lay dead,
Her beaming eye sunk in her head;
And love divine no longer there,
I felt no comfort anywhere.

Then quick I cried, " Full plain I see
'Tis not because of flower or tree —
Blue sky or song-bird's minstrelsy —
That makes the world so fair!
'Tis not the sun on land or sea —
That makes the world so fair!
'Tis a hopeful, loving heart in me,
A hopeful, loving heart in me
That makes the world so fair."

A LAW STUDENT'S REVERY

THE classic Blackstone love I well —
Happy's the hour I with him tarry;
And love as well as words can tell
The sage Bouvier's Law Dictionary.

But must I therefore quite forget
That maiden fair whose soft, shy glances
Soothe my soul of all its fret,
And make life worth its fearful chances?

Now, suing that seraphic shape,
Are rivals brave as I and fonder:
Most precious of all! shalt thou escape
While I o'er Blackstone pore and ponder?

ITALY

O, FLOWERY land! O, lakes that shine
Like silver in the sun —
O, land of honey, fruit and wine,
Where lives in dreams do run —
Sweet Italy,
I love thee!

Lake Como lies in dimpled smiles,
And sparkles like a gem;
And like a maiden's witching wiles,
She lures my heart to them;
Sweet Italy,
I love thee!

The spicy breezes kiss my brow;
O, this were heaven, Jeannette,
To gaze forever on as now,
If thou wert here, my pet —
Sweet Italy,
I love thee!

Ah, why these tears that fill my eyes,
This hunger at my heart?
This is no time or place for sighs,
And lovers oft' do part;
And Italy,
I love thee!

Then peace, my soul! why wilt thou speak,
And call for what may never be?
O, rest thee, soul so wild and weak,
Nor dream again Jeannette to see.
Sweet Italy,
I love thee!

MY DARLING

As day by day I live along —
Go through the world and worldly throng —
The thought that bears me up from wrong,
Is thought of thee, my darling.

Whose is that face I seem to see
Before me, wheresoe'er I be —
With loving eyes that lift to me?
That face is thine, my darling.

Oh! memories of the olden times —
Sweet are your scenes, and sweet the rhymes
Ye weave; like tinkling, tolling chimes
Of far-off bells, my darling.

Dear is the memory of what has been
Of thee — O thou of angel-kin,
And toiling from the vales of sin,
I look to thee, my darling.

SPRING LOVE SONG

Do I love her? well, this I know,
That where her steps lead I would go ;
Be it down in the vale by the flow
Of bright, merry streams singing low,

Or up on the hill-tops, divine,
With the fresh sweeping breeze and the shine
Of the sun. O dear love, what is mine
In this world, I would could be thine !

Anywhere, gentle heart ! so near thee.
In thy presence all evil must flee.
One glance of thine eye is to me
Worth more than the gems of the sea,

Or the gems hidden deep in the earth.
O what is all wealth to the birth
Of high thoughts, holy fires, and the worth
Of a soul? Where before there was dearth

In my heart, now the flowers of joy
Spring to bloom with no sinful alloy ;
And my dreams are the dreams of a boy —
Perfect peace that no fears can destroy.

JEAN

FOOL that I am, I have never forgotten her,
She is the light of my life to this day ;
Hers is the face that forever hath haunted me,
Cheering my heart on my wearisome way.

Once in the bright, early morning of manhood,
I met her whom now well I know was my fate;
Little thought I then of courtship and marriage —
Little thought I then — and now 'tis too late.

Much I have pondered on poems and philosophies,
Gorged my poor head with what great men have
writ:
Thinking at some future time to enrapture
The world and this sweetheart of mine with my
wit.

Alas! now what care I for honor and glory,
Nonentity frenzies my spirit no more;
Come, death! with thy horrid and grim desolation,
I dread now no longer thy shape as of yore.

Jean! O, my sweetheart! 'twas she that I toiled for,
'Twas her sweet applause that I strove to obtain;
Haste on, empty years! hollow hearts, I abjure ye!
I hate the proud world which hath wrought all
my pain.

THE BLUES

My head it is calm and cool,
And worldly wise;
But the tears will fill my eyes —
And my heart is hot and aching,
Nigh to breaking.
O, at heart I am a fool!

Am I a fool? or is my heart the wiser?
Perhaps I do foul wrong to underprize her.
Alas, my heart!
Why must we part?
In all the world hast thou no sympathizer?

Soul of mine! 'Tis thine to choose
Which can I best afford to lose —
My heart or my head?

* * *

Pshaw! I'll to bed —
'Tis late — I have the "blues."

BIRDIE

(LINES TO A LITTLE GIRL)

YOUR merry laugh is in my ears,
Birdie.
Life's gay when one is aged ten years,
Birdie.
But I — well, though I weep no tears,
No voice of hope my spirit hears,
Long past are all my happy years,
Birdie, pretty Birdie!

But 'tis not age that warps and sours,
Birdie.
For though we wither as the flowers,
Birdie.
Still may the soul assert her powers,
And life be full of happy hours —
Ah! 'tis not age that warps and sours
Birdie, pretty Birdie!

Then keep your merry laugh always,
 Birdie.

To hearts at ease life's ever gay,
 Birdie.

My mother is a child to-day,
 Although her hair is streaked with gray;
 Then keep your merry laugh always,
 Birdie, pretty Birdie!

VIRTUE AND VICE

WHENCE came those fearful shapes that stalk
 The woeful night of sin!
 Dear friends, from such as I and you,
 They issued forth; some fell blast blew,
 And Satan entered in.

Condition, circumstance — almost
 They make us what we are:
 Saint or hero seldom comes
 From birth and breeding in the slums,
 And back of prison bar.

To-day are mortals no whit worse,
 In God's all-seeing eye,
 Than many a Christian — so by chance;
 For like condition, circumstance,
 Will oft like fruit supply.

Without the holy light of love —
 Which is of life the sun —
 How blindly, wearily we grope,
 And stumble down life's dreary slope,
 Glad when the farce is done.

Who is there walks as straight a path
At night as in the day?
Methinks that God, who knoweth all,
Forgiveth many a slip and fall
Of poor souls gone astray.

We all do need God's help, I wot,
To nobly play our part;
Behooves us all right well to pray:
"Teach us Thy will: show us Thy way,
And make us pure of heart!"

THE MAN WHO KNOWS IT ALL

BEHOLD the man who "knows it all" — observe
his pompous stride;
A man he is of little mind, but so self-satisfied!
This man believes in his tin-cup he holds the
mighty sea,
And in his shovelful of earth the world's immensity.
Whatever thing has been, whatever shall befall
He thinks he knows it all.

Some wayward lines if he espy on fellow-soldier's
shield,
Straightway this would-be sage concludes that
foul is all the field.
He fails to see, with his bat-eyes, dull brain and
shallow heart,
How brightly that escutcheon shines in many
another part!
Outshining his, perchance, in spite of scratch and
scrawl,
Though he thinks "he knows it all."

LALLY

“Does not, in these very days, the blood of murdered Lally cry aloud for vengeance?”

“The wild fire-soul that has known only peril and toil, and for threescore years has buffeted against Fate’s obstruction and men’s perfidy, like genius and courage amid poltroonery, dishonesty and commonplace; faithfully enduring and endeavoring—O Parliament of Paris, dost thou reward it with a gibbet and a gag?”

—Carlyle’s “French Revolution.”

SHALL commonplace and villainy for aye
So strut and stride and damnify the day?
The great and good who died have died in vain,
If great and good that live derive no gain.

Lally in the Bastile! How came he there?
For threescore years his life was brave and fair;
For France he lived and fame—and noble deeds
Filled up his long life’s span—a flower ’mong
weeds.

