

COLLECTED POEMS

CRAVEN LANGSTROTH BETTS

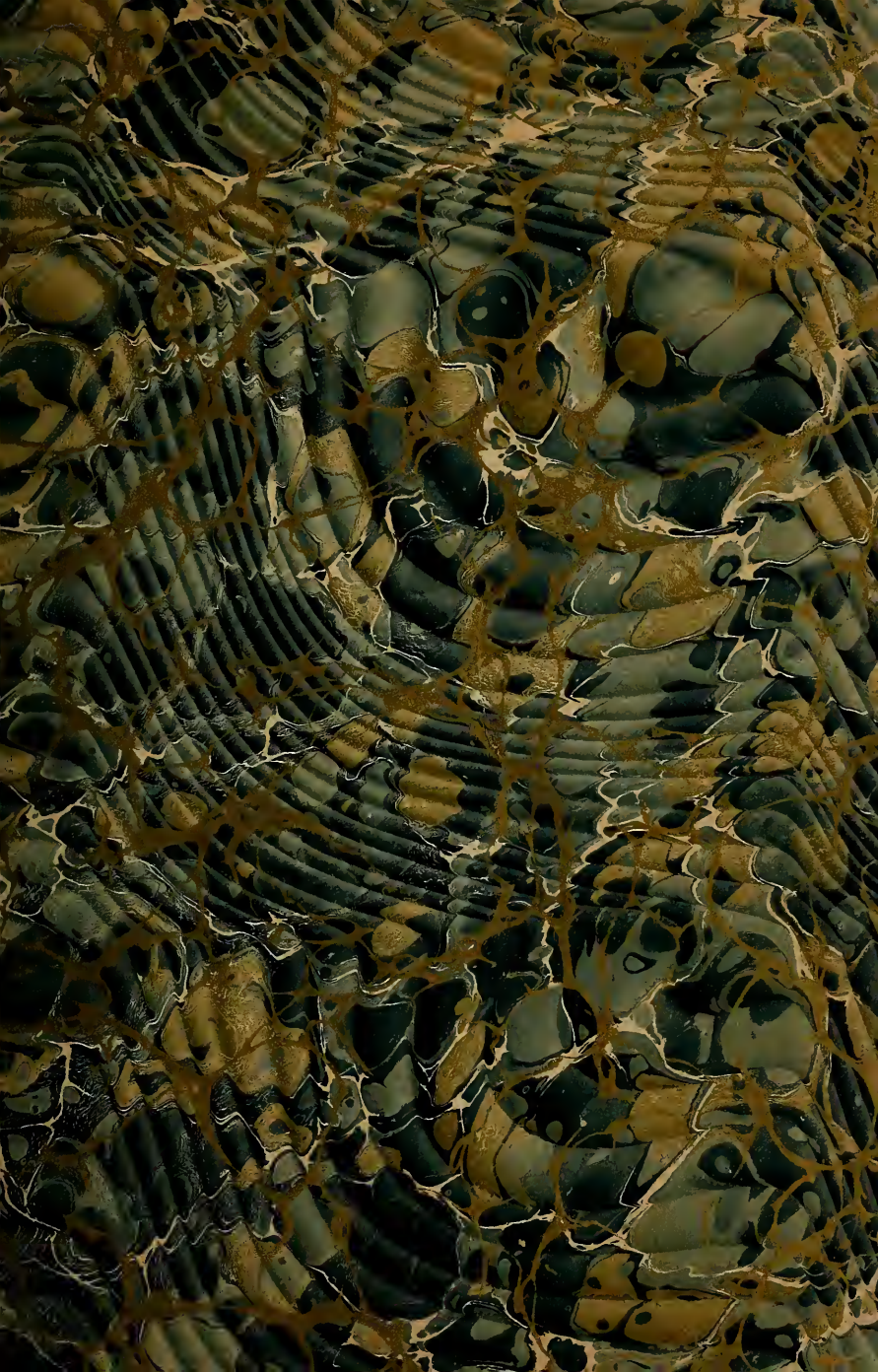


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COLLECTED VERSE

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SELECTED POEMS

OF

CRAVEN LANGSTROTH BETTS

AUTHOR OF "SONGS FROM BÉRANGER,"
"TALES OF A GARRISON TOWN,"
"THE PROMISE," ETC.



NEW YORK

ASSOCIATED AUTHORS AND COMPILERS

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TO THE NOBILITY OF ART
EVERYWHERE

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE PERFUME-HOLDER	3
MAJOR POEMS	
Hymn to the Spirit of Beauty	39
Astrophel	45
Ode to Spring	50
" Autumn	55
" Winter	58
Diana and Endymion	68
Deformed	72
The Ever-growing Truth	77
Eugenie on the Death of Her Son	82
Resurgam	86
In the Gloaming	91
Canadian Thanksgiving Hymn	94
The Hollyhocks	96
California	98
To the Poets	101
The Slumber	103
One Kin Are We	104
The Vision	106
The Birthplace of Freedom	109
The Golden-rod	111
January	113
The Barren Fig-Tree	114
Questions of Life	115
To the Bumble-Bee	117
The Poor Apple Woman	119
Childless	120
My Three Friends	122
Thanksgiving Hymn	124
A Withered Rose	126
Betrayed	127
The Votive Rose	128
Society and Art	129
Lines on a Picture	130
"Just as High as My Heart"	131
The Prisoner of Love	132
In Memoriam	134
Robert Browning	136
To Sidney Lanier	138

MAJOR POEMS— <i>Continued</i>	PAGE
Marlowe	141
Requiescat	142
Lines on Oliver Wendell Holmes	145
“Threescore and Ten”	147
To Richard Henry Stoddard	149
SONGS AND LYRICS	
Hey, Ho, Robin!	153
Written for a Canadian National Anthem	155
Love Leading	157
A Song of Summer	160
Saint Christmas	162
“The Springtime Lingereth Long, Love”	165
Fairies’ Song	167
My Lassie with Your Eyes of Blue	170
Fair as Ceres Bearing Guerdon	172
A Song of the Dawn	174
Sea Song	176
Invocation to Love	179
My Lady from the Sea	181
My Sonneteer	183
Song for the Empire State	186
A Song of Hope	187
Cradle Song	188
FRENCH FORMS	
French Forms	192
The Immortality of Song	193
The Renascence of Spring	196
The Coming Age	199
The Advantage of Love	202
Under Marlboro’	204
Ballade of the Sea-Serpent	206
Ballade of the Tailor	208
The Servant of the Muse	210
The Bogey of English Free Trade	212
Béranger’s Songs	214
My Tricky Muse	215
A Rustic Scene	216
A Perfect Friend	217
The Heart’s Voyage	218
O Sovereign Love	221
The Vision of the Dis Debar	222
Triolets	223
QUATRAINS	
The Quatrain	226
The Universal Life	227
Standing-Room	227

CONTENTS

ix

QUATRAINS— <i>Continued</i>	PAGE
The World-Maelstrom of the West	227
Knowledge and Wisdom	227
Penuel	228
Evolution	228
Love	228
On Certain Academicians	228
Old and New Art	229
To Certain Critics	229
The Basic Force	229
The Conventional Parson	229
Midas and Company	230
Cave Canem!	230
Pegasus at Pasture	230
Orthodox Liberalism	230
The Poets and Mammon	231
Sonnets and Sonneteers	231
The Shakespearean Sonnet	231
Poets and Poetasters	231
On the Spiritual Barnum	232
Truth	232
To Some New Critics	232
Fancy	232
Self-Knowledge	233
True and False Fame	233
Béranger	233
The Rule of Rapacity	233
The Profligate of Kindness	234
Traits of Women	234
The Invincible Sex	234
The Curse of the Coquette	234
Artificial Refinement	235
Woman's Heart	235
DOUBLE QUATRAINS	
Life	235
The Iliad	236
The Press	236
The Years of Life	237
Human Existence	237
Truth	238
Shakespeare	238
The Humble-Bee	239
Hope and Despair	239
Faith and Love	240
Pleasure and Joy	240
BALLADS	
Canada to England	243

BALLADS— <i>Continued</i>	PAGE
The Bonnet Blue	246
Soldiers' Home	248
Good Saint Valentine	252
The Earl's Daughter	254
The Old Sabre	257
Lamond	261
On the Frontier	267
Devon and Drake	273
Mary Jane	276
Blind Milton	278
Defence of the Long Saut	282
Goring's Ride	291
Lady Maud	293
SONNETS	
Foreword	296
Out of the Darkness (3 Sonnets)	297
Britain and Her Colonies	299
England and the Armada	299
Belgium	300
Japan	300
Montenegro	301
Switzerland	301
Holland	302
A Warning to the Kaiser	302
The Lighted Liberty	303
The Half-Century Reunion at Gettysburg	303
Evening at City Point, James River, 1890	304
Charlotte Corday	304
Shakespeare	305
Lincoln	305
Alfred and Charlemagne	306
Cromwell	306
Abdul Hamid, the "Shadow of God"	307
Garibaldi	307
Salvini	308
Othello	308
Irving	309
Booth	309
On Reading the Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini	310
John Henry Boner	310
The House of Lords	311
Don Quixote	311
To the Moon-Flower	312
The Condor	312
Honor and Fame	313
Love and Truth	313
Wisdom and Knowledge	314

CONTENTS

xi

SONNETS— <i>Continued</i>	PAGE
Peace	314
Fortitude	315
The Unseen World	315
Humanitas	316
Personality	316
Duty	317
Science	317
The Tide of Time	318
Death	318
The Closing Walls	319
Life's Voyage	319
The Return	320
Grand Manan	320
The Water Lily (2 Sonnets)	321
Spring Morning	322
Summer Night in the Country	322
The Bather	323
Summer Noon	323
To a Friend	324
Love	324
The Conjunction of Love	325
The Security of Love	325
The Fortitude of Love	326
The Favor of Love	326
The Quality of Love	327
Devotion of Love	327
Immortality of Love	328
Constancy	328
To ———	329
To ———	329
The Ideal	330
The Ideal Found	330
To Astrea (8 Sonnets)	331
A GARLAND OF SONNETS	
To Shakespeare	336
Homer	337
Chaucer	337
Tasso	338
Spenser	338
Marlowe	339
Shakespeare	339
Milton	340
Dryden	340
Pope	341
Burns	341
Scott	342
Byron	342

A GARLAND OF SONNETS— <i>Continued</i>	PAGE
Keats	343
Shelley	343
Coleridge	344
Wordsworth	344
Hood	345
Schiller	345
Goethe	346
Béranger	346
Hugo	347
Tennyson	347
Browning	348
Arnold	348
Bayard Taylor	349
Emerson	349
Longfellow	350
Lowell	350
Whittier	351
Whitman	351
Morris	352
Kipling	352
Mistral	353
<i>L'Envoi</i>	354

THE PERFUME-HOLDER

A Persian Love Poem

This poem is derived from a prose story, called "Selim, the Unsociable," by Arthur Kennedy and originally published in Temple Bar.

THE PERFUME-HOLDER

PROUD Naishàpùr, two hundred years ago,
Inviolatè from the galling Turkish foe,
Like a warm opal dropped from Allah's hand,
Lay glimmering on the green Khorassan land.
Girdling the South, the desert's sandy coil
Strangled the verdure and oppressed the soil;
But East and North the languorous noon-day breeze
Lifted the leaves of lime and tamarind trees
Over the hills, within whose broken row
The gleaming city watched the river flow.
Along the camel track from Ispahan,
Came tinklings of the nearing caravan,
Trailing its parched, dust-cumbered passage down
Into the market of the wealthy town.
Piercing the vibrant ether, bold to view,
A hundred minarets burned athwart the blue;
The purple roofs of mosques, like sunset isles,
Blazed all their panoply of porcelain tiles,
While from the walls the names of Allah shone
In many a scrolled and squared device of stone.
Color and light loomed everywhere; their glow
Burnished the booths and houses, row on row;
They flamed across the palace court-yard flags
And blazoned even the cringing beggar's rags.
The darkling ponds and fountains steely-cold
The sun's keen alchemy changed to shimmering gold;
And marble cupolas and awnings white
Flashed forth all splendid with reflected light;
While green pomegranate leaf and pregnant vine

Gained prouder lustre from the teeming shine.
All earth was bathed in palpitating heat;
The sun-rays searched enclosure, lane, and street,
And streamed along the cream-white painted walls
Of gardens and the roofs of market stalls,
Spreading one glare of yellow radiance down
O'er hill and valley, desert, wood, and town.

High noon in Naishàpùr!—the gay bazaars,
Heaped with their wares wrought under half the stars,
One ant-like, huge, conglomerate market made,
Coursed with a hundred throbbing veins of trade.
Yet the loud buzz of traffic even there
Sinks at the high Muezzin's call to prayer,
While so oppressive grows the blaze of day
That even the water carriers shirk the way.
A little longer swirls the busy bruit
About the coffee stalls and booths of fruit;
A moment longer does the merchant stop,
Claps-to the slender shutters of his shop,
Then in his flapping slippers homeward hies
To prayer, to pipe, to Fatima's dark eyes.
In the brass-worker's noisy, bright bazaar
Hushed are the chaffering and the hammer's jar,
And silence settling o'er earth's fevered face,
Soothes for an hour the throbbing market-place.

One man, a poor artificer in brass,
Stirs not as forth the hurrying vendors pass;
But soon as quiet breathes along the street,
Springs from his leathern cushion to his feet,
Lays by the lantern he had shaped that day,
Looks out along the cleared, deserted way,
Takes down the bowl of curds and loaf of bread
That stand upon the shelf above his head,
Hooks up a curtain o'er his small retreat

Which opens full upon the busy street,
Casts one more glance along the farther wall,
Then hides himself behind the portal-shawl.

One might have heard within that curtain soon
A tapping through the hot and quiet noon:
A strange man this—mayhap for love of gain
He works mid-day when all for rest are fain?
Such was his custom, and the passers by
Had ceased to scan him with a curious eye.
The gossips had no tale of him to tell;
They named him Selim the Unsociable.
Too poor for note of even the idlest there
Was he, and why he spent the hour of prayer
Behind his curtain, save for rest and shade,
None knew or cared; few were that sought his trade.
'Twould seem such anxious privacy and heed
Had little use; the street was bare, indeed,
Save vagrant dogs that strewed the shining track,
Like pious Moslems sleeping in a pack,
Snarling in dream, because the heated bricks
In poignant fancy smote them like the kicks
Of Allah's Faithful—snapping jaws in pain,
Then stretching out their quivering legs again.

Who treads with silent pace the empty street,
Then halts and hearkens to that hammer's beat?
Well might you mark him by his furtive eye
A friend to Falsehood, grasping, shrewd and sly.
To Selim's booth he moves,—he makes a stand,—
The curtain raises with a stealthy hand
And peers within; the sudden shaft of light
Flashes a marvelous work upon his sight;
For lo, between the craftsman's bended knees,
Prouder than aught that Shah or Sultan sees,
With lines of purest arabesque enscrolled,

A perfume-holder, rich as burnished gold,
Wrought all in brass, cut round with lace designs,
With mottoes graved between the flowing lines;
Of antique mould the base; superbly fair
The swelling bowl; and like a lily in air
The stem rose curving; and its feet were wrought
With cunning art from Indian carvers caught.
A miracle of rare and patient art,
Informed by genius ripening from the heart,
Such as might lift the incense at the shrine
Of Allah or of Mahomet the Divine.
One might forego all sense save that of sight,
The life-long master of that heart's delight.

You in the cloud-spanned, amethystine West,
Know not what ceremonious, prideful zest
The Persian in his mistless, azure air,
Brings to his perfume even as 'twere his prayer.
The perfume-holder, no effeminate whim,
Holds ever first and honored place with him;
Drop on the powder but some glowing coals,
Lo, from its bowl the spiralled perfume rolls;
Dear unto Allah as the mingled breath
Of lovers passing through the gates of death.

To lie awake in one bliss-haunted dream
Where leaves are rustling and cool fountains gleam,
Within a vine-hung, lustrous colonnade,
While near, some large-eyed, love-enchanted maid
Leans, lily-crowned, against a marble jar,
Caressing languidly her light guitar,
Her fingers glancing o'er the shimmering strings
Like play of moonbeams on deep bubbling springs,
Wooing the soul of melody divine
From murmuring streams and groves of haunted pine,
Her bosom lifting to the waves of sound

That have in one delicious languor drowned
The outer sense, leaving the spirit free
To revel in one swoon-like ecstasy—
And then to watch the pungent vapor curl
With many a slender and fantastic swirl
Swung through the vibrant music, till the air
Freighted with tinkling sounds and odors rare
Filters soul-deep within the fleshly mail,
Till, rapt, escaping from the body's jail,
The spirit issuing through its portal flies
To fairy realms of wonder and surmise—
Such were indeed a taste of Paradise!

Small thought of this had he, that sordid spy,
Who on the masterpiece cast curious eye.
He was a merchant, trained to every guile
Of trade,—to fawn, to browbeat, and to smile;
Careful to hold, in every scheme he tried
Of fraud or rapine, law upon his side.
His talon fingers in their crawling clutch
Pulled forth the shadowing curtain overmuch,
And Selim, of his presence made aware,
Looked up and met the intruder's searching stare,
And frowning, marked the sordid ruthless trace
Of avarice on the man's ill-omened face.
Then spake the stranger with a smile compressed,—
"Selim, has Allah made the time of rest
Too long, or given too brief a working day,
That thus you toil the noontide hour away?"
As some proud courser that with action grand
Tosses aside a strange caressing hand,
So Selim threw his head back at the word,
For hateful to him was the voice he heard,
And answered: "Surely little rest doth lie
With him, O merchant, who with delving eye
Looks either in broad noon or yet at night

On that which others fain would keep from sight.
It naught concerns my business to attest
Wherefore I work at mid-day or I rest."

He set aside the wonder-work of art
And waited for the questioner to depart,
Whose sidelong, hovering glance was cast about,
Nor rested but to mark the vessel out.
He named a price, but Selim shook his head;
"Why squander words? 'Tis not for sale," he said.
The other, following his practiced guile,
Answered with fawning, unbelieving smile:
"I have a friend, named Marco, from the North,
Dealer in finished brass, who ventures forth
From Venice even to the farthest East;
He'd give the price of many a lordly feast
For such a thing as this, would'st thou but sell?"
But Selim no persuasion might compel
To barter; wrathful to be thus addressed,
He locked his treasure in a cedar chest,
Then to the merchant lifted, one by one,
The simpler works of brass that he had done,—
They were but few,—till forth the chafferer went
And left him with his solitude content.

But he, the stranger, when he passed from sight
Of Selim's booth, his face set hard and white,
Halted, with fingers clenched and frowning brow,
And pondered deep, as one who frames a vow.
The swart Egyptian boy who lounged before
A rich brass-dealer's widely-swinging door
Watched with a keen and curious surmise
The wicked purpose in the crafty eyes,
For every gesture, every glance betrayed
The heart of greed whose hand would not be stayed.

A strident voice came, calling from afar
The hour of work; at once the clattering jar
Of hammers rose again athwart the air,
The seething throng poured back into the fair,
And through its alleys swirled the babbling flood,
Like buzzing bees a-swarm within a wood.
But Selim, through his resting hour intent
And keenly active, languid now, was bent
Above the brass-work, as though toil were grown
Distasteful to him since the noon had flown.
His hammer strokes, less eager, blow by blow,
Dropped on the brass, grew slower, still more slow,
And oft he clasped his brow and closed his eyes,
Bruised by the coarse discordant market cries;
Then with a start, as if in self-disdain,
Caught up the unfinished lantern once again.

It was a hot and glaring afternoon;
Through the bazaar the hum like a bassoon
Surged constant; presently a clamorous throng
Came, booming with the beat of drum and gong,
While, blaring fitfully, the snorting blast
Of trumpets on the scorching air was cast.
The gathering scuff of many slippered feet
Came now low-rustling down the dusty street.
The loiterers left the shadow of the walls,
Lured by the shouts and boisterous trumpet-calls.
The hammer-smiths and chafferers paused as dashed
The flaunting pageant forth and by them flashed.
The last Shah's eldest son, 'twas bruited wide,
Was riding to the mosque to pledge his bride;—
Next to the Shah, the first of Persian land,
And named *The-Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand*.
A royal graft on humble stock whose sword
Some daring day might make him Iran's lord.

But Selim, hooded in one changeless thought,
Scarce heard the tattle that the gossips brought.
None sought to cross an easy word with him;
They deemed his silence but a surly whim.
He, caring little what was thought or said,
So that they left him quiet, with bowed head,
Blind to all else, held survey in his mind
One memory with his inmost soul entwined.
The incompleated lantern he let lie;
The words of rumor as they floated by
Blent with his dream: "The flower of Iran's land
Is his beloved." He sighed, looked at his hand,
Then from his finger, slowly and in pain,
Unwrapped a narrow linen. He was fain
To draw still further backward from the sting
Of passing eyes. A tiny hammered thing
Of brass, close-twisted to a biting ring,
Around his finger showed, whose tissue, red,
Twinged to the pressure of the figured shred.
He wet the cloth, replaced it, while a chime
Of thoughts went swinging backward to the time
When she, pale lily of his heart, had stopt
Across the doorway where his goods were kept,
And in a playful, blithely-mocking vein,
Had given him this circled pledge of pain.
Ay, he remembered, how upon that morn
He felt—all wonder, joy—his soul was born!
How he had gazed upon her laughing eyes
As at a Peri wafted from the skies,
Fairer than houri to the bosom pressed
Of Mahomet in the regions of the Blest.
Except those eyes, each glittering like a star,
Her face was veiled, as in the white cymar
She glided through the market; oft by chance
Caught the obeisance and adoring glance
Of Selim, sitting laboring in his booth;

And as she viewed the trembling rose of youth
Throw signal on his cheek, she smiled, again
Returned him salutation; now and then
Loitered some moments at his little stall,
And then with innocent art by letting fall
Some corner of her veil, in hide-and-peek,
Revealed the sweet curved vision of her cheek
Of ripening olive, like the moon in mist,
And rose-red lips half parting to be kissed.

One day—one of those few thrice happy days
That star perchance a lifetime—his amaze
Burning his face, and hope still hopeless all,
Rallying his heart to Love's unreasoning call—
She came to visit Selim and to buy
Some trinkets of his patient industry.
Lingering she stayed an hour; she bade him tell
The way he wrought the brass; with playful spell
Now drew from him the use of lead and pitch;
Then took the die and punch and bade him teach
Her hand to cut the ductile metal through;
One little die she held, 'twas virgin new;
A tiny whorl the pattern was; she tried
To punch a strip of brass, while he, to hide
Her slender fingers from an errant blow,
Shielded them with his ampler hand, and so
As once the stroke she missed and still again,
Still he rejoiced for her he suffered pain.
At length she gave him back the die; he swore
With words of fire, no one should use it more
Except himself, nor he but on some gift
For her; then she, her laughing eyes uplift
To Selim's face, and with a doubting air
Mocking his earnestness, yet told him where
A kinsman dwelt, whose hand would duly take
The present he might fashion for her sake.

Then did her mood to childlike humor pass;
Again she took a tiny shred of brass
And twisting it with pincers in a ring
Round Selim's finger tightly, tried to bring
Mischievously, across the strong man's face
A twinge of pain, and smiling left the place.