O France! for villainy thou hadst fine pay,
And guerdon proud for many a popinjay.
For one who glorified his country’s flag,
Thou hadst the Bastile, gibbet and the gag!

What mockery the world’s rewards! Unfold
Thy tragic fate, great Socrates! Behold
Galileo in prison—Joan of Arc
Enwrapped in flame. Fame? (God save the mark!)

O shallow hearts and cold and souls of lead —
Think ye the homage done unto the dead
Squares the account? They hear not what you
say —

And monuments revive not their poor clay!

Unconquered went he hence, the living eye —
From which the soul looks forth that cannot die —
E'en from the scaffold flashed defiance down,
And on his brow sat valor like a crown.

Thou regal soul! unfortunate Lally!
I think of one who much resembles thee —
Who treads the stage of life this very hour,
A king—but king bereft of kingly power.

This, then, the sad story — only *not all*
Of earth's best and greatest are swept to the wall.
And great and good who died, was't not in vain,
If great and good that live derive no gain?

EQUALITY

SINNER and saint are all one flesh —
One flesh wise man and fool;
Lives there a sage can draw the line
'Twixt low and high and coarse and fine,
By human nature's rule?

Beneath fine clothes, and rags beneath,
The selfsame flesh appears;
And every face, though fair and full,
Is modeled on the selfsame skull —
And laughter, love and tears,

And birth and death proclaim the bond
 That binds all in its mesh;
 'Twixt sinner and saint, wise man and fool,
 A mighty gulf, but 't breaks not the rule,
 And man is still one flesh.

PURITAN AND QUAKER

PURITAN.

Take thou the Book — live thou by that,
 Be torn by doubts no longer;
 When thou art weak 'twill make thee strong —
 When strong 'twill make thee stronger.

A guide that never errs, this Book; —
 'Twill keep thy feet from stumbling;
 Save thee from error and from sin;
 From pride that leads to humbling.

QUAKER.

Sacred the Book! — it I revere,
 And love to turn its pages,
 And pore its holy precepts o'er —
 Its lives of saints and sages.

But by the Inner Light I live —
 The “ still, small voice ” doth win me;
 I think that light is heaven's light,
 That voice God's Word within me.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE OLD, OLD STORY

“ IF there be any glory — to God the glory!
If there be any shame — to us the shame!”
It still holds true — the old, old story,—
To-day and yesterday the same!

The golden word though we may speak,
Or shining deed of glory do,—
Our part is still with Moses meek,
This truth full well who knew.

Puffed up with pride shall men dare be
When all that's good from God is gift —
In earth or air or sky or sea —
When to the bottom all we sift?

Though to the hero, saint, we grow,
Worms of the dust still were we all
But for the Grace of God, and so
To God the glory, whate'er befall!

A VALENTINE

“ MEN are a puny breed,” I thought,
My mind upon the low and base,—
Forgetting all the noble souls
Among the human race.

“And even Christ not perfect was!”
 I sadly mused, and deemed it true:

* * * *

Then, lo, I turned, and saw thy face —
 And not a doubt I knew

That *thou* wert perfect! And if thou
 Art absolutely perfect, then,
 Shall I have doubts that Christ was so,
 Who gave his life for men?

HIS OWN ARE SAFE

THOUGH we escape the dire assassin's dirk
 That comes to kings, and plot of infamy,—
 Beneath our feet a thousand pitfalls lurk —
 Perils encompass us by land and sea.

O glorious constellations of the sky,
 With what beautiful precision are ye placed!
 The God who fixed ye knows Wherefore and
 Why,
 And floor on which earth's mysteries are based.

And He will safely keep who are His own —
 His own are in the hollow of His hand.
 Dwell where they may, in whatsoever zone,
 Draw breath of life in whatsoever land.

CHARACTER

WHAT a world, what a world! —
Let's sift it once again,—
Let's sift it to the bottom
And see what will remain:—

There's nothing sure but Character,
All else is shifting sand,—
While phantom follows phantom,
See it securely stand.

While new hallucinations
Follow fast upon the old,
Shines ever bright grand Character,—
We know that is true gold.

THE MAID BELOVED

“Not ten yoke of oxen
Have the power to draw us
Like a woman's hair.”

—*Longfellow.*

I

'TIS she beatifies the world with her strange mystic spells,
She glorifies that house wherein, howe'er so plain,
she dwells;
How sweet, how sweet the world doth seem,
illumined by her smile,
That did with pain and sorrow teem, and gloom and
tears erstwhile!

II

Her voice doth sweeter music make in merest simple
speech
Than great composers in their pride can ever hope
to reach;
Her sunny hair's a diadem upon her marble brow
More glorious than any crown that thrones can
queens endow.

III

For her a man of earthy mold will rise to heights
sublime,
And striding heroic through the world redeem his
day and time.
Ah, blest, thrice blest, that man indeed who in this
world of care
Can love and be beloved again by some sweet
maiden fair!

THE MODERN "LOOKING-CHAMBER"

IN China old and hoary, Corea and Japan,
Each house a "looking-chamber" has, some noble
view to scan.
But modern man may sit him down, his newspaper
in hand,
And take a look at all the world with all its sea and
land.
The modern "looking-chamber" is the journal of
the day —
'Tis a house of many windows that the whole wide
World survey.

SUNSHINE

I SEE a light, a light, a light!
Through somber clouds it shineth clear;
(I' faith it is a beauteous sight
To see the sun when days are drear.)

But this is neither sun nor moon
Nor star, but fairer still than they;
It is a lady in her noon
Of beauty, brighter than the day.

She comes! I know not where to hide:—
But ha! she smiles, she beams on me!—
My own! if thou wilt with me bide
This bitter world will heaven be!

THE VOICE OF A CHILD

SWEET is thy song, O canary,
So frolicsome, so undefiled,—
So blithesome, so bright, and so airy,
Stern is he who is not beguiled!

But far sweeter music has she who
The cradle rocks with her fair hand
Than ever bird that on the wind flew
Did utter in any land!

Ripples brook as ripples child's laughter?
Soft as child can a dove coo?
Twitter birds in a barn on their rafter
Sweet as babes in their trundle-bed do?

Ah, sweeter than song of canary,
More frolicsome, more undefiled,—
More blithesome, more bright, and more airy,—
Is the voice of a child!

LINES

BEDIAMONDED, dreamy days,
Glittering with the sun's bright rays,
Enwrapped in Indian-summer haze

Without warning soft descend,
Sweet interludes that spring protend
Or may of winter make an end.

APRIL'S CHILDREN.

WE are April's children, sweet,—
The violets bloom for you and me;
Month when shine and shadow meet,
Sunshine and storm and cold and heat,
So fair and fickle, fond and free.

One minute blue the sky o'erhead,
Without a cloud, and warm and bright
The blessed sun,— the next instead
Clouds and rain, unruly led
By boist'rous winds that soon take flight.

Then who shall blame if smiles and tears
Laughter and crying in us mix
A little more than common,— fears
And hopes, softness and wrath? Who sneers
At us may also April fix,

Who taught us how, and make the year
(If they can) one long perfect June,
Or January. Tut, my dear,
We're April's children, have no fear,—
God made the month and we're in tune.

IN DREAMS, AS 'TWERE, LIFE PASSES
BY

“And Zoroaster, at whose ancient fount
Pythagoras drank, who saw the Dual strife,
The mighty conflict twixt the True and False,
Pervading all the world.”

— From Henry Peterson's “Modern Job.”