And Selim, never from that hour at rest,
Had shrined her lovely image in his breast;
A few more times she passed his open door
Seeking the market, but she smiled no more
Upon him, though his eyes with hunger sued;
That one brief meeting never was renewed.

Now his roused purpose to one issue ran:
Upon that day he straight for her began
A perfume-holder, lavishing his fond heart
Upon it; for it eased him of his smart
To feel he wrought her service, and to see
Its beauty heightening—as some stately tree
Spreads in the desert—when with the patterned whorl
He would its richly shining face impearl
With tiny insets glimmering to the view,
Fashioned to let the writhing vapor through.
One name for her he had and only one:
At each moon-end, his task more nearly done,
He muttered as with care he placed apart
The gift, "'Tis for The Star-of-Selim's Heart;"
The star that touched the wan, the lonely sky
Of his rapt spirit, and then passed him by.

And now 'twas finished—every tiny scroll
Wrought perfect; but the work in Selim's soul
Was never finished, but incessant beat
Upon his heart, while through the mid-day heat

The hammers with their clinking, changeless chime,
Dinned out their symphonies to unresting Time.

He took the cunning tool, the delicate die
That formed the whorl, and with a gloomy eye
Defaced its pattern with his file and cast
The steel, disfeatured, on the street, then passed
One hand across his brow to smooth its pain,
And took the unfinished lantern up again.

Even as he worked a warm Elysian dream
Closed o'er him like a sunset, gleam on gleam.
Upon the wings of passion forth he flew
To clasp her where, unknown to her, in view
Of fancy he had held her;—next the note
Of vision changed; he saw her vestments float
Snow-white through flower-strewn ways, and on her face
A pleading look, as one who asks for grace;
For she was now the seeker, and he—where?
He knew not, cared not, nor could seem to care;
But down the eddying current of his swound
A veiled form came that told him "I have found
My perfume-holder;" straightway he was made
The perfume-holder; smiling then she laid
Caressing hands upon it, and did speak
It fair, and pressed it to her velvet cheek,
And, like to Allah's blessing, letting fall
Her silk of hair around in shining pall;
And over all—the night without a frown,
And the white moon and stars were shining down.
Then for one moment, through the hammered brass
He felt his soul, the soul of Selim, pass
And tremble to the magic of her touch.
The moment sped; there fell low voices, such
As Allah sends to true believers, when
He whispers of the crooked ways of men,

That called, "O Selim! Where is Selim?" Soon
A sweet known voice made answer like a tune,
"I will find Selim, for I know him by
The ache within his finger"; then the sky
Sank, burdened with the sorrow and the pain
Of blighted souls that on sad earth remain;
So, forth went that fair form that held the voice
Among them, seeking, till she found her choice,
Selim's all-constant pain: with that began
By the dream-power the building of a man
Like Selim, yet unlike; the half-things fell
And crumbled in the falling; but the spell
Kept on till, lo, the finish—head to feet!
Then for some moments Selim was complete,
Sitting in the bazaar, his right hand laid
Across his hammer, and the lantern stayed
Between his knees; but nowhere now was seen
The Star-of-Selim's-Heart—naught but the sheen
Of brass-ware, and the crowd that thronged again
The market, babbling of the marriage-train.

'Twas but some moments more—and the bazaar
Vanished again—upon an ivory car
He sits, the enchanting lady by his side.
Lo, she is wreathed with roses like a bride!
Bright as Ayesha in the Courts of Day;
Pearled like a dewy lily in the ray
Of morning. Like the Shah's his kaftan white
Flames with a diamond, a deep fount of light,
A Sultan's ransom; forth in state they ride
Midst cheers that surge around them like a tide,
Drawn by a gold-and-crimson-harnessed span
Of cream-white horses, (such at Ispahan
Speeds the Shah prayer-ward on great days of state);—
So move they proudly to their blissful fate;
Flowers rain upon them and their coursers' feet

Stamp cloth of gold, as down the echoing street
They press unto their nuptials—till a band
With him, The Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand,
Fronts them with challenge; straight a conflict grows--
The prince hath claimed the bride—tumult and blows
Bring blood and death:—now Selim wounded lies,
His bride and jewel both the prince's prize.

Again the vision changed; his memory fought
Against oblivion, for his mind was wrought
Still with his finger-ache! Then she again
Is with him on a wild storm-wasted plain.
A ponderous iron mace he grasps in hand;
Forth like the mighty Rustem doth he stand,
Sheathed in full mail; to a tremendous round
Of burnished brass his aching arm is bound;
A company of leprous devils shout
Against him; and amidst that evil rout,
Two Sheitans, fierce and terrible to view
As the White Demon god-like Rustem slew.

But the sweet lady, she has naught of fear,—
She loves him; to his wounded hand draws near
And kisses it; then the Sheitans howl in scorn;
While he, alike with love and passion torn,
Rushes, deep cursing, at the hideous pair,
And closing on them heaves his mace in air.

Then suddenly he woke—the finger's pain
Stung him awake—now in his stall again,
A poor brass-worker, his bright vision flown,
Unloved, ignoble, scorned, reviled, alone.
A laughing, jeering crowd around him kept,
For he had moved and muttered as he slept;
And lo! amidst the laughter loud and long,
The slime-tongued merchant, foremost of the throng,

Faced him: "O Selim, your brave dreams must spin
From poppy-head, or some old potent bin
Of purple Shiraz! Those who hashish eat,
Like fakirs play thus to the crowded street
More strange adventures than were ever sung
By great Firdusi of the silver tongue."
Then pausing, while the brutal mirth ran high,
And Selim, too bewildered to reply—
"I, too, can dream, though scarce of lady's lips,
And battle, but of merchandise and ships;
For, while in sleep I rested this mid-day,
I dreamed that Selim came and heard him say,
'Here, take thy perfume-holder—I would feast;
Bring forth thy bezants, be thy name increased;
Or sell to Marco, if so be thy will,
To profit thee and me; I'll drink my fill
Of pleasure; let me flourish and be gay
And kiss the maid that I have won to-day.'
Here sits my Selim mooning in his booth;
Say, has my vision spoken aught but truth?"
Said Selim: "All I sell is in your view,
I have no perfume-holder here for you."
The knavish merchant made him this repeat,
With crafty leading, to the crowded street.
Yet once more he began—"But dreams are sent
From Allah." "Some, not yours"—then Selim bent
His eye full on him, "I have these to sell,
If so that you would purchase it is well,
You shall have value just and good; I need
Money to-morrow; be the price agreed.
Or if my wares you want not, pray you cease
And leave me, in the Name of Whom be Peace."
Then did the merchant buy of Selim's art
Some pieces, lothful with his coin to part;
And took his leave, while Selim, richer grown
By a few silver coins, did little own

For merchandise, save what discarded lay,
The unfinished lantern. Now he worked away
Fiercely upon it, that his wearied thought
Might cease its whispering, and Time be brought
To mend his pace. So, till the market gate
Was ready to be closed, he lingered late
At labor; rising then with anxious care
He fastened tight the little shutters where
The treasured gift, his pride and solace stood;
Then paced the unfriendly street in restless mood.

That night ill-boding dreams without surcease
Assailed his spirit, crucified his peace.
That one short night seemed fraught with danger more
Than all the hundred nights that went before
While he his treasure in the chest had kept
In that deserted market-place. He slept
Fitfully, briefly, now that once he knew
A bad man lusted for it; then he threw
His clothes upon him; wandered up and down
The winding streets and alleys of the town,
Still ever passing where his treasure lay
Behind the palisades which barred the way
To the brass-worker's moonlit, still bazaar.
Up raced the savage watch-dogs barking war,
Leaped at the gate which held twixt them and him
As though they fain had torn him limb from limb.
A watchman with his lantern, on his rounds,
Drew near, attracted by the clamoring hounds,
Saw Selim, knew him, and passed elsewhere;
While he, with bodeful brow, kept gazing there
Between the bars, where one long shadow fell
Across his shop—a lonely sentinel.
Thus aimlessly until the dawn of day
He wore the weary hours of night away.

Scarce did the market open than his door
He opened too; then hammered as before
At the half-finished lantern; next took down
The perfume-holder, wrapped it, that the town
Might not view what he carried; then returned
All quickly home. With what the brass-ware earned
He clothed himself in festival array
As though it were for some high holiday;
Tied with deft hand the perfume-holder, too,
Within a broidered silk of creamy hue,
Wherein he placed a scented billet writ
In flowing verses when some rhyming fit
Had seized his spirit in the silent night;
This a calligrapher did fairly write, —
With many a courteous phrase of love profound;
And various woven flowers the border bound.

Behold the eager Selim as he stands,
The perfume-holder lifted in his hands,
Apparelled fair, ready to play his part
Of service to the mistress of his heart.
The full fine head-cloth of white hand-wove stuff,
Broidered with glimmering gold and threads of buff,
About a cone of yellow camlet winds;
Below, a snow-white linen skull-cap binds
With narrow line his temples, showing fair
Above his bronzed face and coal-black hair.
His head is straight, symmetric, small of size,
As of a steed alert, and his dark eyes
Are lustrous like a steed's; an eager grace
Plays in the outlines of his mobile face;
The lips are proudly set, the nostrils fine,
The features delicate and aquiline;
His tunic like the turban white, each fold
Of linen with its waving lines of gold;
A knife-case in the silken shawl is placed

Whose graceful folds wind round his slender waist;—
From far Cashmere to Shiraz shall you see
No statelier, no braver youth than he.

The messenger he gained for his emprise
Was an old woman, good, discreet, and wise;
But ask not of the look on Selim's face
As in her hands the love-gift he did place,
Or while he watched her dragging steps depart
To her, the sovereign of young Selim's heart!
He stood in trance while heart and visage burned,
Waiting until the ancient dame returned.

O Love, thou pole-star of all souls—proud dream
Of bliss! dread ruler, passionate and extreme!
In thy closed hand are wealth, fame, life, and death;
Self at thy heart, self-sacrifice thy breath;
The clown thou makest king, the king a clown;
Thou turnest cowards brave, and with thy frown
The man of blood is quelled; yea, even the clutch
Of avarice, groping for the overmuch,
Yields to thy smile and to thy promise sweet
Strews its blood-sweated bezants at thy feet;
But when a heart like Selim's owns thy power
He is all slave, all votary from that hour!

He stood and waited; years it seemed went by;
The glare of mid-day paled across the sky;
The hum of distant traffic ebbed away,
And o'er the hills the flame-born god of day
Seemed to halt yearningly ere, passed from sight,
He left the lovely city to the night.
Selim stood, waited;—back she came at last;
There was no need to question her, he cast
One look between her hands where she did lift
Trembling to meet his gaze the unopened gift,

Saying, "The lady by the Shah's command
Is wed—The Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand!"

The words struck Selim speechless, he had known
One joy in life, a dream, his, his alone,
And he had drank it with a royal art,
Like Jamshid, till the wakening stung his heart;
His head fell forward, for some breathless space
The blow was deathening; ghastly white in face
He tottered toward the door like one in years,
Borne down with grief that scorched the fount of tears.
Grasping convulsively the brazen jar,
He found himself again in the bazaar,
The while with quivering lips, distractedly,
He muttered texts of old philosophy,
Groping for consolation, but no heed
Could give them—ah, how often in our need,
When earth is black beneath the blackened skies,
They fail, those deep proud sayings of the wise!

Yet through his agony was woven a tune
Of words that clogged his tongue—as 'twere some rune
Hammering its dreadful rhythm through his brain—
And mingled with his bitter draught of pain:

*"The Cup of Life with wine or wormwood flows;
The Leaves of Life keep falling, and the Rose
Whether at Babylon or at Naishàpùr,
Fades, and her garden mate unheeding blows."*

These were the words of one in Selim's town,
Gone long before, a sage of wide renown,
Who learned the mystic law that moves the stars,
But yet whose soul, foiled at life's prison bars,
Testing the hollowness of earthly state,
Mocked sadly at irrevocable fate;

And, spite of fame and power by learning won,
Re-wrote the olden tale of Solomon,
Chanting the hopeless burden o'er again,
" 'Tis vain—the life we live, like death, is vain!"

And Selim turned to work, because he felt
His reason totter as he slowly spelt
The branding of the blow upon his soul;
In work, unceasing work, he might control
The anguish of his heart, and so—vain, vain
The miserable days that must remain!
He had forgot or had not cared to change
His holiday vestments; down the sun-baked range
Of the bazaar the whole brass-working tribe
Broke forth upon him with loud laugh and gibe
That bit not like the fangs of anguish grim,
Yet like a swarm of gnats they worried him.
Yearning to be alone, his soul was wronged
As round his path the coarse mechanics thronged
With mock obeisance, gestures rude, uncouth,
Jeering, as they pursued them to his booth—
For little love they bore him. "Taunt him well!
Is he not Selim the Unsociable,
Too proud to mingle with his equals?" There
They crowded close to see how he would stare—
For a dire chance had happened him: thus he,
Unto his small store staggered heavily.

His booth was plundered; all his wares were gone!
Far worse—his tools! He could not think upon
Their loss. Their value was not great, but dear
Almost as were his fingers; misery drear
Drifted across him; only now remained
The unfinished lantern, but deformed and stained,
As though the plunderer held its value light
And with his heel had crushed it out of spite.

A long time he sat, there in his little shop,
Still as an image of stone, his head a-prop
Upon his hands, a ruined man, bereft
Of all he owned most dear. To him was left,
When he a little cleared his mind to think,
(His cup filled full, with madness at the brink),
Only the gift returned which he still held,
The perfume-holder; now is he compelled
To purchase bread and tools; now must he go
And from the merchant buy a lease of woe.

Blindness and deafness fell on eye and ear,
Confounding all, nor grew his sense more clear
As he went stumbling to the merchant's stand,
The empty pledge of his false hope in hand.
The place of sale with merchandise was rich;
Fine armor blazed from bracket, hook, and niche;
Sabres from Samarcand and costly shawls
From Indian looms were hanging on the walls;
And Orient ivories, carvings from the Isles
Within their lacquered cabinets stood in files.
The shelves were heaped with stuffs of rich brocade;
Mirrors of steel with silver frames inlaid
With jewels, glittering daggers, hookahs fine,
And all the costly wares of Levantine
And Indian markets crowded all the space.
As Selim gazed in wonder round the place
Coarse faces covered him with leering scan,
Fit tools of service to the sordid man
Whose slaves they were, and downcast Selim felt
The transient courage he had groped for melt
Whole from his heart; his one despairing thought
Sowed desolation; things against him wrought
In foul conspiracy. The merchant now
Began with lowering and contemptuous brow
To underprice, to scorn, to villify,

What he had been so eager once to buy.
Then asking Selim what his need might be,
He told him he would take for surety
The brazen jar and lend him; sadly then
Said Selim, "I need brass and tools again
To carry on my trade." The merchant's smile
Changed to a cold and stealthy look of guile
As forth he brought a well-assorted pack
Of half-worn tools; but Selim started back,
Then clutched—the things were his! Faintness did seize
Upon him, he felt his very life-blood freeze
And shrivel; distant, indistinct, and small,
Looked all things round him; darkness seemed to fall,
And deathly coldness, blotting earth and sky,
As though the wing of Asrael brushed him by.
Suddenly loomed the merchant's hateful face
Close o'er his own, in horrible grimace;
Forth sprang two monstrous hands that straightway lay
Grasp on his brazen treasure and away
Bore it in triumph to a distant shelf;
Then rushed the hot fit on—he flung himself
In rage against the servants—wildly fought—
Until his mind some little space was brought
To hear men's voices dwindling through the dim,
From faces that he knew; these said of him
"Such master work as this is, cannot be
That foolish Selim's;" sure were these that he
Wrought nothing of the kind; they knew him well
And all his work; he yesterday did tell
He owned not such a thing; and as he strove,
Struggling to right himself, they dragged and drove
Him forth, and nothing but a whirl was there
Of dust and pressure, anger, and despair;
Blows rained upon him; one last cruel stroke
Brought blood—he fell—and then his spirit broke!

* * * * *

She who had been to one unhappy heart
The lode-star of its being, sat apart
In the zenana's curtained privacy,
A married captive, never to be free.
But o'er The Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand
Some time she ruled; the heart she could command
Of that fierce fighter in his pleasant mood:
A second wife in sovereign solitude,
All gave her homage, all her triumph graced,
Even she, the first wife, whom she had displaced.

The Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand at first
Was courteous and devoted, but he nursed
Higher ambition than in flowers to bind
His mood to service of one girlish mind
However enchanting, for his heart was set
On deeds of violence; he could ne'er forget
The feud, the blood-lust that was his from birth.
He was a bold, intrepid son of earth,
A graceful tiger in a leash of silk,
As mild and pleasant as the coco's milk
Till call for action came;—a lion-hunt,
In which he scorned the danger, chose the brunt,
Or vision of booty and some vengeful raid
Into Afghanistan, more often swayed
The councils of his heart, than any charms
He found within the circle of her arms.
And she, poor lonely discontented dove,
Brooded on this, and dreamed had she through love
Been so far favored in her lot, to fall
Unto that heart where she was all in all—
However lowly, howso'er distressed
By circumstance, by poverty oppressed—
Life had been happier even with such an one,
Than that now passed with this proud monarch's son.
She was unlike the frivolous, tranquil crew

Who chattered round about her; often grew
Intolerable to her vivacious mind
The still zenana—health and spirit pined.
But came distress far greater when, one day,
Returning from some distant, wide foray
Into Afghanistan, her husband brought
A captive home, who now held all his thought.
The superseded wife grew languid, pale;
Till, part by some new thought to countervail
Her long depression, part, that she consult
A famed astrologer, whose art occult
In all that region was most noted, they
Who lived about her counselled her one day
She should a few leagues' distant journey take,
The drear monotony of her life to break,
Beyond the turquoise hills and level land
That fringed the province with its shifting sand.

Poor lonely star of one lone heart! the love
Her soul still yearned for like that heaven above
The Frankish women sought—she had not dreamed
That it had crossed her; its pale radiance gleamed,
A heavenly vision through her falling tears,
Fairer as loomed the vista of the years!
Bravely again she took life's burden up.
Hope flowered once more; she had not drained the cup
Of bitter vintage to its turbid lees.
She and her escort started as the breeze
Of early evening swept the fragrant glades
And waved the banners o'er long colonnades,
Ruffled the citron blooms and filled the air
With cool perfume and freshness everywhere;
Bathed with its dews the earth and purged the sky;
Soothed the hot valleys with its wandering sigh;
Fluttered the folds of shawls and turbans loose
And frolicked in the billowy white burnous;

The languid city fanned with healing breath—
Ay, even awoke the pulse benumbed of death.

Servants and slaves upon the camels laid
The tents and baggage; others were arrayed
To take the journey, sitting on the packs
Lashed either side or on the mounded backs;
And, as a guard, to rearward and before
Some twenty warriors on white camels bore
Lances or muskets, and each hump around
Bright shawls and broidered saddle-cloths were bound.

From out the gate the ordered camels passed;
They left the hills behind—then travelled fast
Across the waste, whose open length was soon
O'er-lanterned by the lemon-colored moon.
The guards from time to time their challenge sent
To plodding footmen on their passage bent
Unto the city; who when questioned said
"We are but home-bound miners;" some they stayed,
The last of these, some moments; at demand
Why they were journeying in that lonely land,
These answered humbly, they had carried out
Into the distant desert thereabout
A corpse; 'twas of a man who, raving mad,
Had died in prison; this of what it had
Of worth they'd stripped; lo, now but from their toil,
With their sad recompense of wretched spoil.
The captain forward turned his camel's head
And told his lady what these men had said.

Naught further marked their travel; all next day
They camped; at evening took again their way;
And when at length arose the second sun
They left the desert, their long journey done;

And to the village straight their lady brought
Where dwelt the famed astrologer she sought.

The gifts bestowed, with courtesies exchanged,
A visit for the lady was arranged
To the mysterious man. His house was small
And undistinguished; but within the wall
Was a rich room where he received his guest;
There hung a time-piece with quaint signs impressed;
An astrolabe with Chaldic figures stood
Which told of wandering stars each varying mood,
Wrought in Egyptian land; a conjurer's crook
Leaned on a table; in a crypt-like nook
Lay yellow parchments piled. The languid wife
Wistfully eyed the man of learned life;
A sage sedate, a form of mark and note
In Iran, where the beggar's frowsy coat
Clothes often king-like men; his tall black cap
And ample flowing robe of camlet nap
Were of the finest, and his brow and eye
Majestic; for through gazing on the sky
And pondering deeply o'er its mystic lore
He much of its sublime expression wore.
Full to the waist, wide down the massive chest,
His sable beard swept o'er his saffron vest,
Lending grave dignity and benignant grace,
Softening the stern lines of his thoughtful face.
There stands a proverb long in Eastern ken,
That "no men should wear beards but Persian men."

The sad-faced lady come to seek his aid,
Took courage as his features she surveyed.
Calm, courteous, wise, he seemed; she told him all
Was needful to the purpose; voiced the thrall
And endless hunger of her heart, and, too,
Briefly her history; for she saw he knew

Much of the strivings of tried souls; yes, he
 Was deeply schooled in the philosophy
 And poetry of Iran and the East.
 He soothed her famished spirit with a feast
 Of well-culled verses, wrought for counsel by
 Strong hearts to comfort life's extremity;
 Down from the words of Solomon the Wise
 To the star-gazer poet, who now lies
 In her own city in unchanging rest,
 The clods and burial stones across his breast.

The words of counsel past, ere she her way
 Took thence, he told her he, the following day,
 The issue of his searchings of the night
 Would send her. She, too, watched the twinkling light
 Of stars, that through the heavens unswerving kept
 Their doomful path. Beneath them mortals slept
 As though no seeds of fate within them lay.
 Keepers of how many secrets they
 Of human lives, revealers of how few,
 Though their eternal witness fronts our view!
 Alas, they did not to her soul impart
 That one had called her "Star-of-Selim's-Heart."

Next morn in scented silk the missive came:
*"To the Most High and Honorable Dame,
 Moon to the Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand,
 Fairest of all the fair of Persian land!
 In name of Allah whom the faithful call
 The Merciful, Victorious, Chief of All:
 The Stars, O Lady, speak the truth, tho' man
 Not always may their mystic answer scan;
 Thrice have I read to-night the face of Heaven,
 And thrice to me this answer hath been given,
 These silent words of fate and mystery:*

'A FLIGHT OF RAVENS!'

May it rest with thee,

*O Lady, to interpret them aright,
And may they throw upon thy darkness light
According to thy heart; and may the peace
Of Allah, who alone gives souls increase,
Be shown to Thee. This is the prayer devout
Of him, the unworthiest of thy servants; doubt
Not He will send thee grace.*

Written by the hand

Of Hassan of the Astrolabe, to command."

She, bearing these words with her, now began
Her homeward journey, pondering; still ran
Her thoughts along one line; her mind was bent
Upon the answer of the stars, that went
Ever before her like a vision blest,
Guiding her to her solace and her quest.

It was the chill and silent time of night
Before the rose-crowned, pearly-vestured Light
Loops joyance round the world; mysterious hour,
When Azrael comes with all his awful power
To loose the souls of men and women old
From their worn bodies, and in numbing fold
The fluttering spirit wraps and bears away
To realms of utter midnight or of day.

The camel-train paced slowly; rose the dust
As each broad foot into the sand was thrust,
And fell again full quickly, beaten down
By the damp air; a distant eastward frown
Against the sky betokened hills; the sun
Beyond the shade-land soon prepared to run
His course; the watchful guards from time to time
Turned in their saddles to behold him climb

The hill-tops; o'er the desert's lonely gray
Paling for leagues beyond, the film of day
Pressed a faint outline; an uneven spur,
Dimly defined against the mist-like blur,
Breaking the outline, showed them Naishàpùr.

As the round sun flamed o'er the hills again,
Startled by that or by the camel-train,
A clamorous flight of birds upon one hand
Trailed from some object on the distant sand.
The lady, resting in uneasy sleep,
Awoke as o'er her swished the bustling sweep
Of wings, and from her litter watched them float,
Ominous and black, against the heaven remote,
New-lighted by the half-way risen sun,
Which o'er the pallid sky his splendor spun.
Flush to her mind, as from the written page,
There rushed the words of the star-gazing sage,—
“A flight of ravens;” straight she waved her hand
And gave the captain of the train command
She must at once be carried to the place
Whence rose the birds of omen; with ill grace
He turned to do her will, for now would day
The naked desert scourge with burning ray.
The slow procession wheeled, the distance spanned,—
And lo, a skeleton bleaching on the sand!

“O fairest lady,” cried the chief in tones
Sore vexed, “Let Allah hear me; 'tis but bones
Of some wayfarer, slain or gone astray
Here in the desert; others for a prey
Than these same birds have found him; doth abide
With him no coin, nor weapon at his side.”

“In name of Allah, Merciful and Just,
Some of you men dismount and straightway thrust

Around him; search each bit of cloth and bone
And see if aught about him may be known."

Unwillingly, and cursing the delay
Among themselves, they slowly did obey.
They lifted with their spears each ragged clout,
And with their muskets shoved the bones about.

"Nothing, fair lady, nothing," cried the chief,
Climbing across his saddle with relief;
Then set the train in motion, well content
To quit their tarrying. Soon thereafter went
Unto the litter one who lingered late.
No word he said, but with a smile sedate
Handed his lady a sere, tiny thing
Of white and yellow bone. Round it a ring
Or shred of brass, tight-twisted, bore along
Each edge, at intervals, impression strong,
Irregular, a little whorl, which she
Caught at as from the man of mystery.
She placed it in the hollow of her hand
And gazed and gazed, till in the slender band
Of brass she found the token—yes, the day
That she on Selim's finger in her play
Had twisted it! again the constant gaze
Which searched her footsteps through the market ways;
Again the dream, the hope, the flushed surprise
That starred with love those dark and thoughtful eyes.

To this, then, he had come! Ay, well,—alas!
She knew the tiny pattern on the brass,
And all in tears she scanned it; he had said,
She now remembered—in his little shed—
He, poor dead Selim, her lone worshipper,—
The tool that made it, save on gift for her,
Should not be used; yes, he whose bones now lie

Strewing the sand, beneath the pitiless sky,
All save this one, this small ringed finger bone,
Relic of sacred love, hers, hers alone!
The one cold token of the constant flame
That burned within his breast. O hour of shame!
This dry white bone reproached her! Witness now
Poor dumb starved heart the fervor of her vow!
Witness her tears and kisses and her head
Bent o'er this voiceless pleader for the dead,
Laid now upon her soft grief-burdened breast,
There, while that heart should beat with life, to rest.

The lusty sun stared fiercely, free and high,
When they had reached the city. The blue sky
Shone dazzling clear, save where some fine-combed clouds
Straggled across; as they were souls in shrouds
Speeding to heaven; or travellers single-file,
Moving apart, as tho in fear of guile,
Wrapping their parching bodies from the glare
And dusty highway. The zenana's air
Unto The Star-of-Selim's-Heart was cool
And comforting, as, fresh from out the pool
Of perfumed water on the rich divan
She lay, and over her waved an Indian fan
Held by a favorite maid. The silken door
Opened, two little girls between them bore
A shrouded present, which by high command,
Her lord's, The Shadow-of-the-Sultan's-Hand,
On her return be given her. Listlessly
She loosed the first silk wrappings—paused—for she
Saw surely 'twas some growth of royal art,
Even such a love-work as some loyal heart
Like Selim's might have pledged her. She unwound
The silk with wakened care, in thought profound.
Oh, miracle of genius proud and pure!
He promised her such a gift; alas! how poor

The man who loved her was; she had not cared
For him or his—ah, heaven, had he been spared!
Selim's own self this wonder might have wrought—
Selim's sweet self, had he not come to naught.
It wronged, insulted him; for daily need
Had bound that hand from such a lavish deed.
Faint murmurings were thronging in her ears;
She watched it glimmering through her mist of tears;
Seen midst them, the entrancing, matchless thing
Loomed indistinct, gigantic, wavering.

As her tears fell she wiped them fast away;
Then seeing more clearly, something bade her lay
Grasp on the brazen vessel, while her gaze
Grew fixed, grew all excitement, all amaze;
Then 'gainst her breast she strained it with a sob;
And as her heart, rallying with mighty throb,
Shook deep her being all her loosened hair
Enshrined the perfume-holder like a prayer.
There—there—deep-graved the proof of matchless love!
Each scrolled and burnished strip of brass above,
Upon each ornamental fillet's round,
The same fine-patterned tiny whorl was found!
The same with which his finger, once, she bruised
And fastened—from the die herself had used!

Yes, Selim's gift had come to her—his love
Had found her after death; ay, there above,
Even in the distant realms of bliss, new cheer
Must come to him; had she not grown more near
Unto his spirit though his outcast bones
Lay whitening on the desert's sands and stones—
All save this finger token? But there—look!
Graved on the brass his words, the open book
Of Selim's love—the words he never said
In life—his faithful message from the dead!

*“Dove of my soul, thou white and wondrous dove,
 My Heaven is with thee; nor did Allah’s love
 Ever send Peri unto suffering earth
 Fair as thou art, O lily of fragrant birth!
 Star of love’s sky, rise pure and dwell apart
 To sanctity the flower-land of my heart.
 Behold the first fruits of my pledge to thee;
 Queen of my dreams, be merciful to me.”*

That evening, from the spot the camel-train
 Had halted on when day broke o’er the plain,
 Saw the same sun, soft-barred with roseate streaks,
 Dying away between the western peaks;
 And as he sank from view the low sweet breath
 Of twilight sighed above the day-god’s death;
 But swelled at night and through the star-lit space
 A requiem swayed across the desert’s face;
 And as it wailed its dreary, weird refrain
 Along the hills and o’er the barren plain,
 Cast heavy handfuls of soft sand where lay
 A dead man’s bones—and when the eye of day
 Searched for them, lo, the desert held its trust,
 Folded forever in its shroud of dust.

And in the night that breeze with plaintive sigh
 Breathed through the lonely latticed turret high
 That pinnacled a palace; wandering there,
 Entered a dim-lit chamber, strewing rare
 Spiced odors forth along the midnight air
 From a brass perfume-holder—such sweet breath
 As rises scarcely at a monarch’s death.

And in that silence a pale, tearful-eyed
 Woman inhaled the perfume—watched it glide

Toward the desert; on her heaving breast
One trembling hand she laid; beneath it pressed
A silken case, which hid a little bone
And shred of hammered brass . . .

No more is known.

MAJOR POEMS

HYMN TO THE SPIRIT OF BEAUTY

MAGNET of the exploring mind,
Joy of nature unconfined,
Spirit of the ideal, rare
Artist working everywhere,
Posting on thy restless pinion
O'er thy imperial dominion,
Painting all the turning year
An enswathèd planetsphere;
Child of Fancy and Delight,
Joyous, e'er enchanting sprite,—
Thou alone hast all completeness;
Perfect thou in strength and sweetness;
Ere blind Saturn held commission
Thou hadst heavenly manumission,
Ere grey wrinkled Time was young
Jove with music tipped thy tongue,
And so dowered thee with charms
That he thrilled with love's alarms;
All enamoured of thy face
Straightway clasped thee in embrace
And the keys of Heaven and Hell
Yielded to thy potent spell.
Hebe was thy handmaid, she
Taught thee grace and favor free;
Told thee many a mystic story
Of Olympus' olden glory,
Ere the strife in Heaven began,
Or ere Earth's first eons ran.
Lusty Bacchus owned thy sway;

At thy feet his thyrsus lay ;
Other loves he heeded not,
Ariadne was forgot,
Turned thy votary and for thee
Herded sheep in Arcady.
Brawling Mars would pine and sigh
For one glance of thy bright eye ;
He would lay his helmet down
At thy slightest nod or frown ;
He would bind his flowing locks
With the blue fond-lovers phlox,
But to lend some passing grace
To his harsh forbidding face.
He would call thee "dear" and "sweet,"
Sitting suppliant at thy feet.
Thou couldst thrill his heart with fear
For thy distaff claimdst his spear ;
Made thy mirror of his shield,
Once the torment of the field,
And his blood-dewed laurel bough
Rested on thy mocking brow.
Thou has quaffed the mountain lymphs
Oft amidst Diana's nymphs
When the rosy fingered Dawn
Hath the day bolts fairly drawn
For the saffron vestured East,
Ushering Nature's great high priest,
When he comes in golden state
Thru his azure archèd gate.
Oft in some sequestered nook,
Gazing idly on a brook,
Thee the rustic Pan hath seen
Full length on a bank of green.
Thy blown robes and floating hair
Oft thru fields and uplands fair
He would glimpse as on thy way

Thou wouldst with the shadows play,
And his silent pipe would slip
From his curved, half-smiling lip.
He would leave the charmed flocks
Clipping still their verdured rocks,
Follow thee thru forest lanes
Down which drifted sunshine strains
In a mist of filtered light
Thru the dense umbrageous night
To the shy nymph's bathing place,—
Where the caverned rocks embrace
One of Nature's hidden nooks;
Where the mild midsummer brooks
Loiter, loth to leave, and hide
Neath the banks their purling tide,
And the curtaining waters fall
Foaming o'er the moss-hung wall.
Still his soul within him burned,—
When the leaves were backward turned
Of the poplars tall and fair,
Knew that thou wert passing there,
Caught the fairy fantasy
Of thy fluttering drapery;
And howe'er he still pursued,
And howe'er thy favor wooed,
Still thy laughter rippled back
All along thy shining track;
Still thy fairness lured him on
Till he some slight favor won;
Flower or love wreath from thy hair,
Or a kiss thrown on the air,
Or a glance of roguish guile,
Or a courtesy or a smile.

Lovely sprite, ethereal elf,
Thou art Concord's second self,

Thou art Melody's mateless voice,
Thou art Nature's dateless choice,
Thou art Purity's inner glow,
Thou art Culture's outward show;
Thou appearest to the seer
Where no earth-born forms are near,
And thou breathest upon his thought
Till it glories, star-enwrought,
Thru the unmeasured fields of space
To the heavens high dwelling-place,
Till unnumbered spheres it sees
Hung in crystal galaxies.

Thou, queen mother of the Loves,
In thy pearl car drawn by doves,
Rulest o'er the human heart
With an ever alluring art;
Never granting full fruition
To its ideal or ambition;
Still compelling it to turn
Toward a lovelier something, turn
On the axis of its thought,
Seeking that still vainly sought,
Avatar of blissful life,
Uncontaminate of strife.

All unconscious of thy wile,
Careless youth, thou dost beguile;
Following up thy conquest won
Each new-born, diurnal sun,
Till thou flash on him surprise
Thru some sweet-faced maiden's eyes;
With intoxicating kisses
Luring him to a heaven of blisses,
To the Elysian Fields of love,
Where the skies are gold above;

Where the flowerets never fade;
 Where no upas casts its shade
 'Gainst the sun-down tinted sky;
 Where the dew is never dry
 On the petals of the rose;
 Where in chiming silver flows
 The brook, unbound by wintry frost,
 And by dog-star drouths uncrossed;
 Where the perfume laden breeze
 Wafted from the Hesperides
 Blends its murmuring with the bees;—
 There his nightly dreams are fair
 As the soft blue-violet air,
 Till with golden locks outspread
 Titan lifts his morning head
 And night's minions flee away
 From the victor crownèd Day.

But a fuller bliss hath grown
 Than these earth-born forms have known;
 Thou hast still a nobler part,
 Mistress of the poet's heart!
 He shall limn thee as thou dost stand
 Fresh and fair from God's own hand,
 And the fadeless aureole spread
 Of rapt sainthood round thy head;
 He, thy champion, aye hath worn
 Thy bright favòrs, proudly torn
 Thru the hard won, fateful day,
 Trophies from the field away.
 He hath been thy high-priest, he
 Hath adorned, enfranchised thee,
 And hath offered up his heart
 On the fire wave of his art;
 He will still contented dwell
 Thou sole inmate of the cell

Of his dream life, and hath borne
Oft for thee the cross of scorn.
As I too have borne for thee
Scorn and bitter mockery;
As thou, too, hast dwelt apart
In the fastness of my heart,
And hast whispered to mine ear
Words which none beside may hear.
Mistress of my earliest choice
Of the sylphlike form and voice,
O'er me still thy glamor throw,—
Spirit, all to thee I owe!

ASTROPHEL

(In memory of Benjamin Lambord, died June, 1915)

I HAVE loved life—I have loved life too well!
For sorrow dies not, yearning will not cease;
I have loved life, the life of Astrophel,
Of Astrophel, who lieth now at peace;
Peace from world care and wasting ills increase;
Free from Earth's galling ill requited toil;
One with the thousand stars of artist Greece;
Reprieved from niggard Fortune's cumbering moil,
And chill despondent doubts that did his genius foil.

I scarce can sense he has renounced our life;—
Spring lingers with her trophies; birds and trees
And bourgeoning flowers are with earth-rapture rife,
Their sentient perfumes load the rhythmed breeze.
My heart should hold in tune with all of these;
It should with that warm ravishment accord;
Why drain this bitter potion to the lees
While he triumphant stands with spirits adored,
Elect of earth and Heaven who waiteth on the Lord?

Philosophy, wise mentor, grant me balm!
Alas, I gain small comfort from your book;
I seem as life shows round me, careless, calm;
I would not aught should on my sorrow look.
Even by my dearest friends I am mistook;
Something has gone from day I know not where;
And yet the sunbeam flickers on the brook;

Music and happy voices thrill the air,
 And summer dawns in pride and life blooms lush and fair.

Why here have chosen, Death? there are enough
 Of passing souls to glut thy greedy hand;
 Blood streams in torrents, rivers, and the stuff
 Of carnage reeks to Heaven from every land;
 On every side thy sable plumes are fanned;
 The beautiful, the gifted, brave go down
 Daily to that mysterious, shadowed strand
 That lies beyond the country-side and town;
 That hides so much of love, dream, promise, hope, renown.

They all are thine—that press of stagnant souls
 Alien to claim on Heaven; knaves, dolts and fools
 Cumbering the earth; blind, burrowing money moles;
 Rakes lingering on their late repentance stools;
 There fails no plethora of men whose rules
 Of life outbrave the tiger and the pike;
 Untamed by pity and untaught by schools
 Of love or duty; each and all alike
 Preying on weakened life and seeking where to strike.

Then to choose him—the purity of whose life
 Was rainbowed, Ariel rescued from the pine;
 Whose spirit soared above this world of strife
 Even as a falcon loosened from its line;
 Who quaffed all beauty as a youth drains wine;
 Thirsted for knowledge as a saint for God;
 Whose soul was keyed to harmonies divine,
 Climbing those minstrel marches few have trod,
 Plucking rare flowers of song from that Olympian sod.

I mourn for Astrophel—ah, none is left
 To take his place, the Muse's darling son!

The world unknowing him, is still bereft
Of all the dazzling themes he might have done.
Yet he his finished course has proudly run,
Nor truckled to a crass, material time;
Yes, he to valorous laurelled heights had won
In the glad workday of his youthful prime:—
Now naught remains except to grace his corse with rhyme.

For he loved books and could with practiced pen
Clothe balanced thought in lucid shining phrase;
The mounts of song were captured in his ken
From Palestrina to these full-sounding days;
While his own lyre was strung to magic lays
Such as lend wings to man; like him who smote
Sublime the storied Lied, his genius sways
The variant turns of the vibrating note,
Till thru the ethereal field those heaven-tuned echoes float.

And they are of the heritage of man's soul;
Part of the temple structure of that art
Which o'er unnamed emotion takes control,
The spirit sailing on without a chart;
He held no claim or dealing with the mart
That over lesser natures makes demand;
Love, Pathos, Aspiration, played their part;
Those proud familiars came at his command,
Which he controlled with strenuous soul and plastic hand.

He lived for art—for more he lived to me.
I scarce can think that he has passed beyond;
The genial tone, the voiced thought high and free,
The æolian life of which all hearts were fond,
The gentle presence, drew me with a bond
Time cannot alter, circumstance replace;
That natural dignity his soul had donned

Stood lightened by its loveliness and grace,
With Mozart's winning smile and clean cut cameo face.

Even now I see him—he comes thru the door
With hat in hand and book beneath his arm;
The lithe, light tread on the unthinking floor,
The room all brightened,—breathing forth his charm;
He seemed a creature no ill thing could harm;
So kind, so courteous, loving, debonaire;
I heard no threatening of that dire alarm
That could dissolve such sweetness into air;
No thought but Heaven to me would still that largesse spare.

And yet—and yet—who knows, ah me, who knows!
It must be as the soldier falls to-day,
Striking for country, home,—whose life blood flows
Across the front of his unconscious clay,—
Spurning rich life that Freedom shall make way,—
So has he fought his fight and held his stand
On art, his art, which shall at last bear sway;
And that transcendent song that he had planned
Survive, a torso prized, wrought by a master's hand.

If so, no traffic hold with vain regret;
Let us cheer Sorrow from our doors; still burn
The incense of our love, and proudly set
Remembrance high with chant and flowering urn;
He left his heart behind him, let us turn
To those brave melodies struck for after time;—
The deer has not more passion for the fern
Than that fine gallant soul for the sublime;
Now, now, perchance, enthralled by some celestial chime.

Seek him not then, O Kin-folk, in the grave!
That which you wept escaped, it is not there;

Invoke his song, it is his message brave,
His best of earth which we who loved him share.
In that his immortality shines fair;
That is his aureole, 'tis his heavenly crown;
That is his trust to earth which Time shall spare;
Death threats not that, howe'er on all he frown;
Abashed before a claim his power may not put down.

My plaint fails earth-bound—but the end is peace.
The clouds disperse, the showers of grief are past;
The tears, the sighs, the vain regrets shall cease,
The treasured memories shine, we hold them fast;
Doubt and despondency behind are cast;
For Astrophel inhabiteth his star,
The star of immortality; at last
The beam breaks o'er us from that realm afar,
Which Fate nor Death may shock, nor Time nor Custom
mar.

ODE TO SPRING

BLITHE Flora, goddess of the opening year,
Queen of the birth of love and warm desire
Youngest of sovereigns of this variant sphere,
Thou who had'st Pan for brother, Jove for sire,
Fairest earth patron of the heavenly choir,
Blest harbinger of plenty and increase,
Bright incense-bringer, vestal of the fire,
Priestess of life and joyance, beauty, peace,
Bearing within thy robes the balm for cares surcease;—

Thou, the adored of Earth, boon Nature's hope;
Joy of the winter prisoned and winter marred;
Who settest all hearts aflame, giv'st prescience scope,
Wings to the venturous spirit, to the bard
His hippogriff of Fancy; guide and guard
Of every live thing that exalts thy reign;
Urging thy forest children, stripped and scarred,
To cloak their naked limbs with leaves again;
Coaxing Earth's timid flowers to smile o'er hill and plain;—

Mother of all winged things, what time the brooks
Unloose themselves from Winter's hampering chain;
Gathering in windy pines the clamorous rooks,
And scattering balms and scents o'er hill and plain;
Who dost the budding emerald life sustain
To its full flower in Summer's lordly pride,
And o'er their tender lives thy tents maintain
Of clouds and rains, and spreadest far and wide
Thy spangled web of dews across the country-side;—

Thou who athwart the winter-conquered earth,
The ice-bound streams, the desolated land,
Sweep'st on thy air-borne car, with kindly mirth
Thy fragrant largesse scattering on each hand;
Blessing the Earth's and Sun's new marriage band;
Coursing the fiends of Winter to their lairs;
Who, like the Virgin Mother still dost stand
Agent of Resurrection, Queen of Prayers;—
List him who greets thy reign and all thy bounty shares!

Hearken to him who loved thee while a boy,
Ay, with intensest passion, and who keeps
The memories ever of that childhood joy
Thru manhood's cares, decline, and barren deeps;
Yea, even to-day his spirit sings and leaps
To view thy breath awakening the trees;
To hear thy forces mustering, as sweeps
Thy airy chariot o'er the woods and leas,
With all the South in train and murmuring down the breeze.

Long has the Mother waited—deep, close down
Within her breast she hides her children frail;
Above their sentient germs she spreads her gown
Of leaves to fence them from the frost and gale.
The patient Fosterer knows thou wilt not fail;
She wards with care her weaklings all from scath;
Let Winter do his worst, she will not quail,
Although he lash her in his churlish wrath
And o'er her prostrate pride urge his un pitying path.

Oh, how her heart rejoices when thy horn
Is wound by boisterous March across the hills,
While wavering Winter, baffled and outworn,
Withdraws from his wide theatre of ills;
While all his ensigns, hanging from the sills,

Are by thy breath blown forth in clouds and rain
 To speed thy triumph, to feed full the rills
 Which, now enfranchised, leap down hill and plain
 And shout their joyous news to river, lake, and main.

Within the star-pranked palace of the skies,
 The young moon on thy arm, thou lov'st to rest,
 While the warm South-Wind on thy mandate flies
 Urging thy rule to North and East and West;
 While Winter's legions, smitten and sorely pressed,
 Shriek through each mountain pass in forced retreat;
 While from Earth's late mute, desolated breast
 Rise sounds of life and joy and odors sweet,
 Distilled by Heaven's own dew and borne by zephyrs' feet.

Sweet April, child of sunshine and of tears,
 Attends thee with her violets; jocund May
 Comes ever smiling through the cycled years,
 Her daisies and her hawthorn flowers to lay
 Upon thine altar; regal June, alway
 Garlands thy brow with roses till thy child,
 Gay, wanton Summer, flaunts her sumptuous way
 O'er hill and holt, o'er every field and wild,
 And vainly would outcharm the hearts by thee beguiled.

Fair, faithful harbinger of fruitful life,
 What were this Earth deprived thee? What were noon
 Without the dawning? Winter's toil and strife
 How borne without the promise of thy boon?
 Thy clouds, thy rains, thy blooms, the bubbling rune
 Of brooks, the diapason of the trees,
 The hum of insect life, the varied tune
 Of birds, the buzzing of the questing bees,
 And all the pageantry of life thou lead'st across the leas.