IN dreams, as 'twere, life passes by,
Phantoms they be for which we sigh,
Hallucinations us beset,
We toil for naught, for naught we fret,—
And yet,—
That 'tis not *all* a dream we know;
And though like specters to and fro,
We go,—
We are aware that we proceed
(By thought and word, by act and deed)
Unto what goal we choose of two,—
If false, to Hell; to Heaven if true.

GREAVES THE "HERETIC"

(Lines written after hearing the Rev. Mr. Greaves, a Socialist of New York City, speak on Socialism.)

WHAT an awful power is the power of God,
That smiteth one so unaware.
It smote the hearts of all who heard:
And Greaves the "Heretic" was there.

Beware the vials of God's wrath,
For what can with His might compare?
Methought I heard the voice of God:
And Greaves the "Heretic" was there.

The light of Heaven for which we pine,
Methought it shone on pew and chair.
"God is not far away," I thought:
And Greaves the "Heretic" was there.

"No man can look on God and live,"
'Tis said, "'tis more than man can bear."
"Was it an angel, then?" I thought:
And Greaves the "Heretic" was there.

Who is this "Greaves the 'Heretic'"—
This "Peter the Hermit" of a man?—
Can he the problem solve has vexed
The world since time began?

" NICE "

(Inscribed to Miss M. C.)

The literal meaning of the word "nice" is "ignorant." The first definition given in the Century Dictionary is: "Ignorant; foolish; weak." All the other senses of the word are developments of this original meaning. It is an old word. See the Century Dictionary.

WHAT wonders Time may work,— see this word
" nice,"

Now so precise —

Discriminating, critical, exact,

Matter of fact,—

Agreeable in every way, and coy,

Giving us joy —

Delicate, soft, tender, dainty, sweet,

A word most meet —

Fine, modest, reserved, speaking everywhere

With scrupulous care —

Subtle and accurate to a degree

We seldom see —

Particular, fastidious, acute,

Of Art the root —

This word was once (O, word, of Time the freak!)

" Ignorant, foolish, weak! "

DEATH

IMPENETRABLE pall beyond the brink,

Is there no star through thy profound to blink

With kindly ray to show to man the link

'Tween this world and the next? Is it in vain
We peer and ponder? Man, proud man, would
fain
Know and be sure that he shall live again

Beyond the grave when earthly body fails
And he the breath of earthly life exhales
And with the pallor dread of death he pales.

What is beyond? Perchance we travel far
From earth on spirit wings to distant star,
(For millions on millions such 'tis said there
are,)

And one to Venus, one to Mars shall go
At death, perchance, and one perchance to woe
And one to joy! We guess but cannot know.

THE CITY

OH, the awful, awful pity
Of the overcrowded city!
Here is exemplified indeed
Squalor that is the child of greed —
Here, indeed, may well be seen
How poor man can himself demean
When pushed by squalor to the wall.
Is't better to die and thus end all?
Bought and sold — no sense of shame —
Slaves in all except in name!

CONSERVATIVE AND ICONOCLAST

CONSERVATIVE

“ALAS!
We have let the old faith go:
Paled is the mighty glow
Martyrs and saints did know!”

ICONOCLAST

“Huzza!
But we have let the cobwebs go!”

CONSERVATIVE

“I know, I know! —
But we have let the old faith go,
That martyrs made and saints, I trow —
That faith was true as time will show!”

DARWINISM

I

THE fin was made before the hand —
(If science' lore we're to believe) —
The sea was made before the land; —
Did Venus precede Mother Eve?

If in the fish man's primal seed,
 And fins, not feet, first to be tried,—
 Did Neptune Adam then precede,
 With sea-born Venus for his bride?

Mermaids in the sea, perchance,
 There were, and centaurs on the land,
 Ere man complete made his entrance,
 Could in God's image upright stand.

If ape be "missing link" man's course
 From fish to ape its way did win —
 But how comes it that dog or horse
 In soul seem more to man akin?

First came the fish, and then the brute,
 And then (the monkey, it may be?)—
 And then the savage, ere, last fruit,
 Man civilized we see!

II

But evolution is not all —
 There are some mysteries beside: —
 From out the void vague voices call
 That will not be denied!

Up from the fish and wave! —
 Up from the worm and clod! —
 Came man with now a soul to save,
 Who hopes to dwell with God!

From fish and brute there is no shame
 Man's body did evolute and grow: —

Man's soul of flame from God it came,
And back to God shall go!

And humbling thoughts of ape and fish
Need not to gloom man's soul consign;
Still Moses in his sacred niche!
Still Dante's lay divine!

The Bibles of the world behold,
Each other that corroborate!
They wear a glory as of old,
Untouched, undimmed by doubt, debate!

Jesus, Mohammed and the Buddh,
Good Shepherds of the sheep are they —
With power divine by God endued,
To Heaven still they lead the way!

God's hand in present and in past
It is not difficult to see,—
The hand of God from first to last,
At work eternally!

LONGINGS FOR HEAVEN

AH, why should we linger longer? —
Ah, why linger longer here?
Shall the spirit's wings grow stronger —
Shall the dear Lord grow more near
If we wait and linger longer
In this groveling earthly sphere?

There is joy in heaven above us —
 There is joy and all is fair!
 Here on earth no one to love us
 And full many a grief to bear:
 There is joy in heaven above us —
 Would that we might hasten there!

Ah, God! that we might live a holy
 Life, for heaven to prepare!
 Stained with sin, how melancholy
 Should we mount the Golden Stair:—
 We might climb to heaven slowly —
 But could we enter there?

INTUITION AND REASON

COMES Reason now, slow-plodding up the slope
 To where Instinct arrived at one swift bound.
 The pure in heart see God, while scholars grope
 In darkness, and the glory have not found.

The mind is to be revered, but more
 The soul, which has a vision all its own;
 And dull and blind the eye of flesh before
 The spirit's eye, that on from zone to zone
 Flies swift, and reaches even to God's throne.

PROGRESS

THE world wags on, and progress makes
 But what a bloody toll it takes!
 Ah, blessed be the hero's dower —
 The poet's song — the word of power —
 That hastens the Millennial hour!

THE EARTH, THE WORLD AND THE
PROPHET

I

WITH every star that fills the skies
Our star, the Earth, drifts on for aye;
And man, that thinks himself so wise,
As blindly drifts as they.

II

Behind the curtain none can see,
And purpose, plan, discover quite;
But suns and moons and stars and we
Drift on in aimless flight.

III

Could men but glance behind the veil
And all the mighty plan survey,
Full many a scoffer would turn pale,
Perchance, and haste to pray.

IV

Behind the veil in holy trance,
Of plan and purpose, heaven and hell
The prophet hath a glimpse, perchance,
As Holy Scriptures tell.

V

The prophet's message comes to naught —
Men kill the prophet, and forget.
And still the world drifts on distraught,
And kills its prophets yet.

IT IS THE LORD

“Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.”—The Gospel according to Saint John (XXI:7).

I

THERE are so blind they fail to see
 God's hand in rout or victory,—
 Who think by happy chance was won
 Our freedom by great Washington;
 That but a happy circumstance
 Was Appomattox; and by chance
 Was guided safe our Ship of State—
 Our Union saved—by Lincoln great.
 But who the writing on the wall
 Believe they read and see it all,
 To them how brightly shines each word:—
 “It was the Lord.”

II

And who can doubt that in the dim
 Manila dawn God was with him
 Who in that mighty battle's space
 The keynote struck, and set the pace
 For all the war that was to come,—
 Of valiant deeds a glorious sum?
 God spoke the word, and Dewey led,
 And in his footsteps soon forth sped
 Hobson, and Schley, old Wheeler, too,—
 Heroes upon heroes, the long list grew.
 Stands it not written with Dewey's sword:—
 “It is the Lord”?