And he whose soul was to thy flowers allied,
Sweet minstrel, with thy promise in his heart;
In his own Spring, in his rapt dream and pride
Of genius struck by Death's untimely dart;
Lover of books and beauty and that art
To which he gave his best, now lieth low,
Even as thyself wilt lie—the tears that start
Are for no vulgar earth; no pomp or show
Of kings might honor him whose worth I once did know.

'Twere fitting that his dream should close with thine,
Like Keats's, and the fevered heart which yearned
To sound the depths of that emotion'd sea
Of rhythm, that surging thru his spirit burned,—
Or when, like Orpheus, his fancy turned
To magic measures, charming old and young,
Giving in plenteous store the love he earned
Back to those friends for whose delight he sung,—
Even now cut down when Fame had her first chaplet flung.

Let me, too, pass as he did, in thy time;
My own Spring long has withered, and that fame
Which comes of work well wrought, the wreath sublime
Of Poesy, has never crowned my name.
Yet would I pass like him, devoid of blame,
Of selfish, sordid passion. Goddess, hear—
Keep thou my heart like thine! let me still claim
The love and joyance of the opening year;
Thy dauntless strife 'gainst Time, thy soul's unfailing cheer!

Yet, Goddess, what are passing lives to thee!
Mother and nurse of every living thing,
Thy endless chain of years, thy agency
Remains the same, tho all man's pride takes wing;
Ever thou buildest for the garnering;

Thy rains, thy dews, thy beams impartial fall;
Ay, every year thy birds of promise sing
To usher in the Summer's carnival;
Love, Life, Hope, Liberty enswathing all.

ODE TO AUTUMN

DAUGHTER of Ceres, round whose wain-like car
Vine-wreathed nymphs and goat-hoofed satyrs dance;
When down the twilight deeps the Evening Star
Casts her pale glimmer o'er thy realm's expanse;
Or when the Harvest Moon with mellow glance
Is hung thy lantern in the fields of air;
Or when the cohorts of the Morn advance
With brazen standard and with lances' flare,
Queen of the plenteous time, still is thy presence fair!

Thou art not crowned with blooms like siren Spring,
Nor with voluptuous Summer's glories dight;
But late the birds within thy bowers sing,
And thou hast days of lingering cool delight;
And thou with gracious and benignant might
Art matron o'er earth's tilled and garnered store;
Her fruits of gold, green, russet, purple, white,
Her heaped up treasures of the threshing floor,
The frothed October brew and wine-vats brimming o'er.

And thou too hast a glory all thine own,—
The wampum of the woods, the violet skies;
The barley rippling as the wind is blown
Along the northland marches; the rich prize
Of yellow pumpkins, sprawling huge of size;
The tasseled silken plumes of soldier maize;
The grapes dark ruddy with their vintage dyes;
The blushing peaches, and the pear which sways
Its brown-enameled gold o'er the close orchard ways.

Oh, Autumn, where is now thy regal worth?

Sad palmer queen in Nature's amice gray,
'Tis bleak November,—all thy pride of birth
Is folded mutely from the view of day!

Vainly the foliage thou wouldst overlay
With pigments of thy sundown painted skies;
For while the trees their liveried pomp display
Of gala tints and variegated dyes,
Winter to fragments rends their cloaks with taunting cries.

Yes, Winter, thy fell rival, now will turn

Thy whispering verdure into howling waste,
And choke the pregnant flow of Plenty's urn,
And clog the streams with firm and shining paste;

Across the northern moors he maketh haste,
Behind his coursers, furious, fleet, and pale,
In ermine robes and hoary terrors graced,
With shrouded messengers of sleet and hail,
His javelined, ghostly scouts who guide the impending gale.

What if the impatient North winds round thee blow

Their hoarse-tongued trumpets as their King draws
near,—

Thou still wilt triumph, tho with manes of snow

The steeds of Boreas sweep in wild career;

Ay, when he hurls his stealthy icy spear

Far o'er the dun waste and the shivering wold,

Nature in dumb defiance, grim and sere,

Fenced by thy foresight from the invading cold,
Scorns his unkempèd rage, ruthless and over bold.

But when beside the shining Christmas board

In blithe accord the household kindred meet,

When forth is spread the lush life-giving hoard

While round the doors the North-wind's coursers fleet,—

Then when the Patriarch takes his honored seat
To ask Heaven's blessing on the plenteous fare,—
Then must thy heart rejoice! then most complete
Thy triumph—tho before the keen-lashed air
Thy chariot, rolling south, hath crossed the uplands bare.

Guardian of fruitful life! what thee we owe
We can with naught save gratitude repay;
All that we are, all that we feel and know,
Directly to thy bounty we must lay;
Far do thy thoughtful favors overweigh
Gay, wanton Summer's flushed and haughty grace;
Thou art our yearly hope, our daily stay,
For ere thou yield'st thy throne and dwelling place,
Thou dost provide for man till thou renew'st thy race.

Autumn, God rules through thee! thy hand alone
Guides opulent Progress with potential care;
If thou but frown, dark spirits forth are flown,
Satan's fell angels from their dreadful lair,—
Hunger, Theft, Madness, Pestilence, Despair,
And Blasphemy! Great sovereign of Increase,
Still kindly listen to thy suppliant's prayer!
Grant bread to life! ay, give without surcease!
And spread o'er thankful earth the Saturnian reign of
Peace!

ODE TO WINTER

MONARCH of polar realms, at whose hoar breath
Even the hearts' most passionate tides congeal;
King of frore winds and patron friend of Death,
Fortressed by icebergs as with towers of steel;
To whose stern march man's haughtiest navies reel,
Or plunge sheer down through ocean's champing waves;
Who on heaven-prideful mountains stamp'st thy seal;
Blighter of births and fructifier of graves;
Sovereign first crowned on earth, whose subjects all are
slaves;—

At whose fell frown sense fails and hope departs;
At whose hoarse voice weak mortals cower with dread;
Shriveling the poor, blocking the roads and marts,
Blasting where'er thy boreal flags are spread;
At sight of whose wild steeds, disheveled head,
Beasts, reptiles, insects wither and waste from day;
From whose grim gaze the choiring birds are fled;
Thy one desire to ravage, wreck and slay;
What curse bears earth like thee—what prayer thy hand
can stay?

From thy pale wrath scarce Heaven itself escapes.
Thou stripp'st their brave, warm livery from the trees;
Nor even weak herbs avoid thy vengeance rapes,
Scathing the valley depths or upland leas;
Scouting round Spring with keen and barbèd breeze,
Frequent thou dost her genial realm surprise;
Her broidered zone and wind-flower garland seize;

Howling with rage through all her shuddering skies;
Marring her emerald robes, dimming her mild blue eyes.

Nor stands even Summer from thy raids exempt;
Thou her rose-coronet tear'st with pelting hail;
Oft Autumn's wain and horn thou dost attempt,
Crippling her husbandry with venom'd gale;
The huddling clouds before thy coming quail;
The brawling brooks hush timorous to their chains;
The hardy wild-fowl scour with bodeful wail
Before thy vanward sleets and skirmish rains,
Whose annual trumpets shriek thine onset o'er the plains.

Round thy swift wheel throng blood-hounds—Famine glares
From the strained-leash, impatient for his prey;
Consumption, gaunt and ghastly, round him stares,
Singling frail, hectic forms to rend and slay;
Scurfed, dull-toothed Rheums rush by with sullen bay,
Worrying their victims who resourceless die;
Beneath their fangs Youth fades and Hope turns gray;
Through fear of thee men murder, thief, and lie,
And the lashed coward wolves grow bold beneath thine
eye.

For sure thy sire was uncouth Chaos old,
Thy dam, decrepit, blind, primeval Night,
Who in their pact with Time bequeathed thee Cold,
Ere they resigned their thriftless, pristine right;
Who, ere they winged their head-long hell-ward flight,
Schooled thee for war against the ordered world;
Leagued their vague terrors to thy breath of blight,
Cloud, tempest, darkness,—these thy mandate hurled,
Urged by the Gorgon, Want, with hissing hair uncurled.

Long as this world its path celestial wears;
Long as the indenture of gray Time shall run,

Thou wield'st thy sceptre—long as Heaven forbears
 Thou warr'st unceasing with the imperial Sun;
 How oft thy black battalions, one by one,
 Crash 'gainst his bright spears in the Northern sphere!
 How flash thy forkèd fire-bolts! then the dun,
 Tremendous conflict ceases; far and near
 The Sun's armed hosts advance, thine break, all rout and
 fear.

Once thy high-turreted, mastless ships of war,
 Like the Norse swarming, menaced every coast;
 They breasted ocean's breadth from shore to shore,
 A deep-keeled, sailless, iridescent host;
 They were thy pride, O Winter, and thy boast;
 Still annual dost thou launch them, towering free
 Above the islands; oft a mountain ghost,
 An icy castle, cools the sun-scorched lea
 Of some careening bark, furrowing the trade-wind sea.

Thy standards curtained once the Torrid Zone,
 And vexed Enceladus cooled his throat with snow;
 Across the Alps was reared thy crystal throne;
 Once didst thou chain the Mississippi's flow;
 From coast to coast thy vanguard, blow on blow,
 Spread death through nether Afric's fervid realm;
 Driving before thee bird, beast, man, thy slow,
 Resistless glaciers deep did life o'erwhelm,
 'Till more than Timour's rule stretched round thy sparry
 helm.

Like to Armadas whelm'd in ocean surge,
 Vast forests sank 'neath seas of leaguering ice;
 Pushing down tropic vales the greening verge,
 Thy snows frothed o'er earth's fruitage, corn and rice;
 No common tribute could such lust suffice;

The rocks were ground to dust, the mountain fanes
Were channelled peak to base; one awful price
Earth paid thee—an enormity of pains,
As crept thy torturing frost through her fire-nurtured veins.

How then lived man?—though fenced with frozen mail
The soil refused him sustenance, yet his hand
Drew safety from the maelstrom of thy gale;
On Earth's last cooling round he took his stand;
He found in caves a refuge; armed with brand
Of wood or stone, he dauntless faced and slew
The earth-shaking mastodon; to his command
He trained the fleet-foot reindeer and o'erthrew
The huge cave-bear that even thy scourge could not subdue.

Thus age still rolled on age,—then through dun skies
The buckler'd Sun sprang armed in aureate might;
His flashing javelins gained the desperate prize;
Back to the Poles thy chariots wheeled in flight;
There, and upon the hoariest mountains' height,
Thine outposts o'er the world—eternal sway
Thou holdest with brawn hand and ancient right,
Pavilioned vast with glaciers, icebergs gray,
Thronged round with winds thy hest drives world-wide
day by day.

Ay, when the modern Cæsar's fated power
Rose black with portent twixt the earth and sun,
Enshrouding continents, in his amplest hour
Thou met'st him, breath'dst against him, and undone
He fled, disarmed, dismayed; his empire won
Through blood and flame lay prostrate; ne'er again,
Answering thy voice, forth roared the Gallic gun;
Thy winds still boast those vaunting myriads slain,
Sepulchred 'neath thy snows from Moscow to the Seine.

Thus thy revenge grows rooted, still more high
 Around the Poles thou rear'st thy crystal wall;
 Still, age on age, repulsed, compelled to fly,
 Thy cohorts sweep to their wide carnival;
 Still, one by one, the warm, bright barriers fall;
 Persistent siege, insidious attack,
 Spread slowly, surely thy perennial thrall,
 Winning by piecemeal thy dominion back,
 Till Time treads out his torch, Death dies and all is wrack.

Ay, when on cool, clear eyes, athwart the dome
 Flare white thy torches, and the maiden moon
 Is hooped with silver, 'tis thy coming home
 O Conqueror! were our earthly ears in tune
 Well might we hear thy minstrels' triumph rune
 Filtering its cadence through the dusky sky;
 For be it gray December or green June,
 Somewhere victorious thy dark standards fly,
 Somewhere the Sun hath failed, somewhere his subjects die.

Yet, O proud Winter, despot though thou art,
 And unreprieving thy imperious will,
 Thy sumptuous grace reveals a royal heart,
 What time thou smil'st the earth is beauteous still;
 Thou deck'st with pearl and ermine tree and hill,
 And rob'st with light-wreathed down the naked vales,
 Bright pendants hang'st to archway, eave, and sill,
 While blush fair cheeks beneath thy bussing gales
 As at the Sun's first kiss are tinged the wind-filled sails.

And Nature, vanquished, triumphs, too, through thee.
 By thee is her progressive year made sure;
 But for her harsh arrest, how many a tree
 And flowering shrub would bloom not nor endure;
 Safe in their roots the thrifty saps procure

From Mother Earth their rife, reviving powers;
Then when fair Spring holds out her shining lure,
Up gush the life-streams and rejoice in flowers,
While all the unshackled brooks swing laughing through
the bowers.

Thou, too, art Lord of Revels—jocund thou
In the grave North at gracious Christmas time;
For the bright holly twines thy rugged brow,
And Mirth and Song leap round thy beard of rime.
Then the gay dance, chime-born, when in her prime
Heaven's wreath of diamonds frets the crest of Night,
Whilst the board, heaped from many a summer clime
And from bronzed Autumn's horn, with crystal bright
And lordly silver crowned, shines in the hearth-fire light.

Such are thy charms, O Winter! joys robust,
Varied, illustrious;—mirthful, too, thy sway;
If earth yields naught for thee, not thine the dust,
The taint defiling the mild season's day.
Thine is the silvery trilling of the sleigh,
The steel-shod skater's zest, the daring slide,
The schoolboy's snowball battle, blithesome play!
Where'er thou reign'st free flows the festal tide,
'Till to one blithe accord thou bind'st the harvest side.

E'en when thou comest in thunders and in glooms,
(Like Attila, bursting on corrupted Rome);
Blustering above thy three fair rivals' tombs,
Even then thou furtherest the pure joys of home;
Beneath peaked cottage roof, arched palace dome,
How glide in fireside cheer thy riotous hours!
The genial game, the wise or witty tome,
Beguile the heart as in the month of flowers,
Making new Edens bloom amongst thy snows and showers.

And she, my mother land, Queen of the North,
 Heir to the Viking heart, the Briton fame;
 Midst the sea-bridlers youngest, yet the fourth,
 Unfurling round three ocean shores her claim;
 Binding about her brows the Maple flame;
 Holding from thee the new North World in fee;
 Unsullied by the blood-drenched Afric shame;
 Resourceful as the circumambient sea;
 Firm as her granite hills, staunch as her bannered tree,—

She gains from thee the deep-blue of her skies;
 She breeds by thee her sons of stalwart mould;
 She breathes thru thee a faith that never dies;
 She draws her chasteness from thy storms and cold;
 Along her future blessings manifold
 Impend, if to herself she hold but true;
 May she, like thee, still dwell unbribed and bold,
 And bear her steps still upward, while the dew
 Of Peace shall pearl her path 'and Honor's star lead true.

Nor comes the forceful brain, the tireless hand
 From the enervate realms beneath the Line;
 There, flower-enchained, the soul can ne'er expand,
 Divorced from care, it sinks in sloth supine;
 The voice that fathers pregnant thought is thine;
 The heroic virtues all are nursed by thee;
 Thy tones to man are prophecy, like wine
 Is thy keen, urgent spirit; like the sea
 Thy winds upbear his soul, thy breath is Liberty!

Thy breath is Empire,—from fierce frost and storm
 The lion-loined, the bane of Romans, came;
 No power on earth could thwart them, swarm on swarm,
 They purged the world with massacre and flame;
 Before the blast of Thor's and Odin's name,

The sensual southern gods abhorred their shrines;
Since then the North has bulwarked Christ from blame;
Where'er the Northman rules there justice shines,
There Civilization grows, broad-based, on ordered lines.

Victorious o'er crude matter,—space and time
Robbed of their secrets,—still man's tireless brain,
All grasping, ventures on its quest sublime,
Still leads a longer strong-armed vassal train;
Still surer mastery o'er them doth obtain;
These giants in harness, those mysterious powers,
Like the thrall'd genii of the Orient main,
Toil for him through life's waking, sleeping hours,
And crown Time's centuried march with incense, gems, and
flowers.

Yes, to thy trackless wastes this marvellous man,—
Even to thy citadels of ice and snow,—
Following that spirit born of these, doth plan
Constant through Death's most private haunts to go;
No terrors, toils may daunt him,—arctic floe,
Storm, cold, night, famine edge the tough emprise;
From cape to cape, from mount to mount, the slow
Receding Pole, still spectral, charms his eyes;—
Thus, starved, benumbed, outworn, he follows Hope and
dies.

Yet there he penetrates—even to that place
Most private to thy rule his march hath gone;
Even in the numbing terror of thy face,
Where Night her veil a hundred days has drawn;
Favored by fortune, yet of chance the pawn,
His daring foot is set upon thy throne;
Lo, there he stands, his face turned to the dawn;
To hunger, toil and cold unmoved as stone,
So that his unmatched pride may claim thy realm his own.

Yet he, even he, were but for thee a child,
 Passing in dreamless sloth life's choicest year;
 Driven by vague impulse, passions rude and wild,
 He drew no benison from the purer sphere;—
 He breathed no air of truth; no limpid tear
 Of feeling made the flowers of pity start;
 Beheld no beauty; all untuned his ear
 To music of the birds; his own crude heart
 Was to itself a fear, yet conscience owned no smart.

His craft was that of beasts;—to hunt, waylay
 His food and dig rough shelter from the storm;—
 He praised no God; the body's lusts, the fray
 Nursed the chief arts that could his mind inform;
 He knew few social virtues; like a swarm
 Of insects grew man's congregated dust,
 Without coherence, amity, or form;
 From brutish birth to brutal death a rust
 Clave to his darkened soul, an all-corroding crust.

Thou didst arouse him, Father of the North!
 Thou nerved'st his heart-strings in the great Ice Age;
 Drew'st tense his listless sinews, goad'st him forth
 At first, for naught but rapine, war to wage
 On palsied, blighted races; now the sage
 Councils of Time have trained his hand to peace;
 The victories he now writes on History's page
 Yield grander Iliads; all the art of Greece
 Revived, refined, and grasped the hundredth Golden Fleece.

Therefore, reign thou, most honored! for thy worth
 Doth far thy surliest vassals' wraths outweigh;
 For whilst thy white confusions blanch the earth
 Thou lay'st foundations for an ampler day,—
 Thou sowest to richer futures; still life's May

Blooms with the foresights thou hast taught to man;
For by thy rigor forced to war for sway,
He forms his own soul on thy strenuous plan
And builds a deathless fame in one brief mortal span!

DIANA AND ENDYMION

ENDYMION had wandered all day long
Within the embrasured shadow of the woods,
Lured by a dream of loveliness and hope
And joyance, such as comes but once to spirits
Of earth, and seldom to the gods above.
He hungered not, for the warm pulse of youth
Fluttered his eyelids, beat about his brain
With visions blissful, rapt; for all his soul
Vibrated, pinioned by the breath of June,
Blown thru the cedarn alleys, and the burden
Of swaying pine-tops melted thru his mood,
Like incense midst a pure impassioned prayer,
Till the deep diapason of the boughs
Rhythmed the pulse of languorous delight
With wordless chords of song. He came at eve
Upon the woodland fringe, when camping Day
Had set his crimson standard in the West,
And driven his golden-manèd steeds a-field
For pasture ere the morrow; o'er the heath
The opposing gradual shades of evening fell
In folds like wings of sleep, and the mild dews
Of Latmos, steeped in odors, filtered down
Thru the dim breathless air and touched his brow
With balm-anointing coolness;—o'er the vales
Faintly the low of home-returning kine
Rose with a hollow murmur, like the pipe
Of Pan himself, and swathed the pulseless eve
With a soft film of sound;—the purple shades
Deepened to bluish jet, and one by one

The sentinels of Heaven in glistering arms
Moved midst the tented night, to each his stand,
And panoplied with light the involved skies
And the still, breathing earth;—nor yet the Morn
Had journeyed forth, but in her house of clouds
Lingered awhile, as loth to shame the stars
With her full aureate beam.

Endymion drew

His leopard skin around his graceful loins
And leaned against a tree whose blossoms pale
Broke foam-like o'er his head, and breathed their love
Into the silent night;—the languid eve
Pressed its nepenthe deep within his soul,
Soothing with cool caress; his eyelids fell
And his breast heaved with weariness; all cloyed
With drowsy sweets he sank upon the sward,
Arm-pillowed, dreamless in the pale starlight.
But soon the curvèd moon from her cloud sphere
Outbroke and turned her calm and tender gaze
Upon the limp form of the Arcadian youth,
Bathing with lucent glow his olive face
And russet burnished limbs;—her nether horn
Hung like an argent sickle, and from its tip
A silvery gleam fell o'er the dusk-bound earth,
Banding the height with lustre to the feet
Of slumber-wrapped Endymion;—down its coil
A radiant goddess slipped with arms outspread,
White as the drift of Heaven; on her arched brow
The moon had fixed her image, and her breast
Shone brighter than Orion's belt with gems,
That burned the dusk to splendor; at her back
A sheaf of silver arrows crossed a bow,
The red hart's lordly tine; in her right hand
She bore an ash-tree javelin tipped with steel,
Which sooty Vulcan tempered diamond hard
On Lemnos long ago; her beach-brown hair

Was coiled, save one long curl that 'gainst her throat.
 Her throat of matchless alabaster, swirled,
 Clung, as she dawned on Earth and to the side
 Of the still youth with printless tread she drew.
 The splendor of her beauty waked the birds
 And tuned the slender life amidst the grass
 To tenfold chorus, as with buskined feet,
 Brushing the harebell blossoms, her proud lips
 Curved to a smile of wonder and delight,
 She drank the charm of the transcendent youth.
 She stooped, then paused, a goddess bashful grown;
 She paused, then stooped; her face with blushes flamed
 That turned the flowers to rose; she bent her down
 And lightly touched his lips, then thru his hair
 Of clustering hyacinth she amorous swept
 The glory of her hand.

He waked not yet,

Although his heart was stirred with dreams divine,
 With beatific visions, as the chrism
 Of more than mortal love enswathed his soul.
 Then as the sleeper stirred she hovered there
 Close to his face and breathed his smothered sigh
 Of warmth-fed passion, as the youthful blood
 Coursed nimbly thru the alleys of his brain
 And fed voluptuously the uncharted mind
 With rapt, aspiring dream. She smiled, she sighed;
 Her breast with longing heaved, counting the cost,—
 The commune of the gods, the praise of men,
 Worship of virgins, her Ephesian shrine,
 And all the glories of her name and state.
 Fate held the golden scales—a mortal love
 Against a heavenly crown; a span of bliss
 Against an immortality of cold
 And splendid power; then again she gazed
 Upon the sleeping youth; till yearning swayed
 Her pulsing soul, far thrusting back her vow,

Her oath of godhead; musing, half-inclined
To veil her deity in a mortal frame,
And clothe her splendor with the common garb
Of human uses and the ways of men.
But even then the intrusive morning broke
Gray-filmed between the porches of the East;
And looking forth she marked a scarlet shaft
Of sunrise break upon the thronèd crest
Of far Olympus, canopied with clouds,
The home of prescience and power where dwell
The starry gods who guide the fates of men;
Then turned and still with backward-looking eyes.
She floated forth across the Latmian height,
Urging ethereal passage toward the Mount,
And burned a rival splendor 'gainst the dawn
Above the pathless and unstable sea.

DEFORMED

LEAVE wide the window—let the new-born Spring
Enfold me ere I die with her warm breath!
Die, did I say? I but cast off this thing
Hate calls its body. Claim thy tribute, Death!
Men have belied thy terrors; thou'rt to me
Deliverer; come, proud king, and make me free!

Yes, I thy lover, Death, have wooed thee long,
For Life hath crossed me with its foulest spite;
Life hath debased me, tricked me, turned me wrong;
Set me a mock in Earth's and Heaven's sight.
Life? I have never lived! In this brief span
I but have shared his agony with man.

Nought else? Ah, yes, these flowers! Their beauty fills
My soul with ravishment, whose hope is proof
Against this loathèd flesh, these wasting ills;
God gave me love—it is my sole behoof:
I love the flowers! I love this sweet spring day,
And you, dear friend, you I will love for aye!

No coldness froze me in your steadfast eye;
Your heart was always to compassion true;
You only did not curse me, pass me by;
Alone of all mankind I have but you;
I have been twice redeemed; not once sufficed
For me, you are my nearer, second Christ!

Yes, hell was mine, an earthly hell of shame;
The vilest outcasts drove me from their sight;
Their scorn and hatred seared me like a flame;
Women and babes fled from me in affright;
Never since matter germed, since earth was green,
Was such a vile misshapen monster seen!

Yet I was born with human mind and heart;—
Ah, why should God have left this mark on me!
Yes, I can weep—look how the tear-drops start
As limpid as from eyes of infancy!
The temple ways are foul, but its pure shrine
Is silver and holds consecrated wine.

'Tis said in His own image God made man,
But only sin's foul shape was shown in me;
Some wickedness, first born when time began,
Resisting goodness and regeneracy,
Heaped high its growing horrors on my head,
And for God's beauty fiend-form gave instead.

I walked the earth an alien! even the birds
Twitted me with deformity—the broad sun
Laughed at my plight—day stared at me—men's words
Flicked at me serpent-like—their eyes to shun
Dwelt on me still detesting—God and man
And pitiless nature laid me under ban.

Yet have I read of pure and tender joys;
And covertly, like Satan upon Eve,
Besieged by all the yearning life annoys,
I gazed at beauty, still constrained to weave
Among sad thoughts the unavailing tears
Of hopeless, homeless, loveless, blighted years.

Affection, which hath fostered every life,
Spurned me and changed her sweet breast-milk to gall;
The whole world's hate fell o'er me; all its strife,
Was how to break my spirit. Sad as Saul
When Israel's heart turned from him, I began
To live, to grow, in soul, at least, a man.

A curse far heavier than the curse of Cain,
Or him, who cries "unclean!" fell on my brow;
I heard the angels o'er my plight complain,
Around me fiendish shapes did mop and mow;
While leering faces cast a ghostly spell
Across the path that lured me down to hell.

They sold me like a chattel, hissed and jeered;
They thrust me forth before the vulgar crowd;
Their laughter tortured me; my soul was seared
By their low horror; and my spirit bowed
Almost to breaking 'neath that cross of scorn
To which my human heritage was born.

Even the frightful freaks I dwelt among,
Avoided contact, shuddered, turned away,
Or cursed me; hourly by their insults stung
I cursed myself and cursed the light of day.
And as the thing I called my head I bent,
I felt the fearful laughter thrill the tent.

And then the barker with a fiendish leer,
Stood up and poured the vitriol of his tongue
Around me, raising in their throats a jeer,
Which like the flame of Tartarus scorched and stung;
Till all the earth was torment, and I trod
The bitter wine-press of the wrath of God.

Then in a maze I saw you mount the boards;
I watched the anger quiver in your eye;
Like to the money-changers whipped with cords,
From your just rage I watched the barker fly;
Next with your Christ-like arm you cleared a space,
Among the throng, and with me left the place.

Then to my hideous grave of life there came
One ray of comfort, first of all my days;
One heavenly word of kindness in His Name,
Who taught us Love; a word beyond all praise;
That word was *brother*—your hand sought for mine,
You bathed my heart with sympathy divine.

I looked—but in your eyes I failed to see
Aversion, lurking like a coiled snake;
The balm of pitying cheer was there for me;
The angel, Hope, in your blessed accents spake;
These books, these pictures, flowers, are all from you,
Oh, rarer heart than woman's, kind and true!

Yes, you have earned the love I had bestowed
Upon some woman in life's happier state;
The love to unborn children I have owed,
The love that in all hearts outlasteth fate;
On every path of life a spring of God,
Waiting the stroke of Faith's divining rod.

Here in this chamber, closed from eyes of men,
I have worn out the remnant of my years
In peace if not in happiness; and when
This lies in death, I will rise midst my peers,
The spirits gone before; I then must be
In the new body—oh, what ecstasy!

Yes, Death and I are friends! I never knew
 Life's dread of him, and now my sole regret
 Is leaving you, dear friend, for in that new
 And better world there will not one be met,
 Except it be Christ's self, to whom this heart
 Will yearn as then for yours—but here we part!

Once more your hand! ah, friend, the love I bear,
 Would that it might ennoble this vile form;
 Then might you see my soul, its visage fair
 Rainbow'd from out this passing cloud and storm,
 Irradiating Life. Ah, *Beauty, Love,*
 I shall behold you perfect there above!

The unclothed beauty of the soul that grows
 Sublimar as the effluence of that life
 Which is the sun indeed! which ever flows
 Across the warring clouds of human strife,
 And gendering all the glory of the years
 Breaks into starry splendor on the spheres.

The beauty, strength and symmetry here sighed
 In vain for, as I sighed for that of flesh;
 The manhood purged by suffering, glorified
 In the new larger life we live afresh;
 The favor of God's smile, the love of Christ;
 BROTHER—'twas His the word; dear friend—the TRYST!

THE EVER-GROWING TRUTH

(*A Parable*)

A SEED of truth, now far renowned,
A poet in his garden found;
Yet whence it came or how it grew
Or what its worth he scarcely knew;
He planted it; with tender thought,
The germ was to unfolding brought.
He nourished it with deftest skill
And placed it on his window sill;
A world of patient care, in sooth,
He lavished on that new-born Truth.

Enamored of its thrifty grace,
He stood it in the market-place,
And hourly to the crowd would cry,
"My precious Truth, who'll buy! who'll buy!"
He sang its praises late and soon
In lyrics of all kinds of tune;
Yet tho it shot forth green and fair,
And spread its leaves to sun and air,
Burgher and matron, maid and youth,
Laughed at the poet and his Truth.

A scientist in cap and gown,
First marked it with a hostile frown;
A pedant, steeped in dreams of age,
Fogged in his mythologic page,
Declared it but a weed, he saw

'Twas clear against time-honored law;
 For plants of such a strange degree
 He could not find authority;
 He deemed it but a thing uncouth;
 "It never, never could be Truth."

A pompous theologue drew near
 And smiled, "Good sir, what have we here?
 'Tis worthless, friend; you should devote
 Your care to matters less remote.
 Certainly God did not intend
 This unknown weed to work His end.
 A thousand seedlings comelier far
 I'll lend you from my dogma jar.
 You surely cannot mean, forsooth,
 To call this wretched wild thing, Truth."

A politician sidled up
 And sneered, "You drain a bitter cup.
 Who'll buy? Not all the fiends in Hell
 Nor saints in Heaven; you'd better sell
 Odes to the hero of the time;
 He's useful, if much less sublime.
 You swear you've grown it? Well, suppose
 You have—will't bring you bread and clothes?
 From Pilate down," he chuckled, "youth,
 We're all at sea about the Truth."

One day a philosophic wight
 Fingered it, gauged its spread and height;
 He measured down and round about,
 Yet what it was still held in doubt.
 'Twas in bad way—'twould soon be dead;
 He snorted, squinted, shook his head:
 "A dreamer's whim as one may see;
 What, this thing bourgeon to a tree!

'Twill ne'er abide Time's gnawing tooth;
It never, never can be Truth."

So all men on it gazed askance,
Or gave it scorn or passing glance;
They tossed their heads, they pursed their lips,
They would not take the proffered slips.
The owner shouted all day long,
"Who'll buy—'tis surely worth a song!"
But tho it wrung the poet's heart
To sue the mammon-greedy mart,
They would not give him heed nor ruth,
They would not buy his novel Truth.

Time passed—the world-wrecked poet died;
The plant his loving hand supplied
With tendance slowly pined away,
Nor longer bloomed in face of day;
Blossom and leafage, all forgot,
Lay shrunk within the earthen pot.
Men marked its brown and cheerless hue:
"Look what the crazy poet grew!
Pity the fool outlived his youth,
He fondly called this changeling 'Truth.'"

And now the plant which had beguiled
The poet, passed unto a child,
A weak-eyed offspring, who, purblind
When manhood came, forgot to mind
The precious flower, and anyone
Who cared might place it in the sun.
"I have so much, so much to do;
My father valued it?—most true."
He blinked, then gave a yawn uncouth;
"I have no time to air his Truth."

At length a stranger hurrying by,
 Chanced the neglected plant to spy.
 He halted, gazed, then asked the price,
 And straight he owned it in a trice.
 He watered it with constant care,
 He gave it wealth of sun and air,
 When, lo, around its withered heart
 New tender sprouts began to start;
 They leaved, they wove a verdant booth,—
 The poet's wonder-working Truth!

And now folk asked in stark surprise
 Whence came this plant of giant size.
 They wondered much to see it spread;
 Then fell to praising it instead.
 The theologue, with mouth agape,
 All speechless, watched it taking shape;
 The man of science wrote a book
 Upon it; pedants stopped to look
 With reverence, and the man of sooth,
 The philosoph, adored the Truth.

The politician stared, and then
 Took off his hat and cried, "Amen!
 We've grown it; I foresaw it all,
 'Tis plain as apples in the Fall:
 The man was cannier than we knew;
 I also had this long in view."
 But all, unknowing whence it came,
 Thronged to the owner for its name;
 "What's this?" they cried, "is this forsooth
 What that daft rhymer called the Truth?"

"You would not take the poet's word,"
 He answered, "tho 'twas daily heard;
 Like mine, your prescience might have known

These bravely struggling leaves half-grown,
And owned, had you but eyes to see,
These blossoms for futurity.
The man you mocked heartbroken died;
The plant you scorned is now your pride;
Supreme beyond neglect or ruth,
Behold the never-dying Truth!"

EUGENIE ON THE DEATH OF HER SON

WHAT, killed! O God! who said so? it is false!
I'll not believe it! 'tis an arrant lie
Forged by an enemy! *Tears!* then it's true,
True or I would not weep! I shall go mad
Crushed by this load of woe! My son, my son!
Bless'd God, couldst thou not find a sacrifice
Some other than my lamb, my only one?
Were there not gallant hearts enow to bleed
That have no mothers?—None but only him
On whom the hopes of millions lived and thrived?
Art thou all sternness, that couldst take his life,
So hopeful, fresh and loving, full of joy,
And leave me desolate?—Oh, it cannot be!
Men call thee merciful, and mercy loves
To guard young tender life, not to crush quite
The lonely longing heart, the yearning hope,
The hope of years, long, long and painful years;—
Oh Heaven, I rave, I rave, stern judging Heaven!
I never, oh, I never more shall see
Him whom I once called Louis, never lay
My hand upon his brow and bid him live
The coming glory, life and light of France.
Ah, woe is me! for I have outlived hope,
Husband and throne and country, and my child!
Strike now, thou grinning Death, and join again
Them thou hast parted! give me back my boy!
Or that this agonizing grief might bring
Madness upon my soul! but yet not so—
For then, perchance, I'd lose all memory

Of my poor stricken love;—no, better live
 And weep from day to day salt drops of sorrow
 And drown my grief in tears, feeding their flow
 Upon remembrances of my dear boy,
 Nipped by the fierce frost in his morn of May.

O my son, my son!
 Had I been near to hear thy dying lips
 Falter the name of *Mother*—to exchange
 One parting look—to stanch thy piteous wounds—
 To watch the flicker of thy fleeting breath;—
 How soft I would have pressed thee to my breast
 Where once thou lay, my child, a smiling babe—
 And soothed thy passing moments, and have wiped
 The death-dew from thy brow—but thou art gone—
 And I no more shall see thee, my lost boy!
 My one, my Joseph! oh, my light, my all!
 I cannot think, my child, that thou art dead,
 And that corruption and the grave shall mar
 Thy delicate flesh—thou wert too young to die;
 Youth bloomed, hope brightened in thy speaking glance,
 And how I loved to trace with mother's pride
 The lineaments the partial hand of Time
 Was graving on thy brow, kinglike and fair.
 Ah, little thought I, child, when thou didst belt
 England's bright sword of battle on thy side
 And with thy radiant smile didst raise my hopes
 With words of loving cheer, that I no more
 Would hear the merry music of thy voice
 Beguile my weary hours from vain regrets;
 No more would feel thy warm breath on my cheek,
 The light clasp of thine arm, as with flushed brow
 And kindling eye, thou saidst, "Ma mère, adieu!
 I go to make me worthy thee and France
 And crown my brows with honor, that the world
 May know thy son is equal to his name

And to his former fortunes—happy if he
 May thread with glory the dark web of fate.
 His star shall lead thy Louis up to fame,
 France, and an empire; never yet hath failed
 The great hope of our race—good bye, good bye!
 God keep thee!” and thou leftst me with that word.
 Yes, then thou leftst me, leftst me here alone.
 Alone! was I alone? No, while thou livedst
 My spirit went forth with thee, as in dreams,
 Watched o’er thee oft on shipboard or in camp,
 Walked with thee up and down, joined in thy prayer,
 Ay, poured out for thee litanies of love.
 I’d muse away whole hours upon a gress
 Of how thou’dst be employed, and how thou’dst shine
 Upon the field of battle, and would pray
 The God of hosts to keep my boy from harm,
 Till prayer begat assurance—Oh, fond fool!
 To trust the promptings of a mother’s heart
 And hope to buy thy safety with her prayers.
 Oh, thou wert winged for glory, Icarus,
 But flew too near its sun! Now art thou gone,
 And now am I alone! Oh, I am cold!
 The night-wind gives a moan that thou art dead,
 The night-bird tells it to her lonely mate;
 This eve the Sun, fainting within the west,
 Cast on his bed of clouds a bloody stain,
 Yet shall he rise and smile, freshed with new life—
 But thou, my Light, my Sun, dyeing the fields
 Of far-off Africa with thy young life
 Let out by savage hands,—remorseless hearts
 That held no pity for thy tender youth,
 Thy life-blood streaming on their cruel spears—
 No more shall come to greet me with thy smile.
 I am alone, alone amidst a world
 Of moving bodies, careless, mocking forms
 That taunt me with their life thy bloody death.

I have no more to live for and the grave
Yawns wide its dreary portal;—come, kind Death!
Snap the last cord that binds me to this earth
That I may seek my lost one through the skies;—
I have no other hope—I am alone!

RESURGAM

*"Old things need not be therefore true
O brother men, nor yet the new;
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,
And yet consider it again!"*

SO wrote the rhymers of a vanished day
And we, the Present's children in our play
At circumstance, abiding calm and sane,
Should take this home—consider it again!

The passing hour—the horologe of Time
Rounds forth the cycle of a change sublime;
Old institutions tottering to their fall,
And a new writing on tradition's wall.
Progress plays life 'gainst death—the setting sun
Brings with new hopes and fears fresh tasks begun,
New to last year or yesterday, and change,
Growth and decay thru all creation range.
And yet—and yet—the past is with us still;
Plan what we may the omnipresent will
Of past achievement lays its heavy hand
Upon our souls to warn, to check, command.
There is no dead past—the germ source, the earth,
Gives to all sentient life its primal birth;
Each animal, plant, serviceable sod,
Lives in and on and of the senseless clod.
Unresting as earth's tides the social flow
Beats on Time's shores in waves of joy or woe.
Creatures of circumstance are we, and yet
This homely phrase we never should forget,

Tho chance at times conspires to prove a lie,
"God is with him who keeps his powder dry."

All conscious effort tells,—the amœba's span
Marks progress, even as the mind of man.
And all life's sublimate, all its ills
Spring from the varied tension of our wills.
This we may say—there dwells essential might
That makes for God, in other phrase, the Right;
In spite of foil and of recurrent flow
The tides of being swell and higher go.
As various as the leaves of forest trees,
As shapes of rock or cloud, as flight of bees
Or birds or butterflies, the human soul
Differs within the round of its control.
Humanity, that particolored veil
Of the Almighty whose pure beams assail
The universe, changes with every cloud
Of custom twixt the cradle and the shroud.
And with this change comes strife;—Existence first
Claims tribute of our nature as of erst,—
To gain whate'er one can,—the primal law
That doth all life within its meshes draw.
And next the spirit of Beauty, struggling thru
The inert past, the chaos of the new,
Wearing upon its crest world maidenhood,
Unfolding in its utmost sense the Good.
And last, the chrism of Love, supreme control
Of life made perfect in the human soul,
Forsaking self and passing hand to hand
The torch of Happiness thru a darkened land.
Yet Love, as said the ancient world, is blind:
Tho true its instincts, none the less has Mind
Sentence and rule of every living thing,
And out of Mind Justice and Order spring.
And out of Order, Justice grows the State,

Borrowing the curule chair and robes of Fate,
And high above the throne of State, the rood
Blood-drenched and scarred of Human Brotherhood.
Out of this concord currents flow of thought,
Muddy, clear welling, ill or wisely taught,
A reaching out for something unfulfilled,
By knowledge chastened, by doubt checked or chilled.
Philosophy, Religion, Science, Art,
These sway the soul in absolute or part,
The four main props of life, and built on these
The thousand tiers of life's utilities.
From savage up to seer, the soul's unrest
Is constant, striving still to be expressed
In some rude idol moulded, carved by hand,
Or thoughts that to the zenith star expand.
Like tides that sweep upon some rock-bound shore
These waves of soul-endeavor evermore
Beat on the shores of Time; their constant play
Sweep round the headlands of the stormed to-day.

The social systems, present, past, to come,
The monarch's trumpet, the republic's drum,
The poet's vision, the idealist's plan,
The Happy Valley, the millennial man,
And all the varied shibboleths proved in vain,
Voiced by the restless record of the brain,
Fast as the pictured films incessant flow,
While life moves on with never-ending show.

Lo, Anarchy, an ideal, crudely wrought,
Unchartered by historic fact or thought,
Bearing within itself the seeds of death,
Denying force, yet force its living breath,
Cursing the nations and by them accursed,
Destruction of the state its last and first,

Best advertised of economic pills,
The panacea for all social ills!

A stricter theory, a preciser scope,
Rule grown supreme, the Socialistic hope,
Antithesis of Anarchy, to bind
In law's straight shackles variant mankind;
At hearth and field and mart one pulseless plan
To free the aspiring, restless heart of man;
To lift the curse from poverty and play
Jove to the trivial habit of the day;
To shove each king and magnate from his throne
Yet place thereon an idol hard as stone,
And under guise of setting genius free
Fettering it thru combined utility;
Man's flowering thought, a formal potted theme;—
This forms the rainbow of an airy dream.

Ah, could such dream dawn true! if Heaven's white dove
Of peace could bind the peoples all in love,
With chains of flowers, or might man and man
Bridge heart to heart, nor Hell have power to ban,
The true Christ then were come, no god-head birth,
But a new human day-spring o'er the earth.
If such the consecration—if the mind
Of Heaven might clothe and expedite mankind,
Moulding the world one kinship, fit to climb
The laurelled heights of self-obscured time,
Not vain Love's martyrs braved the toil and shock,
Nor Sidney's blood flowed fruitless on the block,
Nor all the seers who wizard armor forge
From Socrates to Kant and Henry George
To fight the dragon, Error, would be found
Vain charging down the wind; nor would be drowned
In the world discord of the new and last
The mighty poets, answering blast for blast,

The trumpet tongues of the ages, who aye strove
To show that love was beauty, beauty love;
The symmetry and concord of the soul,
All life and light, with systems as they roll
In one harmonious diapason—sod,
Tree, flower, fish, reptile, bird, beast, man, to God!

IN THE GLOAMING

I

WE sat upon the rough sea shore,
My plighted love and I;
The heavens with clouds were tented o'er,
No star upheld the sky;
Yet was the ether strewn with light
And sweet the air and mild,
While the slow waters to the night
Crooned like a sleepy child

II

When lulled upon its mother's knee;
And from the fragrant earth,
Around us on the shadowed lea,
A million trills had birth,
Which tinily did interfuse
And to the heavens upburn,
While downward Night her dusks and dews
Poured from her popped urn.

III

Silent and still we sat; her cheek
Pressed mine,—i' the other's arms
Each folded; rythmically did speak
The beached waves' low alarms;

The reflux wave which aye assailed
 The pebbles beneath our feet;—
 Over us, amethystine veiled,
 Night bended down to greet

IV

The breathing earth with still embrace;
 The brooding, thrilled delight,
 The living lushness and the grace
 Of warm midsummer night.
 And so our souls fell into chime
 With earth and sky and sea;
 So did our sentient summertime
 Melt in mute ecstasy.

V

And then she spoke,—her words came low
 As the soft-lapping tide;
 Fervent as Evening's pulsing glow,
 My sweet-voiced, sea-born bride;
 High words of love and light as pure
 And kind as Heaven's own dew;
 Words that shall comfort and endure
 My last life journey thru.

VI

And while we lingered paled the light,
 Dusk's curtains were drawn down;
 Passed o'er the placid wave the Night,
 And o'er the dreaming down

Her sables moved; but in that world,
Our hearts, the light still burned;
The petals of our souls unfurled,
And forth to Heaven upturned.

VII

And thru our bosoms throbbed the heart
Of breathing Nature's God;
One were we with the spheres, a part
Of star and wave and sod;
Comrade with eldest yearnings blown
Thru sentient pipes of Pan,
To noblest dreams of earth full grown,
The God-ward tread of Man.

VIII

Oh life, oh love, ye are the same
To souls born free and true!
Oh pure heart faith, words cannot frame
What the rapt eye may view!
Far from earth's dull material sounds
The still small voice is heard,
How oft the rude world's discord drowns
Heaven's sweet star-lighted word!

CANADIAN THANKSGIVING HYMN

DOWN all the changes of the years,
Across earth's mingled joys and tears,
The stars of endless progress shine;
The centuries, O Lord, are Thine!

Thy hand the sovereign gifts of peace
Bestows with bounteous, rich increase;
The hearts of nations move to Thee
As towards the moon the midnight sea.

The star that rose o'er Morning Land
Doth now with clearer beam expand;
Old dreams come true—oh, wondrous spell
Thy word of love, Emanuel!

Now Faith, like Noah's wandering dove,
The drear wide waste of creeds above,
Bears back unto her refuge ark
Her token o'er the waters dark.

But chief of those Thy love hath blest
Are we, the English of the West;
With filled and overflowing hands
The Benjamin of Nations stands.

O, thanks supreme are due to Thee,
Who brought us forth across the sea,
And taught our souls to feel and know;
Where Truth could build and Freedom grow!