ENOUGH

“Enough is as good as a feast.”

WHAT more should we desire,—
All us that have enough?—
To wallow in the mire
Of surfeit,—gorge and stuff?

“God be with us ever!”
Our prayer of prayers should be,—
But riches oft’ dis sever
The heart, O, God, from thee!

Which are saved by which?
Neither by neither, ’tis sure:—
The rich by being rich,
Or the poor by being poor.

THE GREAT CHURCH OUT-OF-DOORS

I

No temples else had He—
Jesus, the Nazarene,
Who died upon the tree,
But out-of-doors, I ween.

II

No temple built with hands;—
For temples these did count:—
Upon the salt sea sands—
Upon the breezy Mount.

III

How fair Thy temples are,
 O God, by day or night!
 With Phoebus' golden car —
 With Luna's silver light,—
 With sun and moon and star,
 How fair Thy temples are!

DID CHRIST DIE FOR NAUGHT?

SADLY the Poet ponders: "Behold the Patriot-seer,
 Who looked to God for guidance and saw the vision
 clear —

And faltered not in duty for pelf or craven fear! —

"How fared it with that noble man? Sad tale 'tis
 to rehearse,

(This world's a world where naught's revered but
 money in the purse,)

His pity for the downtrod slave was turned into a
 curse!

"Ah, God! 'tis passing sweet to be 'at one' with
 Thee and Thine —

To work in harmony with Thee and do Thy will
 divine —

But bloody is the sacrifice as curse the most malign!

"The Greeks put Socrates to death — the Jews their
 Christ did slay:

Will that Millennial time e'er come when men can
 truly say:

"That cruel age is past and gone — it is not so
 to-day!"

THE NEW EVANGEL

“ WHY should ‘ My People ’ war upon
And slay each other? ” saith the Lord ;

“ For is not Satan still to fight,
With all his wicked imps abhorred ?

“ His creatures are a swarm, that seek
To wreck and ruin all My Earth,
So that My angels strive in vain,
And tremble at each new child’s birth.

“ That Satan working on the hearts
Of evil men My saints should slay,
To be expected is, but when
Good men other good men betray

“ From ignorance, more stress, ’tis plain,
On education should be placed.
My Buddha is to Me as dear
As is My Christ — no love I waste.

“ Gautama, who is Buddha called,
In Asia millions saves for Me,
And just as truly is My Son
As Jesus Christ. Shall Deity

“ The heart of man inspire for naught?
Enough! — Behold I say ’twas I
With love the heart of Buddha fired
To save men’s souls! The vaulted sky

- “ That all contains, and has no end
And reaches to the farthest star,
Is not so all-embracing as
My love and plan and purpose are!
- “ Great Socrates shall I forget,
Who just as truly died for Me
As Jesus? Was the hemlock-cup
Less bitter than the cruel tree?
- “ Did I not to Confucius give,
As well as Christ, the ‘ Golden Rule ’?
And Mohammed, first great foe of wine,
Was he not, too, My faithful tool?
- “ And Zoroaster, Persian sage,
Behold ’twas I with him communed,
And found him wise and faithful, and
To heaven’s harmony attuned.
- “ Of God and Devil what knew the Jews,
And what knew they of Heaven and Hell
Before the Persians taught them what
To Zoroaster I did tell?
- “ Why, all the Bibles of the world
Are Mine! — I ended and began! —
The Christians’ Bible; and the Vedas;
The Zend-Avesta; the Koran;
- “ The Five Kings; the Tripitakas;
The Eddas: — Bibles seven these; —
But Rome I sent Aurelius,
And Greece Plato and Socrates.

- “ In different languages though they,
My prophets and My saints, may speak,
Their message yet is still the same,
For all to save men’s souls do seek.
- “ And therefore they who Me would please,
And show their love for Mine and Me,
Must cultivate the ‘ Open Mind,’
And rid their hearts of bigotry.
- “ Who do My will and keep My law
Are My beloved,” saith the Lord ;
“ Be they of Buddha or of Christ —
On them My love shall be outpoured.
- “ For sect, religion, what care I?
I read the heart and I can tell :
I send each to their proper place —
The good to heaven, the bad to hell.”

IN THE SHADE OF THE VINEYARD’S WALL

WHERE the bosomed hills are green,
And pensive browse the quiet kine,—
And purling brook flows in between,
In shady spot I lie supine.

I watch the birds within the wood,
And list their pretty, witching lay —
The woodpecker in scarlet hood,
The robin, thrush, blue jay.

The peewee's ever plaintive cry,
"Pee!-Wee!" whence comes his name;
The tanager, genteel and shy,
His vest a scarlet flame.

The song-sparrow, well-named, I wis,
Sweet note, and quite a singer too;—
A song for lovers when they kiss, .
An honest song for lovers true.

The jay has on a fine blue coat,
But hear him scold the livelong day;
And the humming-bird has a ruby throat,
But hasn't a word to say.

There's compensation in the brute,
Go north or south, go east or west;—
The bird-of-paradise is mute,
The nightingale is plainly drest.

THE WISSAHICKON HILLS

UPON the Wissahickon hills
So thick the laurel grows,
And there the throstle sweetest trills,
Where the Wissahickon flows.

And when I lay me down and die
Ah, let it be the where
The Wissahickon 'neath the sky
Lyeth so fair, so fair!

Hills that my boyhood's feet have trod
Full many a time and oft,
With wings of youthful spirits shod,
And clambered up aloft

To all her hilltops every one
Among her gray rocks hoary,
And know full well each path and stone
And scene of olden story.

I cannot die so far away
From that fair stream I love so well,
Once more beside her banks I'd stray
That wind by many a hill and dell.

I cannot die so far from thee,
Oh, stream, with all thy rocks and rills —
Before I die, ah, let me see
Once more the Wissahickon hills.

LINES

If death for me should ope his pearly door
Some night, and I should waken on the farther
shore —

What should I find them doing? — Eleanor,

My father and my mother, and all the rest,
In that bright land of Heaven where dwell the
blest?

Would they be busy with some high behest —

Some daily avocation as th' swift years roll —
 Some wondrous schooling for th' expanding soul —
 'Mong angels striving for some mighty goal?

EVENTS

(Lines on the futility of human efforts unaccompanied
 by the power of the grace of God.)

FROM womb of time they issue forth:
 Our strivings seem but little worth —

Our hopes and prayers may count for more,
 That fly, like angels, on before.

And yet to hope and pray were vain
 Did we not strive and strive again.

'Tis what we *are* that counts the most,
 Not what we *do*, else were we lost.

The best we have or shall attain
 Is not our wage for hand or brain
 So much as gift of God, 'tis plain.

LINES

BROTHER, we are growing old,
 We're growing old together;
 No matter how the old world wags —
 Through fair and stormy weather.

Brother, we are growing old,
'Tis Father Time that leads us ;
Though one have naught and one have gold,
We're growing old together.

BY THE SEA

ROLL in, roll in, ye waves
Upon the sandy beach! —
Though oft with aching heart,
Our lips to smile we teach —
Man lives his life apart,
No power his pain can reach —
Roll in, roll in, ye waves
Upon the sandy beach!

SLEEPS SHE A SPACE?

SLEEPS she a space? or moves she now
In some new round of duties high,
One of some fair, angelic race
In some bright orb that gems the sky?

Life, death, and the hereafter, lo,
Mysteries these that reason mock;
But aye serene the star of faith
Shines on secure from every shock.

We feel, we know: — Sufficient light
Is given that our eyes can bear:

Jesus, Confucius, Socrates,
Have spoken, doubt their words who dare.