Still runs the sturdy Standish strain,—
Still glows the patriot heart of Vane
In us,—the old Cromwellian will
In us is warm and vital still.

What though the horoscope of fate
Points out fresh dangers to the state,
Thy mercies oft our path have crossed,
Our trust, like Gideon's, was not lost.

Great cause for many thanks have we,
A land at peace, a Nation free;
From North to South, from East to West,
Above all nations we are blest.

Blest in our heritage and increase,—
Blest both in faction and in peace,—
Blest more than Israel in her prime,
This new, this true Hesperian clime.

With no faint hope for our young land,
We lay our futures in Thy hand;
For blessings past we worship Thee,
And for Thy bounties yet to be.

Though fate's dark frown should cloud Thy face,
Keep for us, Lord, Thy heart of grace;
Our lives are Thine; Thy Gospel's ray
Lights up our new Thanksgiving Day!

THE HOLLYHOCKS

SOME space beyond the garden close
I sauntered down the shadowed lawn;
It was the hour when sluggards doze,
The cheerful, zephyr-breathing dawn.
The sun had not yet bathed his face,
Dark reddened from the night's carouse,
When lo, in festive gypsy grace
The hollyhocks stood nodding brows.

They shone full bold and debonair—
That fine, trim band of frolic blades;
Their ruffles, pinked and purpled fair,
Flamed with their riotous rainbow shades.
They whispered light each comrade's ears,
They flirted with the wooing breeze;
The grassy army's stanchest spears
Rose merely to their stalwart knees!

My heart flushed warm with welcome cheer,
They were so royal tall to see;
No high-placed rivals need they fear,
All flowers paid them fealty.
The haughtiest wild rose standing near
Their girdles hardly might attain;
They glowed, the courtiers of a year,
Blithe pages in the Summer's train!

Their radiance mocked the ruddy morn,
So jocund and so saucy free;
Gay vagrants, Flora's bravest born,
They brightened all the emerald lea.

I said: "Glad hearts, the crabbed frost
Will soon your sun-dyed glories blight;
No evil eye your pride has crossed,
You know not the designs of night.

"You have not thought that beauty fades;
It is in vain you bloom so free;
While you are flaunting in the glades
The gale may wreck your wanton glee."
They shook their silken frills in scorn,
And to my warning seemed to say,
"Dull rhymester, look! 'tis summer morn,
And round us is the court of Day!"

CALIFORNIA

BRIDE of the Sun, thou beautiful Queen of the limitless
West,
A tiara of glittering snowpeaks o'er thy proud, imperial
crest;
With thy veil of vines and flowers, and eyes of eternal blue,
From the Occident greeting the Orient, heir of the Old
and New.

California crowned with summer, thou fairest of fair two-
score,
Great is thy name amid nations, bright marvel of mountain
and shore;
With gaze fixed full on the future or lifted to Hope's glad
skies,
The stars of a cloudless heaven reflected in thine eyes.

At thy feet the Ocean casteth his broad and burnished
shield,
For thou stretchest a scepter of iron over his wave-strewn
field;
And thy ichor of life takes fire from the glow of thy mighty
heart,
As from thy lips of passion the peans of triumph start.

On thy robes the perfume of roses lingers the live-long
year,
And the dream-winds of the ocean make music in thine ear;

Child-mother, of years most fruitful, whose breasts o'erflow
with milk,
The East shall sue for thy favor with spices and gems and
silk.

Yet, O thou peerless beauty, tho dowered with Heaven's
high grace,
Dream not of a cloudless future—the meed of a faultless
face;
For evil hath tainted thy blood, and the petulance of thy
hand
May turn a curse upon thee and blast thy bounteous land.

Rise, rise in strength majestic, young Titaness of the West,
And forge thyself a cuirass of the gold that adorns thy
breast;
Temper thy sword of justice in Freedom's sacred fire,
And slay with heart unflinching the dragon of thy desire.

Smite with the edge of thine ire that dragon of soulless
greed;
So shalt thou leave safeguarded the heritage of thy seed;
So shall plenty descend like dew and the fair and fruitful
earth
Requite with lavish largesse the life that gave thee birth.

Anoint thy soul with vigil, thou bright-haired matron-
knight;
Win fairly thy crown of honor, bear bravely thy shield in
flight;
So Peace may o'er thy conquest her choicest blessing spread,
And wreath with the orange blossoms the laurel round thy
head.

Then will thy star resplendent burn on the brow of Morn;
The Aurora of life new-waking, discarding her robes out-
worn;
In the virginal beauty of Truth, mid the nations radiant
stand,
The charm of a brighter heaven—the joy of an ampler
land!

TO THE POETS

O H, poets, brothers, though the world, unheeding
Grudges us all things save its care and pain;
Know our probation is the spring-time seeding—
Our tears the warm and fertilizing rain.

Make firm your choice! should we be slaves to Mammon,
To take the flesh pots from his sweaty hand?
Better Heaven's manna in the land of famine!—
Better the desert thirst, the lonesome sand!

Should we forego our ill-paid love and hoping,
For Wealth's and Power's delirium and fears?
In recreant, careless sloth should we be dropping
The soiled rosary of the silver years?

Ye faithful hearted, what is Pride's indenture
To those who Heaven and Nature's secrets share?
We have our Shakespere—he will, peradventure,
Show us the heights where laurels grow most fair.

Let us not fail in word, in just ambition;
Nor solely use the prophet's voice to please;
Nor spend the golden thought in cheap attrition
Of trifling themes and turbid fantasies.

On, minstrels,—cheer the van,—march uncomplaining!
Ye are God's favorite children, for we feel
Perpetual spring within our spirits reigning,
Though frosts of age may on our locks congeal.

Pale watchers for the Light—in the new reaping
Men shall adore each lambent, deathless name!
Ye patient ones—a wealth of smiles and weeping
The world shall pay in homage to your fame!

Yes, all the tissued dreams of Fancy's leading,
The gold-wrought threads of song our rapture wove,
Are raiment to man's naked human pleading,
Girded with sacrifice and clasped with love.

THE SLUMBER

SHE paled away like some bright flower,
In Autumn's chill,
Before the storm unchains its power,
At winter's will.

She sleeps—nor all life's fevered dream
Disturbs her rest,
As pulseless as the thin moonbeam,
That lights her breast.

ONE KIN ARE WE

WE all are sons of English land,
From Britain to New Zealand's strand;
From isles of spice and far Cathay
To realms of occidental day.
From shore to shore, from sea to sea,
Throughout all earth one kin are we!
One kin, undoubted, faithful, free,
In our redoubted Liberty!

We own the wealth of half the world;
Our sails on every sea unfurled
Waft treasures priceless and untold;
Ours are the fabled shores of gold!
In every land, on every sea,
On foreign strands, one kin are we!
One kin, illustrious still to be
In our industrious Liberty!

How bright the stars of empire shine
Above palmetto, oak and pine!
How the full groves of orange trees
Are rustling in fair Freedom's breeze!
Our realms of oceaned industry
Show to the world one kin are we!
One kin of blended fame are we,
Born to one splendid Liberty!

The Slav, the Teuton, and the Gaul,
Our strength and splendor dwarfs them all;

They quarrel o'er their conquered lands—
Earth groans beneath their armèd bands;
Aloof in calm supremacy
We bide, because one kin are we!
One kin of fearless, proud degree,
Guarding our peerless Liberty!

Freedom regains each lost estate
From out the grudging hold of Fate,
The peaceful triumphs of her rule,
Arts, science, law, the church, the school;
Our patron saint of husbandry
Is she, because one kin are we!
One kin—one towering, wide-spread tree,
With flowering boughs of Liberty!

Old England's glories bloom o'er earth;
They bourgeon forth in constant birth!
The stars that o'er Columbia shine,
The Pleiads o'er the Canadian pine,
The Austral cresset blazing free,
Now light the world; one kin are we!
One kin, far-famed, of proud degree,
Led by our star-flamed Liberty!

The earth's redemption draweth nigh!
Hark! as the dowerless nations sigh,
The rush of Freedom's firm set feet
Resounds down each insurgent street!
Her banner rolls out broad and free—
We lead the van! One kin are we!
One kin—one valorous constancy—
Yes, one chivalrous Liberty!

THE VISION

'T WAS twilight hour; I sat in darkened mood;
"Would that the world would yield me more of good,"
I sadly mused, when, close at my right hand
My guardian genius seemed to me to stand.

His face was calm, compassionate, and mild,
He gazed on me and all so sweetly smiled,
A paly radiance strayed across the room,
Like flickering moonbeams through a covert gloom.

He placed his hand upon my bended head;
"Look up, my child," in pure, low tones he said;
I looked, and wonderingly I gazed again,
The room seemed filled with a triumphal train.

Each figure in the dim light loomed and shaped,
Then crossed and vanished where the shades were draped;
And as they to my gazing passed away,
My sweet-faced genius low to me did say:

"These are the phantoms of thy youthful hope,
They enter not within thy manhood's scope;
Fair cherished ideals of life's early day,
Lo, one by one, they slowly fade away.

"Look thou once more!" again I raised mine eyes;
There passed a figure clad in splendid guise;
He eyed me with a shrewd, cold gaze of stealth;
"Not thine," the genius said, "his name is Wealth."

A stately presence next did cross me by;
Proud was his mien and threatening was his eye;
One short, contemptuous glance he on me cast;
"This one is Power, and lo, he too has passed!"

I looked again—a delicate perfume
Of rose and jasmine wandered through the room;
There came a maiden all bedeckt with flowers,
Sweeter than those e'er grown in Flora's bowers.

Her eyes were lustrous as the stars of night,
And graceful was her form as sylph of light;
She held me spell-bound in delicious charm;
Sweetly she smiled and waved her lily arm.

Yet passed she on—bewildered and amazed
I earnestly within the darkness gazed;
The genius touched me, "She too doth remove;
Not thine," he said, "men call this siren, Love."

I heaved a sigh—with rapt look and profound,
One slowly came, his head with bays was crowned;
And fair as is the opening rose of morn,
A changeful radiance from his form was borne.

Yet simple was his garb—a glance he turned
Upon my anxious eyes, that through me burned;
With eager lips and outstretched hand his name
I cried aloud, "take all, but leave me Fame!"

Yet even as I spake he passed away;
My head in anguish in my hands I lay;
When a low voice upon the other side
Said softly, "Grieve not, I with thee abide!"

I raised mine eyes which vanished hope had seared;
My calm-faced genius all transformed appeared;
Celestial radiance all his visage veiled,
And scars showed where his hands had once been nailed.

“My child,” he said, “the world for thee has nought;
Wealth, power, and fame are all too dearly bought;
Even love itself, unsanctified by me,
Would lure thy soul from higher destiny.

“Know thou thy good—what hallows mortal life
Is 'gainst ourselves to wage a conquering strife;
Learn thou of me thy frailties to subdue,
And be in all things to thy vision true.”

He ceased, and all his form grew heavenly fair,
Then slowly faded through the still night air;
Humbled and awed my spirit inly bowed,
And as he passed the moon brake through a cloud.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF FREEDOM

WHERE'S Freedom's birthplace? it should be
Some spot of earth most fair to see!
What doth she name her natal home?
Some minster pile? some palace dome?
In what court, castle, tower or hall,
Did her first lisping accents fall?
Not within bannered walls of stone
Doth Freedom any birthright own!

No! she was not with life endowed
Among the mighty and the proud—
Neither midst kings nor conquerors found,
Nor lords nor prelates capped and gowned;
The haughty barons, earls, and peers,
Oppressed and starved her infant years:
She hath not there a heritage known,—
No birthright there may Freedom own!

Perchance her nascent strength grew then
Midst demagogues and lawless men?
Mayhap midst anarchy and crime
Was nurtured first her youth sublime?
In realms by selfish faction torn
Perhaps the radiant maid was born?
Where such rash tyrants sway the throne
No heritage can Freedom own!

It may be, then, in ways of trade
Her earliest infant footsteps strayed,

Where Commerce with her golden chain
Links shore to shore, joins main to main?
No! she was poor. No costly bales
No argosies with swelling sails
Were hers—for humble, scorned, alone,
No birthright there could Freedom own!

No! her first smile she did bestow
Neither on wealth nor power, nor show;
But long ago her tender form
Was rescued from a night of storm.
From out her peril lifted then
High in the arms of lowly men,
A love child, sacred, though unknown,
Midst them might Freedom heritage own!

Lo, proud even of her humble birth
Are now the great ones of the earth;
As eager now her court to fill
As erst their hatred wrought her ill.
But now, as then, her guardian stands
The son of toil with hardened hands;
As when in youth, now fairly grown,
To him her life doth Freedom own!

THE GOLDEN-ROD

A LONG the bronze-banked roadside as I stray
What is it braids the front of Autumn day?
The fields are brown, the wild flowers shrunk in blight,
Save where this glory trails upon my sight;
O Golden-Rod!
'Tis you who greet me as I walk abroad!

As forth I saunter, sunk in moody dreams,
Around my path your way-fire pageant gleams;
While starring all my dusk of musing drear,
You hold me high your wealth of nodding cheer;
O Golden-Rod!
Moving my fancy as along I plod.

You love by common human paths to dwell;
Unlike the hermit shrunken to his cell,
You eye with interest human toil and strife
Undaunted by the dust of passing life;
O Golden-Rod!
Blooming your brightest on the hardest sod.

Your free-willed, fearless presence showeth me
Worth bravely cheerful midst adversity,
How life may through the current of the day
Its bloom of kindly service wear away;
O Golden-Rod!
May manhood blossom like your rude birth-clod!

Fair yellow jewel, the last in Autumn's crown!
No selfish tongue should voice your pure renown,
For without wage you charm the public eye,
A poet of the thankless, sombre sky!
O Golden-Rod!
How many heedless feet have past you trod.

Dear wayside flower with waving, feathery plume,
Uncherished still, life's two-fold way illumine!
Your graceful charm thru Autumn's waning date
Outranks the cultured garden's proud estate;
O Golden-Rod!
Lamp of the highway, lit by hand of God!

JANUARY

A WINTER'S day: the landscape veiled in white
Shimmers within the morning's lucent ray;
There is no cloud in all of heaven's height;
There is no leaf nor bird upon the spray;
The winds alone are wandering, while we
Warm sheltered sit in low-eaved privacy.

Gaily the flames leap up the chimney's throat;
The huge gnarled back-log crackles on the hearth;
Hark, how the wheel hums round its cheerful note!
It is the season of the New Year's birth.
All nature greets us smiling; ah, may Time
Spin out our threads to such a sweet-toned chime!

This life is all our portion; little we
Know of the strife and passion of the mart;
The dull round of our quiet cares, the tree,
The corn and kine make up our peaceful part;
The city's pride and longing pass us by;—
How white the world is and how blue the sky!

THE BARREN FIG-TREE

A BARREN fig-tree in the vineyard stood.
The Lord in passing saw its want of good
And said, to the vine-dresser turning round,
“Cut this tree down, why cumbereth it the ground?”

“Behold have I not planted it with care?—
Hath it not had the rain and sun and air,
Doth it not fare alike with all of these—
Why doth it not bring forth like other trees?”

Then the vine-dresser said with anxious mien,
“Thy care and keeping, Lord, are fully seen,
Spare it a little longer tho, I pray,
For it to Thee may bring forth fruit some day.

“Lo, now it hath a goodly branch and root;
It groweth yet too rank for any fruit;
Its spurious blossoms all are blasted quite;
I’ll prune it, Lord, that it may bloom aright.”

Then said the Lord, “Vine-dresser, great thy care
Hath been of all my trees, beyond compare;
I give the barren fig-tree to thy will;
The choicest fruit is of redemption still.”

QUESTIONS OF LIFE

WHAT is Knowledge? 'Tis the beholding
The blue through a cloudy strife.
What is Wisdom? The unfolding
Of the secret calyx of life.

What is Life? The daily Postman's
Packet and tarnished sleeve.
What is Death? The churlish dustman
Who trundles his cart at eve.

What is Pleasure? The froth on the beaker
Of the sparkling vintage of joy.
What is Pain? A vengeance wrecker;
A servant the gods employ.

What is Honor? A kite that flieth
High as the gale expands.
What is Fame? A tongue that lieth—
A foot-print upon the sands.

What is Happiness? Perfumed essence
Born of the dew and light.
What Despair? A shrouded presence
That sits by the hearth at night.

What is Chance? The heart of a lover,
A shuttle that weaves the air.
What is Fate? The coffin cover;
The Pope in his curule chair.

What is Law? The planks and fitting
Of Noah's expedient Ark.

What is Faith? The white dove flitting
Over the waters dark.

What is Creed? A sea-shore cavern
Where sounding billows sweep.

What is Time? A wayside tavern
Where travellers greet and sleep.

What is Conscience? A Judge's warrant;
A vice-shaming polished shield.

What is Genius? A proud Knight-errant
Tilting against the field.

What is Friendship? Convenient barter;
A heart-fire guide at night.

What is Love? Life's chart and charter;
An Eagle's tireless flight.

What is History? The moon investing
A midnight forest march.

What is Truth? The keystone resting
Upon the eternal arch.

TO THE BUMBLE-BEE

YOU little, busy, bustling fellow,
In doublet striped with brown and yellow,
I wonder if your fair employment
Is such fine, fanciful enjoyment;
Dost ever weary of your sweets
And long for other tasks and meats,
Like human creatures, who, God wot,
Are always grumbling o'er their lot,
Even should their heavy hoarded money
Be heaped up higher than your honey;
"Hard food for Midas," you can beat it,
Your wealth is fragrant and you eat it.
You do not feed your idle ones
As rich folk oft do lazy sons;
For social needs you think it kinder
To probe them with a keen reminder.
In the republic of your hive
To live is but to work and thrive;
And though you're chivalrous to ladies
All idle drones must go to Hades.
You're very circumspect indeed, sir,
And lay up plenty for your need, sir;
But are not stigmatized as niggard
As careful folk sometimes are figured,
Nor are to selfishness inclined
If rightly I can trace your mind;
But yet, my little buzzing elf,
You're much like us who live for pelf.
You have no conscience to be bought,

But yet your honey's all your thought.
What then? you earn and keep your right
To live—small sensual delight!
Your life is temperate, proper, just,
The only thought you have is *must*.
And so I hold no right to blame;
You put me and my kind to shame,
And teach our selfish ones at ease
They're not so wise or good as bees.

THE POOR APPLE WOMAN

THE busy throng and loaded wain
Surged by the warehouse wall;
Around her in the drizzling rain
She drew her tattered shawl;
Unnoticed by a look or word,
She cowered o'er her scanty hoard.

Her eyes betrayed a heart that pined;
Her lips with cold were blue;
Her face was wan and haggard-lined
And wore privation's hue;
Whoe'er hath been of woman born
Mighty pity one so sad and lorn.

But Want upon her careworn brow
Had stamped his cruel seal;
No hope of happy fortune now
Did those sad eyes reveal;—
A leaf swept by the winds of fate,
Trampled at Pleasure's palace gate!

CHILDLESS

MY little daughter Nellie
Would be eighteen to-day,—
Gone these ten years, I tell ye,
It's been a dreary way!
My little daughter Nellie,
As was so sweet and gay!

If you'd a-seen her, mister,
The light of these dim eyes!
They called her "The Little Sister"—
The plaguery tears will rise!
How often in dreams I've kissed her,
My deary, now in the skies!

Pretty? God never thought of
A thing more pure and fair!
It seemed like she was wrought of
The sunshine, dew and air.
Ah, now of her I've nought of
But memories everywhere!

Memories that haunt me ever
As round the place I go;
A heart so kind and clever,
A life so all aglow
With youth and joy, I never
From now to death will know.

Why, sir, the birds would listen
But for to hear her sing;
The wild-flowers seemed to glisten
As tho touched by an angel's wing
When she passed—earth's now a prison,—
No joy in anything!

The dear white-violets cover
In spring her churchyard bed,
And a wild-rose clammers over
The headstone at her head;
Each fair thing was her lover,—
To me and them she's dead!

Ah, well! I mustn't sadden
Your heart, so lightsome yet;—
At times I seemed to madden
At loss of my little pet;
Nothing my heart can gladden;
Old age cannot forget.

MY THREE FRIENDS

(*Lines on a Photograph of Three Dogs*)

THREE friends are these—adherents of my flag;
Stanch followers, courtier, learned clerk, and wag;
Good friends, all three, as e'er did woman own,
As ever loved a woman or a bone;
Friends, thoro friends, thru every pulse and breath,
Friends for all life; perchance—who knows?—past death!
Each to his service brings a fresh delight
And feels no virtue in his love's requite.
Mark you the right-hand comrade—what an air
Of high-bred grace! his head thrown up in air.
How like the love-locks of the Cavaliers
Falls soft the peruke of his silken ears!
And how the silver locket at his breast
Shines like the order on a silken vest!
He is a cavalier! Not Charles' court
Held one of braver or more constant sort;
Who, for a cause, would death more quickly face
Than Hark, my prince of chivalry and grace!
One night—the tale I will not dwell on—he
Saved me some inconvenience—robbery—
Or was it murder? Anyhow, I lay
My life and diamonds to his love, to-day.

The middle one, that's Dick, my learned clerk;
He's smaller than the others—what a perk
Of knowingness sits on his supple ears!
He is the *brains* of the three worthy peers;

Prim as a maiden, gentle, but so quick
 To catch a hint or learn the mannered trick!
 Dick knows a thing or two, mayhap, that you
 Or I, my friend, scarce fathom—yet 'tis true
 Dick has no speech beyond a hoarse "yep, yep!"
 And language, Sir, articulate, is a step
 Dogs will not take this many an æon—still
 Dick's on the road with a persistent *will*.

And now, my third—the one that's on the left;
 No thoroughbred, you see! Nature's bereft
 Brownie of dignity and manners—note
 His blunter nose, his shagginess of coat,
 His tongue a-loll and two big sprawling paws,
 And no clean cut expression to the jaws.
 Yet Brownie, none the less, shall have his due,
 Prince of good fellows! Ay, and princely true!
 Never a better, merrier heart was born;
 With Brownie's love no life could be forlorn;
 See, what an honest, jolly, sonsie face!
 He's prime! the first Mark Tapley of his race!

So, you perceive, I'm rich in three good friends;
 Friends? More than friends—they're lovers; my amends
 To you, my brave Hark, Dick and Brownie! you
 Reck not who else is to your mistress true,
 Nor what her fortunes are, and in her smile
 You're happy, with no lurking thought of guile;
 You've a capacity for love, I say,
 That has no limit—any popinjay
 Can swear his love's eternal—you've no way
 But to act out your love from day to day.

* * * * *

You envy them their task? the trade is free;
 I *love* my dogs. You understand, I see.

THANKSGIVING HYMN

A CHEERLESS, bleak November morn
Broke lowing o'er that band forlorn
Those grave, stern Pilgrims, robed in gray,
Who kept our first Thanksgiving Day.

Between lone shore and lonelier wood
What trials had their manhood stood!
Through sorrow, care and toil arose
The infant state girt round with foes.

But tho rough wood and barren strand
Close hemmed that sad faced, toiling band—
Tho in what hour no soul could tell
Might rise the Narraganset yell—

Sundered in that inclement time
From English kin and England's clime,
Yet still our fathers blest the sea
That fenced their dear bought liberty.

For even while foes and cares assailed,
Faith grew not dim nor courage failed;
Then rose the voices rapt and calm,
That raised our first Thanksgiving psalm.

* * * * *

O wondrous change! how wide and fair
The inheritance their offspring share!
Yes, all is changed—save faith on high,
The freeborn heart, the sea and sky.

That sea and sky now greet a strand
Where Freedom still doth stedfast stand,
While by her side her sisters twain,
Peace, Plenty—smile o'er shore and main.

From out that stern and narrow rule
Have grown the Pulpit, Press and School;
Whose firm foundations stayed the shock
Of untoward fate on Plymouth Rock.

As in that twilight cold and gray,
As in war's fratricidal day,
Now in the hour of halcyon calm,
We raise the old Thanksgiving psalm!

A WITHERED ROSE

THE rose that late in its passion slumbered
Is dead,—and its bloom is withered to-day,
And hopes that a longing heart has numbered
Are torn, like these faded leaves, away.

Ah me, for the dream that awakes to sorrow;
For the baseless trust that has bloomed to die;
The life of a love that is dead to-morrow;
For the outward smile and the inward sigh.

The tears that fall cannot bring back savor
To the petals once gay with the morning dew,
Nor the prayers of an errant heart earn favor
Of joy to the soul to its memories true.

BETRAYED

YOU vowed to me your love was like the sea,
As wide, as free, as fathomless, as strong,
And in that trust I gave my all to thee,
A woman's heart, still unforeseeing wrong.

I blame you not, your nature stands revealed;
My love was wasted, for you could not know
For what deep source my cup of joy was filled;
What hidden springs now feed my bitter woe.

You could not—ah, had I but found it out
In time to flee from Love's unreasoning snare,
Regret had not then ta'en a pledge from Doubt
Nor innocent Hope submitted to Despair.

Alas, that the ignoble still must be
The scourge of generous hearts, and ever bind
The Christ of the Ideal to the tree,
Who comes to work redemption for mankind.

THE VOTIVE ROSE

SWEET Rose, thou gem of yesternorn,
All blushing from thy stem wast torn;
Red as the love pulse of my heart,
And dewy as my tears that start.

My tears are not of grief but joy;
Henceforth no fears shall me annoy;
He said, the love light in his eye,
"How sweet, dear Rose, for her to die."

"For her to die!" ah, happy she!
Dear Rose, thy brethren of the tree
Might envy thee thy parting breath,
Love's envoy glorified in death.

So long as life abides thy claim
Is cherished, symbol of love's flame;
Thy withered form shall daily press
This leaf where I my love confess.

And when I die—thy faded bloom
Shall grace my passage to the tomb,
And he shall kiss thy leaves and say,
"Be with her till her waking day."

SOCIETY AND ART

FROM Mother earth the potter's crafty hand
Moulds into shape the vase's flowing line;
Then art around the surface doth expand
In bossage, color, tracery, and design.

The first is elemental—like the child,
Cast in the matrix of his age and race;
The second like the man—by dreams beguiled,
By action formed, with passion's warmth and grace.

And both are tried by fire—until are fixed
Indissolubly whilst one shard remains,
The colors art and social forms have mixed
In clays and bronzes, or in hearts and brains.

LINES ON A PICTURE

THE guests are gone—my lady there is sitting
Between the lions of her palace gate,
A frame for peerless beauty most befitting,
The power that heralds her ancestral state.

And from her hand the soul of sound has glided
In rhythmic tremors o'er the starred lagoon;
Her spirit seems 'tween earth and heaven divided—
Ah, may her heart re-echo to love's tune!

“JUST AS HIGH AS MY HEART”

HIGH as my heart my lovely lady stands—
Her eyes gleam like twin sister stars of even,
Borrowing their beauty from the depths of Heaven.
Like tapering coral are her milk-white hands;
Her lips like roses red that newly leaven.
High as my heart my lovely lady stands!

High as my heart my lovely lady stands
Beneath a bower of clambering brier roses;
The fawning sunbeam on her form reposes
And burnishes her braided chestnut bands
And like a golden shrine her grace encloses.
High as my heart my lovely lady stands!

High as my heart my lovely lady stands—
But, ah, her worth than mine how truer, higher!
For like as gold that hath been tried by fire
Her steadfast heart meets all life's stern demands.
Yet this I say—nor make kind love a liar—
High as my heart my lovely lady stands!

THE PRISONER OF LOVE

THEY who in Love's strong meshes lie
May swear the bonds are sweet—not I.
Now, Eros, turn thy shafts away,
My breast to them is proof to-day.

With youth thy influence, too, hath flown;
The fair to me is fair alone.
Thy Mother's self with all her art
Has now no power to move my heart.

Only one homage I avow,
The Attic maid with laurelled brow;
Thy yoke and tribute I refuse;
I yield sole service to the Muse.

The Muse, ah, she's the maid for me!
Whose breath like summer winds is free,
Whose eyes are stars of Heaven, whose dress
Is of all lines of loveliness.

Who perfume brings of fields and hills;
Whose voice is of the mountain rills;
Whose smile is like the radiant beam
Of some light dancing, lucent stream.

The Muse is always constant? No!
Her woman's waywardness will show,
But when she greets me then I feel
She loves me aye through dearth and weal.

Yet even while I her claim allow
I prove a recreant to my vow;
Despite of proud resolves, betrayed
By Eros thru an earthly maid.

The subtile King of hearts! he sent
His deadliest power of blandishment;
He roused the slumbering fires to life
That held my youth in bonds and strife.

A maiden sweet, a maiden fair,
With heaven-blue eyes and sunny hair,
In whose low voice and winning smile
I note the love-god's cunning wile.

My Muse, too, in the plot! again
Complacent to the dual reign;
If she now joins against me all
Is up, my shield and falchion fall.

Why, Eros, warfare dost thou wage
Against grey hairs and growing age?
Still thy relentless bow is strung
'Gainst wise and simple, old and young!

It recks not to despise thy power;
None knoweth when may come his hour.
Now, tyrant, lay thine arrows by;
Once more thy helpless captive, I.

IN MEMORIAM

On the Death of Alfred Tennyson

WHOM would ye choose? for, lo, the king is dead
Who latest swayed the realm of English hearts;
He whose revered and silver crownèd head
Lies dreamless midst the thunder of your marts;
Your Alfred of the calm and lofty mien,
His fingers clasping Shakespere's Cymbeline.

Buried in the bowels of that ancient crypt,
Amidst the dust of your illustrious great,
He rests, the gracious-hearted, honey-lipped,
Peer of the grandest of your race or state;
Yea, Prince of more than kingdoms, age or clime;
A Monarch whose dead sceptre conquers time!

For even when the trembling hand of age
Dwelt on the strings, no harsh, uncertain sound
Smote false your hearts; the venerable Mage,
The Master-minstrel all your being found;
Revived your souls to the rich bloom of youth,
And charmed with music the high paths to truth.

Ah, ye may dew with tears the burial stone,
And strew your tributes o'er his stainless hearse;
Voice the far echo of his godlike tone;
Embalm his memory in your fragrant verse;
All—all in vain—no Star of Song doth rise
Above the grave where your great Laureate lies.

The laurel wreath of Spenser should not grace
A front less high than this majestic brow,
The stamp imperial graved upon the face,
Fervently lighted with the poet's vow;
And with the outgrowth of a fertile heart
Blooming and fruiting in the close of art.

The hand that might have grasped yon silent lyre,
And struck its fateful strings with strenuous might,
Joined yester-year the pure-toned English choir,
Who wear their amaranths in the halls of light;
Ruder the touch, yet from those fingers ran
Strains that could rouse or sink the heart of man.

But now, the Arthur of your poet realm,
Both Lancelot and Galahad of rhyme,
Whom will ye find to wear his wingèd helm
Or ride his charger down the lists of time?
The new Pendragon—where can such be found?
Alas, not one of all your Table Round!

Let none the storied chords of that clear harp
Restrike in service dissonant and vain;
Ye will but cause the world to mock and carp;
Ye will but sound a void of grief and pain;
Hang up the shining wires above his head
And leave your laureate's crown upon the dead.

ROBERT BROWNING

KNIGHT in the vanguard of knowledge, peer of the kingdom of thought,
Prophet, and priest, and bard, thou hast sung for futurity,
wrought
For the ampler after-time, for the kindlier soul's increase,
For the higher, humbler faith, for the purest, heavenliest
peace.

Thou hast hidden thy gold and rubies in thy quartz of
rough-veined verse;
Thou hast probed the secret soul with thy questions grave
and terse;
Thou turned'st the lamp of thy mind on the palimpsest of
the heart;
Thou didst strain in the bonds of Time, now Eternity's
ward thou art.

Thy sheaf of years hung full of the green hope of thy
youth,
Nurtured by secret dews from the heaven of love and truth;
No blast of malice can shake, nor Time's envious mace
assault
Thy spacious structure of song, arched over earth's storied
vault.

Thou didst spurn the Egyptian's lure, thou didst cleave to
the race enslaved;
Thou didst dwell unknown to those for whose weal thou
hadst tyrants braved;

Thou beheldest the burning bush, thy feet the mount had
trod,
In the lair of the angry cloud thou stoodst face to face with
God!

The glory of song in thy heart lit thy face with auroral ray;
Thou heldst our wisdom in trust, the chief of transition's
day;
Unbated by churlish age, thy lone, far-sighted stand'
Was the Pisgah heights of song o'erlooking the Promised
Land.

Rest, crowned with the proud assurance thy verse was not
wrought in vain,
Though the century turn aside to its idols of pleasure and
gain;
Thou wilt be heard aright when the lutes and the laughter
have ceased
And the soul is alone with its stars, undazed by the glare
of the feast.

This leasehold thou hast exchanged for a wider and fadeless
life;
The swaddling bands of flesh thou hast cast to a world of
strife;
Thou hast traversed the waters of Death; thou hast found
thy chosen mate,
The sibyl of burning song, the revealer of words of fate.

Where the blue Venetian night falls a spangled, huge con-
cave,
Did thy venturesome spirit wing forth like a prayer from a
dome-crowned nave;
Like Arcturus throned afar in a mist of twinkling shine
Starts thy star on the heaven of song, loved guest of the
trophied Nine!

TO SIDNEY LANIER

DEAR brother minstrel, Heaven-crowned spirit friend,
Who saw unrolled the apocalypse of earth,
Whose soul was star-lit, music-charmed from birth,
Who didst through æther send
The unwearied gaze of half-requited eyes,
Longing for higher, holier mysteries—
O wheresoe'er art thou—
Within what starry sphere
Thy spirit bourgeons, hear!
Bend down through space and touch mine eyes and brow.

Kiss these dull eyes awake that they may view
Like thee all beauty, the involvèd charm
Of Nature, which thy spirit only knew,
Or knew with angels—O thou bright-souled seer
Who resteth on God's never-tiring arm,
And seeth this fair-world a sparkle shining clear
Amidst the constellations—Thou whose pen
Burnt golden characters for soul-blind men,
Furrowing thy page with light,
(Heaven all thy heart requite!)
Sweet spirit, that bear'st faint scar of sin, bend down thy
Heaven entrancèd ear!

This dull material round hath need of thee!
The foison greed of Wealth besets our life;
With earth-blind eyes we see
Not the bright quietude but the cloudy strife.
That heaven, which to the ancient world seemed near,
Is but a waste of doctrine, dry and drear;

A world by dogma vext;
A world with doubts perplexed;
The dizzy heights we gain;
Our weary eyes we strain
And miss the glory shining in the plain;
Some cloud is ever shutting from our eyes
The soul-enhancing visions vainly sought for in the skies!

We walk as in a trance;
We gaze with eyes askance
Upon our fellows in the crowded street;
We crush life's flowers beneath our heedless feet,
And self, with its unending cares,
Enlists our faith, our hopes, our hearts, our prayers;
We struggle to be free,
But a sad fatality
Breaks in across our souls and hides the star
Of promise even from the good and wise;
The elemental war
Environs us and takes us for its prize.

Thou vanishèd in thy noon!
Nature is niggard of such souls as thine,
Fearing her mysteries would be told too soon;
Thou youngest of the radiant Shelley line—
Hadst thou but lived to be
Full prophet in the new-time poesy,
What fair-found heights of knowledge had we gained!
We had not now remained,
Groping abroad with unconsidered sight,
Missing the clearer light
Of truth, to blindly fall on Hope's inconstancy.

But not all unfulfilled
Thy earthly mission or thy pledge of song,
Nor didst thou knock in vain upon our hearts;

The house thy hands hath built
For tired souls to rest in bideth strong
As adamant, and braves the shocks of fate
And winds of custom; at its open gate
Sweet Confidences meet hospitably
Wayfaring spirits and invite them in,
And light their loads of sin,
And tell them many rapturous noble things of thee.

Minstrel of earth and sky,
Mak'st thou no reply?
Say, is our mortal quest and longing vain?
Hast thou in happiness forgot the throng
Of work-day lives on this low-lying plain?
Nor wilt thou lend them of thy new-found song?
Perhaps 'tis better so;
Perchance we dare not know,
Nor thou disclose what meets thy finer ear—
Or how bliss trancèd souls unfold and grow,
Or how the favored Isles of Heaven appear.
Yet, sweet ghost, hear!
Oh, send some largesse of thy wealth divine—
Some tempered draught of thy rapt spirit's wine
Into this earthly, wayward, dim-lit, heart of mine!

MARLOWE

WHAT a fine frenzy of poetic might
Shows Marlowe, rising to his passion's height!
Throughout all space his song triumphant soars,
Fathoms all passion, all delight explores.
His muse culls all things delicate and rare
To adorn her vestments or to gem her hair;
Plucks the bright bay leaf from its highest bough,
Wet with Castalian dews, to deck her brow.
With burning speed she scours the hill of fame
To win the laurel of a world's acclaim;
And would, so daring is her high emprise,
Reach at the stars to pluck them from the skies.
Leaving but half the wondrous story told
Of that fine fable of true love of old,
Marlowe flung down his mighty gift and life,
His proud heart cloven by a scullion's knife!

REQUIESCAT!

(On the Death of Oliver Wendell Holmes.)

NAUGHT may be said
O'er the still presence of the illustrious dead
To forge one star-point to his fair renown,
Or weave one laurel in his fadeless crown,
To grace his time-worn, white and reverend head—
Compounded now with dust,
And with the grieving Autumn strewing it with leaves—
Who held our hearts in loving fetters bound,
A husbandman of many kinds of sheaves,
Now himself garnered to the greater store
Of sages gone before,
Out of the heartache, care and earthly lust;
Who like a true knight hath fulfilled his trust,
Singing himself to sleep,
And facing fearlessly the deep profound,
And smiling still upon our eyes that weep,
That now shall nevermore
Behold him face to face upon Time's echoing shore.

Yet fitly may a bard of younger race,
Trained to a newer habitude of rhyme,
Turn with his own thin laurel to the place
Where rests the veteran of the older time;
The man of stiff set lance and trenchant blade,
Naught venal, naught afraid,
With all the great heart of the Northern clime,—

Then, midst the worthier tributes resting there
(And on his lips a prayer),
Hang his slight chaplet on the cypress bough,
In token of his faith, his reverence and vow.

For of the sons of song she nurtured forth,
New England, mother of renowned men,
He most combined the fiber of the North
With the South's flexile grace,
And from its cloudless, sun-bathed lurking place
His ardent fancy leaped upon the page
And stamped its impress there for every future age.

And he was last of that triumphant throng
Who voiced the earlier Genius of their land,
And spake to souls in terms they understand,
Nor grudged impassioned song,
But felt the thrill of Nature through their veins;
Who smote venality, pretense and wrong,
Nor counted up their gains
By Custom's tally, but to the larger rule
Of the immortal bards, put their young art to school.

Therefore, no passing fame
Shines out from each deep-graved, illustrious name,
Carved in our tree of Liberty; for they
Were nurtured in no dilettante day,
But from the forge and flame
Of civil strife they wrought their strenuous claim,
And woke an echo that resounds away,
Through every realm and clime,
Far down the lengthening avenues of Time.

Perchance they greet him now
With the new-twisted amaranth on his brow,
And welcome him to their high-placed retreat,

And to their rose-bowered seat
 In the Elysium of the poet-band,
 And take him by the hand,
 Those comrades whom he knew and loved in life,—
 The Concord seer,
 And he who sang the wave bright Merrimac,—
 Lowell the generous hearted, and that soul
 Endeared to every fireside, and him austere,
 Bryant, the first of ours who struck his harp notes clear.

But not alone the sons of song shall claim
 The soul of him who charmed forth smiles or tears;
 He owes not to their muse alone his fame
 And all the coming honors of the years;
 Her plainer sister claims an equal share
 Of glory he doth wear;
 And in her train he finds some loved compeers,—
 The sweet souled Hawthorne, whose deep-reading eyes
 Drew Magic from the skies,
 And Irving, genial heart and kindly hand,
 And Cooper, painter true of his loved mountain land.

Yet he his other self hath left behind,—
 The priceless legacy of his hand and brain;
 The wit that falls in showers like diamond rain,
 The gayety that to all care is blind;
 And his rare, pregnant wisdom, Iris sweet,
 With all the children of his soul who still his fame repeat.

Then, ye who loved him from your days of youth,
 Make no vain lamentation for the dead;
 For he hath left the mantle of his truth
 And he who wills may wear it in his stead;
 But ne'er with such a grace,—
 For ne'er again the old-time cavalier
 Will flash his sword in rhyme and chant his rondel clear.

LINES

AT THE END OF A PROSE ESSAY ON OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES
ON THE COMPLETION OF HIS EIGHTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY.

THUS have I writ with fixed, impartial aim
To give no undue tribute, o'erdue blame;
Grudging the bard no honest meed of praise,
And yet not spendthrift of my loyal bays;
Now may the Muse her smiling favor bring,
And strike the light-stringed measure which I sing.

Briefly I choose the close-linked formal line,
The honored mode of bards well named divine;
O'er it old Chaucer took his jocund road;
Along it Marvell's forceful measures flowed;
Dryden's tense genius swelled its tide of song;
Upon it Pope's terse reason swept along;
O'er its dark stream the torch of Byron burned;
Twice to its flow Keats' shallop fancy turned:
It bore along its rippling, limpid breast
Hunt's courtly theme and Morris' antique zest;
Thine, Holmes, its swift, its sunbright sparkling strain
That fairly limns the landscape of thy brain;
That picturesquely turns in play of thought,
In flowery bends of pleasant fancy caught,
Smooth in its current as its tide is clear,
And ever manly, cultured and sincere;—
The rhymed pentameter—that tireless hack
That's borne a horde of bardlings on its back,

Drumming their dull, unvarying rataplan
 On every theme from Cosmos to a fan,
 Their thick octavos in oblivion sunk,
 Gone to the flame, the ragman, and the trunk.

Last of a line—behold the veteran stand,
 The lance of wit still quivering in his hand;
 With locks all whitened now, yet holding still
 A cheerful courage, an enduring will;
 Last of a race of bards;—too proud to climb
 Into the saddle of new-fashioned rhyme;
 Too wise to value art o'er lucid sense;
 Too brave to draw the curb on eloquence;
 Not always deep, perchance, in flow of song,
 But full-breathed, tuneful, fluent, limpid, strong;
 A voice, gay, genial, grave—still true to guide
 From erring paths hot youth's impatient stride;
 A humor keen, yet with no rankling smart;
 Its champagne sparkling, bubbling from the heart;
 A wit perennial and a fancy free,
 The bloom of Spring on life's long wintered tree;
 A heart as tender as a lover's thought;
 A falcon spirit, fearless, firmly wrought;
 Quick to detect, yet tardy to condemn,
 Well armed with pungent, pointed apothegm;
 Shrewd Yankee mind with graft of learning's fruit;
 An ear fine-tuned as Blondel's joyous lute;
 As sly and quaint as Shandy in his style,
 With something of the Frenchman in his smile;
 At fourscore still a bright-eyed, kindly man,
 Part courtier-cavalier, part Puritan;
 Revered where'er the rose of culture grows,
 From Astral summer to Alaskan snows;
 A school-boy's eye beneath his doctor's hat,
 Our love-crowned poet, laurelled Autocrat!

“THRESCORE AND TEN”

BY RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

WHO reach their threescore years and ten,
As I have mine, without a sigh,
Are either more or less than men—
Not such am I.

I am not of them; life to me
Has been a strange, bewildered dream,
Wherein I knew not things that be
From things that seem.

I thought, I hoped, I knew one thing,
And had one gift, when I was young—
The impulse and the power to sing,
And so I sung.

To have a place in the high choir
Of poets, and deserve the same—
What more could mortal man desire
Than poet's fame?

I sought it long, but never found;
The choir so full was, and so strong
The jubilant voices there, they drowned
My simple song.

Men would not hear me then, and now
I care not, I accept my fate.
When white hairs thatch the furrowed brow,
Crowns come too late!

The best of life went long ago
From me; it was not much at best;
Only the love that young hearts know,
The dear unrest.

TO RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

Back on my past, through gathering tears,
 Once more I cast my eyes, and see
 Bright shapes that in my better years
 Surrounded me!

They left me here, they left me there,
 Went down dark pathways, one by one,—
 The wise, the great, the young, the fair;
 But I went on!

And I go on! And, bad or good,
 The old allotted years of men
 I have endured, as best I could—
 Threescore and ten!

TO RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

THREESCORE AND TEN

NOT so, you do your craftsmen wrong,
 They love you, they, the earnest men;
 All hail, our veteran chief of song,
 Threescore and ten!

Though time has blanched and thinned your hair,
 Shaken your strength and dimmed your gaze,
 Greenly you yet the laurel wear,
 As in old days.

And if the shallow, vain acclaim
 Has passed you by for feebler men,
 Know the tried corps of younger fame
 Revere your pen.

True fame is yours, abiding, strong;
This Time will mould in just relief,
When all the meretricious throng
Who wear the leaf

Will vanish from the thoughts of men,
Like those of Della Cruscan time,
With all their fluttering pride of pen
And puny rhyme.

Our old man eloquent be thou!
Still with wise counsels light our ways,
Ungrudging still some worthy brow
Its budding bays.

Then grieve not o'er the passing time,
Friends gone, the brilliant, wise, and brave;
Our country's richer for your rhyme
From wave to wave!

Why not? Truth still breeds reverent hearts;
This land doth proud traditions nurse;
As long as blooms our rose of arts
Lives Stoddard's verse!

LIFE AND DEATH

I REIGN beyond the bourne of Fate and Time,
Through all the Present I echo of the Past,
All things but God are in my leash—I climb
From star to star and quench them all at last—
I blast the blooms of promise with a breath,
Vaunts Death.

“I am the spirit in matter—the All-Searcher,
I am driven like surf by one deep-moving force,
Even in the grasp of Death my hope I nurture,
Enswathing Love is both my end and source,
Peace is my handmaid and my thrall is Strife,”
Chants Life.

SONGS AND LYRICS

HEY, HO, ROBIN!

(A MADRIGAL)

HARK, d'ye hear the Robin's early greeting
O'er the clover blossoms gemmed with dew;
All the gladness of his heart repeating,
Heart that never care or sorrow knew.
Over upland, lawn and orchard
His clear pipe is heard:—
"Sweetheart! Sweetheart!"
Hey, ho, Robin; hey, ho, happy bird!