Mohammed doubt, and Zoroaster,
Gautama doubt, doubt eye and ear;
But there's a voice in thy own breast,
Oh, man, thou canst not help but hear.

Hath God from His high Heaven come down
And made by His compelling voice
Martyrs of saints, and all for naught?—
And martyred seers from bloody choice?

Hath God in every land was fit
Inspired His Bibles all for naught,
That bring the bright Millennium on
Which day by day is nearer brought?

THE MARTYR.

I

I CANNOT let go of God's hand,
And go my way of Heaven unblest!
Who is on friendly terms with God
Can do without the rest.

Let not go my hand, O, God!
I pray thee, whatsoever I do—
But see me safely to the end,
Life's maze and pitfalls through!

II

Alas for sins that separate
From God and leave us all forlorn!
'Tis better to be beggar-poor,
And suffer all men's scorn!

Better are manacles and gyves,
The prison-cell, the hangman's cart,—
Better the torture and the rack,
Or by wild horses torn apart!

'Twas not for naught that saints have died
And prophets — beaten, tortured, burned —
For only so, as all men know,
Their glorious crowns they earned.

LIFE'S AFTERNOON

'Tis now past noon,
And soon
We must go hence.
Beyond the light of day —
And the sun's ray?
Into the darkness quite?
Or dim twilight
Such as the old Greeks tell,
In fields of asphodel?

* * *

Nay:
But into the brighter day,
As we believe,
So do not grieve,
And into the fuller and completer life.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

WERE I born in the land of Confucius,—
 A slit-eyed Chinese with a queu —
 I'd go to a " Joss " House to worship,
 Most likely, and so, sir, would you :
 If we, Yankees born, were born Chinamen,
 We should do as the Chinamen do.

WERE I born in the land of Gautama,—
 Were I born and brought up a Hindoo,—
 I should worship the Buddha, most likely,
 And so, sir, most likely, would you :
 If we, Yankees born, were born Hindoos,
 We should do as the Hindoos do.

But what use pursue the theme further?
 Do we not all know that 'tis true? —
 Translate me the words of Confucius,
 Gautama, and Jesus the Jew,—
 And, behold, they all teach the same precept:—
 " Be good! Be good and good do! "

LINES

I

FIVE in Heaven and five on earth:—
 Who shall be the next to go?—
 The next to take the second birth
 For weal or woe?

II

'Tis surely not so hard to do —
As many loved ones there as here —
The dreaded portal to pass through —
That men most fear.

III

Not that I wish to leave you, dears,—
Brothers and sisters good and kind,—
Yet let this thought help dry their tears
Who're left behind.

HOW THE LATE BISHOP BARKER PLAYED CRICKET WHEN A BOY

("Bishop Barker is dead."—From a special dispatch to the San Francisco *Examiner* from Tacoma, February 21, 1901.)

SAY, Waltie, do you remember,—
(Ah, I know you remember it well)
But let me fan memory's ember,
And the little story tell,—
How the Bishop drove the cricket ball
And all our rules pellmell?

* * * *

His smile was bland as he took the bat
And lazily he waited for the ball;
But when it came, ran out, and "pat!"
It never had a chance to fall —

The well-pitched ball, and a "twister," that
Would surely have knocked his wickets all

Had he but let it touch the ground
And given the twisting sphere a chance.
Don't you remember how he did pound
The ball that day and make us dance —
How round the yard with many a bound
His strong arm made our poor legs prance?

Over the house, and over the fence —
The far fence, Waltie, don't you know?
The far front fence?—"What was the sense
Of hitting the ball so hard?" I trow,
Thought we, as hither and thither and thence
Flew the Bishop's "drivers" long ago.

High in the air! — it might have been caught! —
But wasn't — so on he played;
Many chances he ran, but still he wrought,
And long his defeat was delayed;
With dangers many and great is fraught
Such "swiping," but still he stayed.

* * * *

Don't you remember it, Waltie? —
Yes, I know you remember it well.
And now you say Bill Barker is dead —
That e'er now has tolled his funeral knell;
But how full of life he was that day
In the long ago, of which I tell!

THERE IS "A LAND OF PURE DELIGHT"

I

THERE is "a land of pure delight, where saints
and angels dwell,"
Else Jesus erred, and Socrates, and Holy Writ as
well;
Else Lincoln erred, and Washington — both great,
both wise and just,
And many more, the noblest names, in that faith
put their trust.

II

And though the vision that assures is not vouch-
safed to all,
That faith lives on for aye all round this wide ter-
restrial ball:
The world's religions are as one, nations and tribes
unite,
In that sweet faith of joy to come — the "Land of
Pure Delight."

THE OUTSIDER

I CARE not for the Church's mission,
The learned preacher's disquisition
On Sin, Damnation, and Contrition.

The great and good of every age
My preachers are: On many a page
Of books I list their sermons sage.

No man shall cull those fruits for me
That hang from Wisdom's boughs so free,
First-hand I pluck them from the tree.

THE DEAR LORD KNOWS

THE dear Lord knows how much we grieve —
Our weakness knows full well;
But if He knows all's for the best,
Shall we repine, rebel?

He reads our minds, He knows our sin,
And if our hearts be right;
And if we strive to do His will,
And make a valiant fight.

His angels are on every side
To help us on our way,
And though the earthly night be dark,
Soon comes the Heavenly day;

And we've not very far to go,
The time will not be long —
Can we not wait a little while,
Can we not wait a little while,
And suffer, and be strong?

A PRAYER

I

GOD knoweth our desire,
God knoweth what we require;
He knoweth our hearts' behest,
But He knoweth what is best.

II

Unsure is the mind's decision —
God grant us His grace elysian;
Unsure is the heart's behest —
God grant us what is best!

WOMAN'S LOVE

My angel dwells in earthly form
And tenement of clay,
And eats and drinks like any worm
That walks the king's highway.

Poor man's a wretched worm, I trow,
And naughtiness beseems him;
He wanders wanton to and fro
Till woman's love redeems him.

A PRAYER

WHAT is just and right,
And pleasing in Thy sight —
O God of might —

Grant us, we pray —
Grant us to-day —
Now and for aye!

THE SAVAGE STILL PERSISTS

I

BENEATH the culture of the schools,
And fashion of the town,
The brutal savage still persists
For aye and will not down.

II

In Paris, London, and Berlin,
Their palaces among,
Are savages as gross and vile
As when the world was young.

III

“*As gross and vile?*” Are they not worse?
Even by slow degrees
Could decent people e’er spring from
Blackguards such as these?

ARISE AND SHINE!

LET not despair possession take
Of heart and brain,
And fall inane,
Or fling thy body in the lake,
Or plunge a dagger to thy heart:—
Arise! and act the hero’s part!
Thy tale of woe’s a world-old story:
Arise and shine!—and give God the
Glory!

THE BIGOT

To brutes whose nature 'tis to slay
'Tis vain to make appeal —
The jungle-tiger hunts its prey
And tears it up piecemeal —
Yet e'en a man of coarsest clay
May have a heart to feel.

But when was hand of bigot stayed —
On bloody quest intent —
By prayers or tears of man or maid,
Or voice from Heaven sent?
Was Torquemada so delayed? —
Or Cotton Mather spent?

Still thrives the bigot as of yore,
While narrow minds increase —
They dark the window, close the door,
And chatter on like geese:
Shall Torquemadas come once more?
And Cotton Mathers never cease?

THE WICKED WORLD AND SALVATION

(Verses inspired by the contemplation of the long list of failures of projects to benefit and uplift the human race, such as "Brook Farm.")

I

IN every age, in every clime,
Back to the farthest point of time,
The world still wallows in its slime.

Holy men and saints afire
With dreams that unto heaven aspire,—
Have all, then, failed to lift it higher?

Shrinks the bravest back aghast
As they gaze upon the past:—
The Powers of Evil still stand fast!

Long the list of failures dire,
And heaven on earth is now no higher:—
The world still wallows in its mire!

II

What matter names?— the mere outsides —
The foam that floats upon the tides?
Beneath, Old Adam still abides.

And still men fool themselves withal,
As fast the centuries befall,
And by new names the old things call.

But worry not and do not weep,
For when at last we fall asleep,
Be sure the Shepherd will know His sheep!

NEW YORK

I

LET me sing in rhythmic numbers
The great city that never slumbers —
That never slumbers, never sleeps,
But laughs for aye, forever weeps.
That teems with restless life for aye —
Night and day!

II

The Imperial City never sleeps —
Her millions never cease to plod ;
Upon her imperious way she sweeps,
Magnificent, with grandeur shod.

At night, its palaces ablaze
With myriads of lights, it seems
To one who from afar doth gaze,
Like Fairyland or Land of Dreams !

On many a maiden's hand of snow
Gold glitters, precious jewels glow ;
On many a proud dame's queenly breast
Jewels of princely value rest.
Its men of millions when they stride
They rock the world from side to side.

And do they live and linger yet : —
Honor high and love divine —
Midst all this froth and foam and fret ?
They do — their rainbow-hues still shine !

They do — they are not ousted quite,
They still exist, a grateful sight,
In spots, to cheer the cynic's eye :
'Tis God upholds, they cannot die.

III

Ah, would there were no other side
To this fair scene of pomp and pride ! —
Alas ! the poor, the *poor*, the POOR !
That pestilence which none can cure !

Alas for white slaves pinched and pale! —
They pine, they die — loud is their wail.
Rags, penury, the pinch of want,
The streets of the Imperial City haunt.

And ever the flood of vice and crime
(Bedaubed with gore, besmirched with slime)
Flows on relentless 'neath the tide
Of gaudy grandeur, pomp and pride.

In squalor dire, in shanty, shack,—
In hut and hovel, tenement,—
They swarm, a swinish, wolfish pack,
By police hounded aye and pent.

The Imperial City rots at the core,
With a stench that stifles it more and more.
O where's the physician can cure this ill? —
Can we not cure it ourselves if we will?

POETS AND PROPHETS AND THE WORLD

I

FROM Homer to Walt Whitman, when the time
Poets for filthy lucre framed their rhyme?
At God's behest they sing, time-servers never —
Unyoked the bard, and free as air forever!
Hitch to the plow proud Pegasus you may,
But bind his soul with lies and shams? — Nay,
nay!

II

The worldling and the poet far apart
Are as the poles — the poet's pen and mart
By gulf profound are separated wide: —
Ah, me! times past what glorious names have died
In penury in midst of pomp and pride!
In book begilt the world his swan-song keeps,
The while in pauper's grave the poet sleeps!
And still the play proceeds without surcease —
Till opes his grave ne'er finds the poet peace:
Beside the prophet aye he lays him down
At last to die, slain by the cold world's frown.

III

From felon's death with all its bitter throes
Jesus and Socrates to Glory rose.
In realms divine their souls shall dwell for aye:
But as the world was then it is to-day.
The prison-cell and bitter death of shame
But adds more glory to the martyr's name.
Good cause, O World, have we thee to mistrust: —
To thieves a banquet! — to honest men a crust!

IV

But poet and prophet are not always spurned: —
Luther escaped though Savonarola burned.
To Longfellow, Tennyson, the world was kind,
Though Keats and Camoens suffered and repined,
And Poe in penury lived all his years
And wrote his "Raven" in a rain of tears.
And though to the cross Jesus the Jew was nailed,
In China Confucius' life was not assailed.
And though for Socrates the death of shame,
Marcus Aurelius an emperor became.

THE MIND OF MAN IS PRONE TO ERR

I

THE mind of man is prone to err as is his soul to
 sin,
 Through all the world from end to end strides im-
 perfection in —
 From eels and tadpoles up to man, perfection none
 can win.

II

It is the common doom of all on this wide earth
 that live;
 Who seeks perfection on this earth seeks water in
 a sieve,
 Brethren, let us think of this, 'twill help us to for-
 give!

SALVATION'S ONLY PLAN THAT'LL NOT
BETRAY

It has the guaranty of saint and seer,
 And should be thundered till the deaf should
 hear: —
Salvation's only plan that'll not betray
Is just: "Be good!" There is no other way.

No easy creed it was that Jesus taught
 And Socrates, unto a world distraught.
 "Be good" their only password to the skies: —
 Who trusts aught else beside he is not wise.

This cheap, huckster-salvation of to-day,
Its hours are numbered — soon 'twill pass away;
But “goodness” still password to Heaven shall be
While time shall last and to eternity!

TRUE EVEN UNTO DEATH

MAY a noble man be noble —
May sweet woman dare be sweet —
In this world of good and evil,
Sadly mixed and incomplete?

'Tis God in Heaven watches o'er us —
Our parts heroic we must play,
Like heroes who have lived before us,
Who were noble in their day.

Let the coward fail and falter —
Let the knave forsake, betray: —
Better the scaffold and the halter!
Come death there is no other way!

NEW YEAR'S EVE

I

ON mountain height or wind-swept plain
We shall not lose our hearts' dull pain;
Go where we will, it still abides:
We cannot find it where it hides
To fling it forth from out our breasts —
Deep in our souls secure it rests.

II

But now as horns and whistles blare
The Old Year dies — we breathe a prayer —
The New Year's foot is on the stair.
And now in the door that opens wide
Behold the New Year bravely stride!
Forgotten be our hearts' dull pain —
The New Year dawns! let's try again!

THE GRAND OLD MEN

THE wise and good, the seer and saint,—
To crush them has the world had qualms?
Alas! it spared not Socrates
Or Jesus —cruel 'twas to these
(Earth's best) as wolves to lambs!

O bitter Marah of this world!
Thou turnest many a heart to gall
That once was sweet as any spring
Which from the earth is issuing,
And quaffed with blessings is by all!

Ah, sweet indeed must be that man,
Whether he wields the sword or pen,
Or lives by trade or by the plow,
Who issues forth, still sweet, somehow,
At three-score-years-and-ten!

LOVE AND DEATH

HE

“ WE grow cold as we grow old,—
So they say.
Only the young are warm and bold,—
So they say.
Shall the same of us be told,
That we grew cold as we grew old? ”

SHE

“ Nay, dearest, nay!
I cannot think 'twill e'er be true
Of thou and me!
O e'en if thou from me wert ta'en
By death to some far star's domain —
Why — ”

HE

“ Dear love, you pause, I see.
Ah, this it is congeals the heart
As we grow old —
Our loved ones from this earth depart —
No wonder we grow cold!
God pity us, poor worms of dust —
We weep though in His Heaven we trust: —
Love's separation and despair,
God knows how hard it is to bear! ”

RESTING BY THE SUMMER SEA

RESTING! O, just resting — resting —
 By the summer sea!
 With my coat my cares divesting,
 Dropping all anxiety,—
 Coatless, careless, lazily
 Resting by the summer sea!

Back there in the smoky city,—
 On life's race-course hot and dry —
 Men are straining for life's baubles,—
 Wealth and fame — while here am I,
 On the sea-beach stretched supinely,
 Where the sea-breeze blows divinely,
 Resting by the summer sea!

OH, WHO CAN DOUBT?

OH, who can doubt that has a mind to know,
 A heart to feel, that all are equal so? —
 The Jew, the Greek, the Hindoo, the Chinese,
 Their chance for Heaven the same if God they
 please.

Who live an upright life — beggar or king —
 Their souls at death to Heaven shall take wing.
 The Protestant, the Papist — Turk, Hindoo —
 The Christian and Mohammedan and Jew.

“ Who pray aright their prayer shall answered be.
Who prayed to Jupiter they prayed to Me;
To Me they prayed who prayed to Buddh and
Thor,—
My angels keep their watch on every shore.

“ Have I not sent My prophets down to men
Of every race — and o’er and o’er again?
Have they not all the selfsame message told —
To-day and yesterday and days of old? ”

RESPITE

AN interval of silence deep
In green woods that forever sleep;

In valleys by green hills shut in
Forgot are mart and market’s din;

In stroll by stream in flowery mead
Forgotten is the cold world’s greed.

PRECIOUS IS GOLD

PRECIOUS is gold for what it brings,
And diamonds for their beauty rare;
But far more precious than such things,
And far, O far more fair,
God’s mercy is, beyond compare!

How beautiful and grand the view
 From many a hill and mountain-height —
 But far more fair, I tell you true,
 Than scenes that merely the eyes delight —
 That which is pleasing in God's sight!

VIOLETS FROM THE "LITTLE LOT"

VIOLETS from the "Little Lot"
 I cannot bring,
 And these are not —
 For that old homestead is no more,
 Our happy home in days of yore,
 In youth's bright halcyon hours: —
 And that fair park of sun and shade
 Where we as happy children played —
 Its winding walks — its birds awing —
 Its croquet-ground, greased-pole, and swing —
 Its garden wonderful of flowers —
 Has like a bright dream passed away:
 "Too good to last," as one might say.

THE NOTE OF DESPAIR

OUT upon this wicked world,
 That turns the heart to gall! —
 That turns the heart to bitterness,
 Which once was sweet withal! —
 That murders innocence for aye
 Since time of Adam's fall!

Do I by this condemn myself?
'S death! an' if 't be so,
Then let me die, and quickly —
I'll die without a blow —
If I be but the like of you,
You're free to lay me low!

Vacant let me leave this spot
Of earth without ado
Whereon my feet unwilling stand
If I be like to you!
A thunderbolt for each of us —
And let 't come quickly, too!

Was it for wickedness Babylon
Did fall and was no more? —
Was it for wickedness came the Flood
That covered every shore?
Then surely 'tis the day and hour,—
Let the rain pour! pour!

THE NOTE OF REJOICING;

OR

THE DRAGON-KILLERS

FORGIVE me, God, I did forget
To thank Thee for this bread and wine,—
And all my blessings I forgot,
That make life half divine!
Not Thee, not Thee, but Antichrist
Thy servant's words malign!

And as for all his craven crew,
Like pirates they the world that scour
With bloody outrage that besmears
Abominably every hour —
This dragon that goes up and down
Seeking fresh victims to devour: —

We shall with swift-descending steel
Yet sever head from heart, I trow,—
Huzza! this dragon dread shall die,
And down before our weapons go,—
And all his infamous black blood
In splutterings of death outflow!

So died the dragons of old time,
And so shall die this dragon dread —
Priestcraft, Kingcraft, Slavery,
Each one has lost his horrid head;
Huzza! and now another waits —
Our swords shall soon be red!

THE HERMIT

I

BRIDLE AND CURB

ALL the forces of nature,
And gifts of God from above: —
Steam — electricity — even
The passion of love,—

Need to be harnessed and bridled,
Need both the curb and the spur,—
Now urged, now restrained, ever guided,
Else surely we mortals shall err ;

Else surely shall come dire disaster,
Destruction and death and dismay.
O, how can we mortals walk steadfast
In the straight and narrow way ?

Impossible for us to do it,
Alone, without help from on high : —
We shall slip, we shall fall, it is certain —
The only escape is to die !

How can we these mighty forces
Of nature restrain and control ? —
Can we curb the wrath of the cyclone —
Or bridle the waves when they roll ?

II

THE POWER OF RELIGION

WITHOUT God and help of His angels,
'Tis true we should perish all ;
But with them can we not conquer —
Stand fast and not fall ?

To show the way prophets endured it,
And in it the saints meekly trod ;
Let us take up our cross and press onward,
And be glad, for that way leads to God !

Let us harness the wild powers of nature,
 And drive them safely and well —
 And take up our cross and press onward
 To Heaven and God, out of Hell!

Let us force back the conquering legions
 Of Satan, on earth holding sway,
 To the Bottomless Pit whence they issued,
 And haste on the Millennial Day!

III

OF LIMITATIONS

O ANCIENT saints and prophet seers,
 Inspired ye were, but bounded: —
 O ancient creed, by men of old —
 Good men and wise — compounded,

Thou hast thy limitations, too,
 Thou art not all-inclusive, —
 Inspired thy authors, yet still men,
 With thoughts and dreams delusive.

The mind of man, can it discern,
 Can it contain it all —
 The mind of God — or hear complete
 His words from Heaven that fall?

Can even saints' and prophets' ken
 Discern with unenlightened eye —
 Though God shall send His visions down
 And speak from out the sky?

Else how comes it that out of Christ
Sprang arts and sciences renowned,—
Printing, painting, arithmetic,
Philosophy profound,—

Astronomy? And even in
Religion's realm, from Persia came
Much that in the Christian creed
We orthodoxy name.

In law, great Moses furnished much,
But heathen Romans gave us more:
Our law-books teem with Latin words,
And with their heathen lore.

The Jews were never artisans,—
E'en in Solomon's famous reign
Heathen foreigners were sought
To build and gild his fane.

Columbus was a Christian man,
But how could he have well succeeded
Without that little heathen toy —
The compass — from the Chinese deeded?

IV

OF AUTHORITY

SOME men are gifted, others not: —
The gift's from God: — Can we not rest
Assured that it is wisely placed,
With him can use it best?

The honest artisan shall we
Believe who speaks about his trade,—
And doubt the prophet's prophecy?
When surely both are made

By gift from God, with faithful soul
Patient pursued through months and years,
And only to perfection brought
By weary toil and tears?

The guest-chamber who have prepared
Receive the guest, 'tis plain to see,—
By law that sleeps not day or night
Come all God's gifts to man that be.

For ages on the stars men gazed —
The Arab, Roman, Greek, and Jew —
But the secret of the universe
Copernicus the first that knew.

When Nimrod speaketh of the chase,
Napoleon of the art of war,—
Is it not wise for most of us
To silently their sage words store?

Only the fool will wag his tongue
And hold presumptuous debate
In things whereof he little knows
With men who in those things are great.

The merchant-prince in mart of trade,
Discharging well his duties there,
Is fair to see; but what a dunce
He'd be in the professor's chair!

Ah, beautiful it is to see
A man in his own branch a king,
Wise and great enough to know
He knows not everything!

V

OF THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT

THE right to think for ourselves from God
We get, for did He not confer
On mortal man free agency?
Though that His creature, man, would err,

That privilege possessing, He
Surely must full well have seen.
He deemed it best: — that is enough
Us to assure 'tis best, I ween.

And who but well can understand
That it is best it thus should be?
Who is there feels not fierce revolt,
And will not do that thing, not he,

If means Procrustean are used
His mind or ways to mend or change?
On this point all men are agreed,
Howe'er diverse in thought they range.

Keep, then, thy privilege God-given! —
And may it ne'er be ta'en from thee —
Freedom of thought! May 't have a home
For aye in this land of the free!

And if you understand and know
The mighty issues thereon bide,—
And choose aright,—'tis well; but, ah,
If wrong you choose, then woe betide!

“But God is merciful,” you say,
“And God forgives, and if we make
An error in all honesty,
He will not us forsake.”

God will not willingly forsake
His lowest creature, but if you
Shall Him forsake, He will not pass
That proud partition through.

“I stand at the door and knock,” said Christ;
Unless you open wide the door,
He will not enter in, but stands
And knocks forevermore.

That man will only deign accept
What he can understand and see,
Of his own reason, of his own
Experience,—a fool is he.

Be he in every way the peer
Of any, he cannot contain
The whole of wit and wisdom in
His own poor little brain.

That such and such are true, he knows;
By his experience well taught.
But if he all things waits to learn
Experience by, he shall be brought

To perfect wisdom never, though
He live Methuselah's length of years ;
He must have faith in others, faith
In God, and open eyes and ears.

May not the thoughts of other men —
My equals — be as good as mine?
And their convictions valid as
My own? — The evidence and sign

Of greatest wisdom surely is
For man this truth to recognize: —
He cannot all things of himself
Discern, but must use others' eyes.

Remember and do not forget
Your own judgment to use and wit ;
God you endowed with them for this,—
And you must see to it.

Be free! be free! — but not too free ;
Have faith! — but not too much.
Be true to all, true to yourself,—
And Heaven waits for such!

VI

OF THE ANCIENT AND MODERN

THE men of old were circumscribed,—
'Tis needless almost to rehearse,—
Abridged and wrong to a degree
Their knowledge of the universe

But God, this world, and Satan,
This earth, and Heaven and Hell,
Are still the most momentous themes
That in man's mind can dwell.

And life is pretty much the same
On earth to-day, from A to Z,
As when Bible was writ or Christ
Preached in Galilee.

Do telegraph and telephone,
And phonograph, and such,
Change God and Heaven, Devil and Hell,
Abolish death, or much

Change or alter man himself —
His character — the real man?
No; 'tis the same old universe
That we with wider vision scan.

For man's of woman born to-day
As formerly, and for him wait
The joys and ills of earthly life
That ever were his fate.

Waits God and Heaven, Devil and Hell,
And spirits good or bad shall him
Surround, and all his steps attend
As formerly, though 't be his whim

Or choice with Ingersoll to hold
That all these things have passed away,
Or never were; it alters not
The fact; — they still hold sway.

VII

OF THE MILLENNIUM

THE Persian faith in this wise runs:—
Shall come an awful day of flame,
Nature shall purified then be,
And Hell henceforth be but a name;

And Hell henceforth be part of Heaven,
And even Satan transformed be
Into an angel: Some such thing
Some saintly Christians hope to see.

God knows, and He alone can know,
Man can but guess and guess again,—
Man cannot hope in word or act
Perfection to attain.

Man's creeds approximations are,
And not the pure and perfect truth,—
Impossible that that could be,
For is not language too uncouth?

God help us all! Thy help we need!
Lead us the way that we should go!
For we are foolish, willful, blind,—
The way we cannot know.

FAIRYLAND

“WHERE'S Fairyland, father?” cried little Jack,
“Indeed I want to know!”
“Where is it?” cried little Eleanor,
“Let's all pack up and go!”

“ Well, 'tis like this,” their father said,
“ The way to go is this: —
You run across the rainbow,—
The way you cannot miss.

“ The other end the rainbow
Is Fairyland so fair;
And any time you see one
'Tis easy to go there.

“ Get on this end the rainbow
And run across — that's all.”
* * * *

“ But won't it break?” asked little Jack,
“ And then we'd get a fall.”

Their father smiled. “ The secret
Is this, my children dear,—
You cannot cross the rainbow
With either frown or tear.

“ If you are good, 'tis easy —
It will not bend or shake,—
But if you're naughty, down you go —
A cross word makes it break.

“ The fairies know—they're on the watch
Forever, night and day,—
If little girls and boys are good,
The bridge will not give way.

“ If you want to go to Fairyland,
You see, you must watch out: —
You cannot fool the fairies —
They see you frown and pout;

“ But if you're good the rainbow bridge
All safe and strong will stand ;
And easy 'tis to run across,
And get to Fairyland.”

“ If that is so,” cried little Jack,
“ Let's all be good, *I* say! —
We'll all be sorry if we don't,
That's just as plain as day!”

“ You're fooling us!” cried Eleanor,
“ There is no rainbow bridge *I* know!
There is no Fairyland at all —
My teacher told me so!

“ There is no really, truly bridge —
No really, truly Fairyland,—
You're only fooling Jack and me!”
Her father smiled and kissed her hand.

“ So beautiful 'tis to be good
It is a rainbow-bridge indeed!”
He said, “ that into Fairyland
Does really, truly lead!”

LOVERS' LANE

A WINDING lane through leafy shade,
Where lovers oft' their steps delayed —
Beneath whose leafy bowers were told
Full oft' the tale shall ne'er grow old.

O, blest forever be that road
Of love the sacred, sweet abode!
What tales of love the birds could tell
That sing within that leafy dell

Of kisses 'neath th' embowering trees —
Of tender words borne by the breeze,—
Love's solemn vow and tender word
That only the birds and the angels heard!

THE WORD THAT IS SWEETEST

THE word that is sweetest and dearest of any,
Shall we neglect it and leave it unsaid?
The best word of all—though good words are
many —
O shall we not speak it before we are dead?

Hallowed the names be of father and mother!
Where child in his trundle-bed lispeth and coos,—
But home is where love is and there is no other,
And some must live single for how can they
choose?

The love-word! the best word among words im-
mortal!
The nightingale's singing beside it is naught! —
We are waifs of the ocean that fly to thy portal,
O harbor of home with love's happiness fraught!

LINES

SPLENDORS of earth and sky —
Sister, do not die!

We need earth's angels here —
Stay, sister dear!

The world is low and vile,
But stay awhile!

For there be heroes still —
And save they will!

And there be saints e'en yet,
So do not fret!

God's power shall still prevail —
It will not fail!

MY BOYHOOD SWEETHEART

WHY did I meet her,
Merely to greet her,
Then to depart?

In dreams ever after
To hear her sweet laughter —
My boyhood sweetheart!

Her face what a vision
Of bright realms elysian
It makes the tears start!

Our heads now are hoary
And gone is life's glory —
My boyhood sweetheart!

A TRUCE, A TRUCE TO LOVE'S ALARMS

A TRUCE, a truce to love's alarms
Till we meet in heaven above! —
I dreamt I held her in my arms
And kissed the maid I love.

O sweet! but thou wast far away
From me when morning broke,
Howbeit the sweetness still did stay
Long after I awoke.

No more, I can endure no more,—
There is a limit set,—
Till we shall meet on heaven's shore,
Beyond earth's toil and fret.

BY THE RIVER

THE red light of the sunset fades
And fades, and dies away: —
And fair upon the river falls
The twilight dim and gray: —
The wind is high, the waters toss
And tumble in rude play.

Slow drops the night, the shadows steal
 Around the hills and hide:—
And o'er the hills and up the sky
 The queenly moon doth ride:—
Pretty Jeannette! how happy I
 If thou wert at my side!

The tossing waters swish against
 The dam and it spill o'er:—
I muse within the summer-house
 That dots the river shore:—
“Sweetheart!” I muse, “once we have met—
 Shall we meet nevermore?”

The swish, swish, of the waters how
 It fascinates my ears:—
How tender shines the moonlight on
 The waters through my tears:—
Sweetheart! thy voice that once I heard—
 How sweet!—my spirit hears.

THE END

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