In his russet coat and vest of scarlet,
With his jaunty crest and glittering eye,
Was there ever such a merry varlet?
Look upon him and forget to sigh.
Ah, but he's the blithesome rover!
His glad pipe is heard:—
"Sweetheart! Sweetheart!"
Hey, ho, Robin; hey, ho, happy bird!

How Sir Malpert loves to steal his dinner
From our cherry trees across the way;
He's as reckless as a hardened sinner;
He's a prodigal who's always gay.
Rocking on the topmost branches
Still his pipe is heard:—
"Sweetheart! Sweetheart!"
Hey, ho, Robin; hey, ho, happy bird!

Ah, my blithe and brave fair weather fellow,
Soon again to milder haunts thou'lt wend;
When the leaves are turning brown and yellow
We will miss our early morning friend;
There thru fields of endless summer
Will thy pipe be heard:—
“Sweetheart! Sweetheart!”
Hey, ho, Robin; hey, ho, happy bird!

How those fair and distant shores we'll envy
When rough Winter drives thee from our clime;
Hostage to the summer tho we send thee,
Thou wilt greet us in thy mating time.
Then unto thy loved one calling
Will thy pipe be heard:—
“Sweetheart! Sweetheart!”
Hey, ho, Robin; hey, ho, happy bird!

WRITTEN FOR A CANADIAN NATIONAL
ANTHEM

THE banner with the blood-red field
Flew in the western main;
It made the golden Lilies yield,
It curbed the pride of Spain;
Till kindred blood ungrateful furled
That flag of broad renown;—
All save the North—
She held it forth
For England's ancient crown;
Brave Canada, thou heldst it forth
For England's empire crown!

Since that dark day in many a fray,
The three cross banner near,
On native strand, in Transvaal land,
The seven-fold shield flew clear;
When the Nor'west, a hornets' nest,
Came buzzing round her form,
In royal ire she searched with fire
That mongrel, stinging swarm.
With dreadful frown she stamped them down
And shook her sword of might,
With queenly frown
She stamped them down,
In Death's and Hell's despite.

The Trident Matron from her steep
Looks out across the wave,

And sees beyond the distant deep
 That heritage of the brave;
Two ocean shores
Ope wide their doors
 To worlds both old and new;—
Thy princely hand
Pledge, Motherland,
 A daughter tried and true!
No slave shall stand
Upon thy strand,
 O daughter proud and true!

Of nations five who round the world
 Patrol the Seven Seas,
Of scions four who guard the door
 Of British destinies;
Daughters of pith who peerless front
 The enemies of their race,
She stands the first—tho Gallic nursed,
 She hath the English face.
Then here's a health,
True hearts and wealth,
 Fair Canada, to thee!
A long deep health,
Leal hearts and wealth,
 Brave Canada, to thee!

LOVE LEADING

MY love she's tripping down the lane
Amid the dews, amid the dews;
My love she's stepping down the lane,
Fair through the sunset's golden rain,
Down toward the fields of nodding grain,
Amidst the evening dews.

The latticed beams between the boughs
Play o'er her hair, play o'er her hair;
The flattering beams between the boughs
Light up her snow white neck and brows;
She ne'er to me such bliss allows,
To play with her bright hair.

The jealous wild-flowers she doth pass
Are scant of cheer, are scant of cheer;
The flaunting field-flowers she doth pass
Now shrink their crowns amidst the grass;
They ne'er have seen so fair a lass;
They all are scant of cheer.

The timid violets nigh the path
Nod dainty heads, nod dainty heads;
The slim, coy violets nigh the path,
They hold for her no selfish wrath,
Each dear to her a kinship hath,
They nod their fragrant heads.

The blithe wild rose on thorny stem
Is sad in fear, is sad in fear;
The bold wild rose on bending stem
Flutters its pink pearl diadem;
'Twould fain her beauteous cheek condemn,
'Tis wondrously in fear.

The star of Eve that warms the skies
Doth watch my dear, doth watch my dear,
The Evening Star that studs the skies,
It knows it may not match her eyes;
'Tis standing tip-toe with surprise
Watching my dearest dear.

She carols to the perfumed breeze
So sweetly clear, so sweetly clear;
Her pure voice lulls the perfumed breeze;
She hushes all the whispering trees,
She soothes to sleep the loitering bees,
With song so sweetly clear.

The listening linnet lifts his head
Behind the bough, behind the bough;
The gray-backed linnet bobs his head
From forth his thatched and leafy bed,
"I cannot sing such songs," he said
Beside the green beech bough.

Was ever youth so blest as I?
Love leads her nigh, Love leads her nigh;
There ne'er was youth so blest as I;
Her glance to mine makes sweet reply;
She's coy as fluttering butterfly,
For that Love leads her nigh.

The tell-tale flow invades her cheek;
She stills her song, she stills her song,
The rich, red glow pervades her cheek;
Her eyes are playing hide and seek;
She cannot trust her lips to speak,
Although she's stilled her song.

Fair traitor, now you're mine at last!
No truce will I, no truce will I.
Soft hands, sweet face, you're ta'en at last!
Behind all doubts and fears I cast;
The time for vain delay has past,
No shamefaced truce will I!

A SONG OF SUMMER

AN oriole is singing
Her anthem clear and high;
A blackbird blithe is ringing
Her jubilate nigh;
I watch the swallows winging,—
Shearing the azure sky.

The dragon-fly is glancing
Zigzag, a wingèd spear;
A woodpecker is lancing
An elm-tree bole anear;
How wondrous, how entrancing,
Are all I see and hear!

Around me is the humming
Of heavy-freighted bees;
Over the field is coming
The winsome morning breeze;
This is the time for summing
All soulful ecstasies!

In such a place and season
All life its care forgets;
Come Fancy, loved of Reason,
Look at my tiny pets,
The crickets, black as treason,
Clicking their castanets!

Like a Walpurgis revel
The dream of life flows on;
Across the lawny level
A tender haze is drawn;
This fair scene even a devil
Would love to look upon!

From out the pale blue ether
Glows the untarnished sun;
To robe her heir and wreath her
Hath Spring her glories spun,
And smiling did bequeath her
The flowerets every one!

'Tis buxom, regal Summer,
Her fragrant zone unbound;
With minstrel bird and hummer
Of many an infant round;
Of zest the rhythmic plumber,
A carnival of sound!

But yet there lacks one measure
Of joy on eye and ear,—
A smile of tender pleasure,
A voice of gentle cheer;
This were the lap of leisure,
Sweetheart, if *thou* wert here!

SAINT CHRISTMAS

SAINT CHRISTMAS still is hale and stout,
His welcome grows not cold,
Still rings his royal greeting out
Each year to young and old.

With robe of fur and beard of snow,
And wreath of holly green,
And with a paunch like bended bow
Or lordly soup-tureen;

And with a round and rosy face
As any friar of yore,
Lit with a kindly, reverent grace
And cheer that runneth o'er.

And with a heart all sound and true,
And comfit-bag well lined—
Sure never one an old man knew
So gay, so pleasant, kind!

Not half so blithe and debonair,
Nor with so merry a voice;
He must be sure a child of care
Whom Christmas can't rejoice!

He must be lean and starved of soul
As any o'er-driven hack,
He must be sick or in sad dole
Whom Christmas lures not back

To household cheer and kindly deed,
And simple mirth and jest,
To tender care for human need,
To generous faith and rest.

What time the merry bells ring out
And all the ways are white,
While rises glad the youthful shout
Beneath the holly bright.

Or when on hallowed Christmas-tide
The children, brimmed with glee,
Crowd round his saintship's special pride,
The glittering Christmas tree.

When all the family meet once more
Around the groaning board,
And Christmas knocks against the door
Of merchant, peasant, lord.

And entering in with lusty cheer
Doth o'er the feast preside,
And lights the eye and tunes the ear
And sets the tongue a-glide.

And hangs the treacherous mistletoe
Right down the path of girls,
That brings mishap to gallant bow
And dainty forehead curls.

Yes, sure he's ill and far from gay,
Ay, bilious-green and pale,
Who turns with sullen scorn away
From Christmas glad and hale.

SAINT CHRISTMAS

From Christmas hale and holly-crowned
 And full three yards about,
 In all our forty States around
 Is none so jolly stout!

Is none so dear to childhood's heart;
 And though folk dub him Nick,
 Of all the saints who live in art
 He is the prince and pick.

He is the merriest saint of all
 Who live in tale or song,
 And they who on blithe Christmas call
 Will not go far a-wrong.

Long may he bear his princely pack
 Of joys both great and small;
 Long may his laugh ring joyous back
 From hut or palace wall!

And long may we who joyful take
 His Yuletide to our breasts,
 Live kindly for the old chap's sake
 And keep his plays and jests.

* * * * *

From all the saints of olden day,
 Matthew to Margery,
 Christmas doth bear the bell away—
 Yes, he's the saint for me!

“THE SPRINGTIME LINGERETH LONG,
LOVE”

THE springtime lingereth long, love,
No birds are in the bowers;
No early primrose after the snows
Nor violets born of showers.
But everything speaks of thee, love,
The very air I breathe
Comes wafted to me
Over the lea
With messages dear from thee, love,
Messages dear from thee.

Like a nun asleep is the earth, love,
Wimpled, sombre, and white;
Her snowy hands pressed above her breast
And with snowy robes bedight.
'Tis winter over the wold, love,
No leaf on bush or tree;
Yet what if it be,
'Tis nothing to me
When I am thinking of thee, love,
I am thinking of thee.

The sky is grey with clouds, love,
The sun puts on no crown;
His radiant hair is shorn of glare
And his bright face wears a frown.
But let him frown on as he lists, love,

He harms not thee nor me;
The light of our skies each other's eyes
When we together shall be, love,
We together shall be.

There's wisdom enough in the world, love,
To freight a soul for heaven;
But the wisdom sages have known for ages
Is not free to mortals given;
But ours is free as the sunshine, love,
And rich as it is free;
Life's no sweet dole
To the loveless soul,
As it is to thee and me, my love,
As it is to thee and me.

FAIRIES' SONG

HERE we to the midnight green
Speed in service of our queen;
From the ribbèd salt-sea strand;
From the lonely mountain land;
From where Ignis Fatuus strays
Through the marshy thicket's maze.

Here we o'er the moonlit green
Throng at bidding of our queen;
Guided by the firefly's lamp
Through the night-tide cold and damp;
Till the white stars' beams are shorn
And the cock crows shrill at morn.

Here we on the bosky green
Yield obeisance to our queen;
We the frisky squirrels teach
Nuts to hoard in hollow beech;
Teach the brindled bee to fly
Honey bag beneath her thigh.

Here we to the scented green
Bring the trappings of our queen;
Here's a crown of crystal globe!
Here's a purple bat's wool robe!
Here's a throne of diamond spar,
And a moth-drawn emerald car!

Here we on the bowered green
Hold the court of Fairy Queen;
Round the hamlets raise our chant
Ere we hie to wild wood haunt,
Till the silver crescent dips
In the wave her hornèd tips.

Here we on the tufted green
Dance around our Fairy Queen;
They we are who hold in charm
Gnomes and witches from their harm;
Creatures born of Luna's beams,
Send we kind hearts happy dreams.

Here we on the painted green
Sing around our Fairy Queen;
Elves we are who fill the boy
With his springtime wealth of joy;
Teach the tender maids to see
Beauty in each flower and tree.

Here we on the freakèd green
Pledge the fortunes of our queen;
Drinking dew distilled of flowers
In these snail-shell cups of ours;—
Let the perfumed mead we drain
Cheer the heart and fire the brain.

Here we on the broidered green
Hold the revel of our queen;
All among the clover bloom—
All among the heather plume—
All around the haunted well
Where the Nixies love to dwell.

Here we from the pearlèd green
Haste at mandate of our queen;
See the morn is breaking gray
Over the hill-tops far away!
Benison we leave with you,—
Mortals all, *adieu! adieu!*

MY LASSIE WITH YOUR EYES OF BLUE

I WAS a good-for-nothing fellow,
'Twas little work that I would do;
Still fond of drink till I got mellow;
My dollars hardly earned and few;
'Til I met you—
My lassie with your eyes of blue.

You set my poor dull brain to thinking;
You set my heart a-throbbing too;
I scarce could look at you for blinking,
You were so wondrous fair to view;
Bright, pure as dew—
My lassie with your eyes of blue.

Then all my foolish ways went packing,
And ever as I worthier grew,
I felt my merits more than lacking,
My fealty could humbly sue;
Thru thought of you,—
My lassie with your eyes of blue.

I now have buckled on my armor;
I've quit the weed and wine-cup, too;
I've turned a trusty, thrifty farmer;
I save my money like a Jew;
'Tis all for you,—
My lassie with your eyes of blue.

My heart's a bark that's ready laden
With store of service choice and new;
Then take it lovely, tender maiden,
It bears its cargo all to you,
Of pledges due,—
My lassie with your eyes of blue.

Then when my heart's full sail you've sighted,
And it has anchored close to you,
Let not its loving freight be slighted;
The foolish heart, 'twas all it knew;
Just love, be true—
My lassie with your eyes of blue.

FAIR AS CERES BEARING GUERDON

FAIR as Ceres bearing guerdon,
First I met her midst the corn;
To our ears the merry burden
Of the reaping song was borne;
On that morn,
There beside the nodding corn.

There was none in all the county,
None like her so pure and fair;
With her princely father's bounty
In the land could none compare;
Stood she there,
With a white rose in her hair.

Oft beside yon gleaming river
Held we converse sweet and low;
Where the paly shafts do quiver
From the new moon's silver bow;
Where they glow,
And the pleasant waters flow.

There I loved her, there I wooed her,
And she plighted troth for mine;
(Though I was of lineage ruder,
And she came of lofty line);—
Lo, for sign
See, this faded eglantine!

Soon, alas, fate came between us
And our last adieus were sighed;
Love had naught on earth to screen us;
She became a lordling's bride;—
Then she died,
Like a flower cut down in pride!

Often now I sit and listen
To the river's monotone;
Still its waters lave and glisten,
Yet it answers me my moan,
All alone!
For my heart is turned to stone!

A SONG OF THE DAWN

O H, how sweet in the summer fields is the breath of the
cool clear dawn,
When the vapory grey is rolled from the earth like the
veil from a face withdrawn;
When the Moon her canopied state in heaven resigns to
the Lord of Light,
And her splendid glittering courtier train have vanished in
faithless flight;

'Til the green voluptuous land, new-waked, smiles bright
in the face of Day,
And Night's bodeful dreams with the bats and owls to the
darkness hie away;
When the blooms of the clover fill the air with their count-
less faint perfumes,
While millions of pearl-strewed gossamer webs the gay
young Sun illumines:

When the fingers of wizard winds play light with the leaves
of the woodland's crown;
And the crispy rasp of the whetted scythe through the still-
ness filters down;
And the low of the mild, full-uddered cows goes forth to
their offspring near,
While, clapping his wings to the joyous morn, winds his
challenge the chanticleer:

When the incense of early cottage fires curls soft through
the delicate blue,
And the caw comes down from the wooded heights of the
crows' freebooting crew;
And the clangorous wild-geese wing their flight o'er meadow
and moor and brake
To flash their wings and dabble their beaks in the breast
of the northern lake;

When the vigilant cricket wakes his friends asleep in the
feathery breres,
'Til the grasshopper leaps from his leaf-hung couch through
his forest of blades and spears;
'Til all over the fragrant breast of earth the lives of sum-
mer rejoice,
And the varied myriad insect tones blend one universal
voice;

When the face of every wilding flower is washed her lord
to greet;
When the robin whistles his blithest note and the black-
bird's song is sweet;—
Then is the time for the spirit of man to unburden the
breast of care,
For thankless indeed must be the soul untouched by a scene
so fair!

SEA SONG

OUR ship is a stanch-built trader;
Like a duck she rides the sea;
And a heartier crew or captain, lads,
Was never my hap to see;
She's loaded for Valparaiso
To the guards with Yankee stuff;
And never shall fail to carry her sail
Though the storm be growling gruff.

Then here's to the hardy sailor,
Whose home is the dark blue wave;
Who sleeps like a rock in the tempest's shock,
Or roars his rough sea-stave.

Leave the land-lubber clinging
To earth like a timid snail,
But here's to a rush with the crowding breeze,
The spread of the bellying sail!
To-day at Porto Rico,
To-morrow at Trinidad,
While our good ship breasts the combing crests
Like a race horse proud and glad.

(Then here's to the hardy sailor, etc.)

Then when the hurricane whistles
We'll reef and take in sail,

And batten each hatch and make all taut
In the teeth of the pounding gale;
While under our feet the timbers
Slant like a pent-house roof,
And the spray like hail drives over the rail
With the force of the devil's hoof.

(Then here's to the hardy sailor, etc.)

But when the halcyon summer
Settles across the sea,
And the clouds pack off to their mountain tops
And the round blue heaven is free,
Then deep in the ocean's bosom,
The stars shall make their bed,
And the moon hang bright her lantern white
In the dusky arch o'erhead.

(Then here's to the hardy sailor, etc.)

Then we, old Neptune's children,
Who guide trade's floating barns,
We'll puff our pipes and nuzzle our grog
A-spinning our tough sea-yarns;
A-spinning our long sea-stories,
A-thinking of Nan or Sue,
And how some day in Portland Bay
She'll welcome her seaman true.

(Then here's to the hardy sailor, etc.)

Curse then who will the ocean,
She's nurse to earnest men;
A deep surmise she teaches the soul
Of Eternity's endless ken;

She plays her pranks upon us,
But, oh, her heart is free!
And as soft a sleep has the mighty deep
As a babe on its mother's knee.

Then here's to the hardy sailor
Whose home is the dark blue wave;
Who sleeps like a rock in the tempest's shock,
Or roars his rough sea-stave!

INVOCATION TO LOVE

GOD, defied of lovely Eva,
Cupid, Eros, Hamadeva,
Or by whatsoever name
Thou hast long been known to fame—
Child of Venus—Psyche's spouse—
Listen to thy poet's vows!
For his mistress, wanton she,
Harrieth him with treachery.

By thy bow of silver whiteness—
By thy quiver's golden brightness—
By thine eye of roguish blue
And thy crisp locks' sunny hue—
By thy shining, potent arrows,
And thy Mother Venus' sparrows—
Hasten, god of elfin guile!
Aid me with thy choicest wile!

Through the targe of her white breast
Be thy keen sweet javelin pressed—
Whisper softly to the ear
Glamor maidens love to hear,
And let those low echoes be
Burdened with the name of me.
Love, the ancient and the young,
I thine honors oft have sung!

I, in sonnet and in story,
Oft have tuned thine infant glory:—
What though Time with churlish hand
Poureth fast my shining sand,
And my kindly summer time
Blighteth with his early rime,
Love, thou still hast been to me
An adorèd deity!

Lo, anew thy red fires start
On the altar of my heart!
Fast the breath of passion slips
Forth of the portal of my lips.
All her vagrant fancies guiding
Past the lures of youth's providing,
Lead her, conqueror of charms,
Captive to these longing arms!

Then will I thy praise renew;
Thou shalt keep my homage true;
Crown me now thy child of fortune
And I thee no more importune!
Come, thou hourly heaven-descending,
With the gift that hath no ending,
Though her melting spirit shine,
Make the radiant maiden mine!

MY LADY FROM THE SEA

THE Lady from the Sea! a name
To charm the listening air;
A title buoyant, winged for fame,
Mysterious, debonair;
It rings across the round of time
In music pulsing free;—
A breath from far Romance's clime—
"The Lady from the Sea."

But now the phrase hath sweeter grown,
And haunts my ravished ear;
It takes a tenderer, richer tone
That none beside may hear;
The tocsin of an ampler hope
Where Faith shall bend the knee;
Within one fond heart's larger scope,
My Lady from the Sea!

My Lady from the Sea she stands,
And none may her gainsay;
With true love dowry in her hands
And in her eyes the play
Of forces that unfold their charm
Of light and power to me,
Yet work no living creature harm—
My Lady from the Sea.

MY LADY FROM THE SEA

The rhythm of the ocean wind
Is pulsing through her heart;
The glint of waves that plastic bind
All lands across the chart,
With something of dawn's tender grace
In her clear eyes I see;
Or sunset's glamor lights her face—
My Lady from the Sea.

I watch the endless waters flow
Beneath the eternal sky;
I view the tall ships come and go
With new awakened eye;
She stands beside me and her voice
Doth with all moods agree;
She cries, "Rejoice, worn heart, rejoice!"
My Lady from the Sea.

Like her I come of Viking blood,
Yet bred in landward town,
I feared the mystery of the flood
And shunned the deep sea crown;
But now the breadth of wave and sky
Lies bare to port and lee;—
Ah, how the bannered clouds go by,
My Lady from the Sea!

MY SONNETEER

'T WAS in a common German "Haus"
Where one may buy a beer,
(A "ham and" kind of place it was),
I met my sonneteer.
Among an unkempt, frowzy set,
Who wore a tipsy leer
And swaggered loud, 'twas first I met,
I met my sonneteer.

The scion of Euterpe sat
In solitary cheer,
A well-worn, weather-beaten hat
Adorned my sonneteer;
But yet he took his glass of "wet"
As though 'twere Rhenish dear;
Thus getting up his steam I met,
I met my sonneteer.

I knew him as the author of
That poem called De Vere;
'Twas mild as—well, a sucking dove,
Or as my sonneteer.
But now it's dead as "Capulet,"
A "book without a peer";
As dreary as his verse I met,
I met my sonneteer.

The Muse's livery on his back
All threadbare did appear,

Its shiny seams did fray and crack
 Upon my sonneteer.
 'Twas with a feeling of regret,
 And with a sort of fear
 His lot might soon be mine, I met,
 I met my sonneteer.

What use for him Fate had in store
 Was not exceeding clear;
 For poetasters grow galore
 Like to my sonneteer.
 And Fortune sends her "Kind regret"
 To many such a year;
 I thought, "the world will soon forget,
 Forget my sonneteer."

But ah, the Gods had care of him
 Most gracious-wise I hear;
 A wealthy widow took a whim
 And wed my sonneteer.
 He wrote the dame a canzonet
 Upon her eye or ear;
 A Muse of some account! I met,
 I met my sonneteer.

'Twas at the big Fitz-Boodle ball,
 The grandest of the year,
 While strolling through the supper hall
 I met my sonneteer;
 He looked as though a dun or debt
 Ne'er once had come him near;
 A-sipping Pommery Sec I met,
 I met my sonneteer!

And as the fashion is, he now
 His head will highly rear;

To friends of old he'll slightly bow
My purse-proud sonneteer.
At bon-ton clubs he's quite a pet,
Is booked for a "career";
He's changed indeed, but he is yet,
Is yet—a sonneteer!

SONG FOR THE EMPIRE STATE

THE mightiest of the sisters that form our native land,
The bulwark of our promise by lake and ocean spanned,
Nine million sons of freemen, tried men of mart and field,
In one accord are voicing the triumph of her shield.

The golden grain is ours and ours the fruitful vine;
Above our vales and mountains the stars of empire
shine;

The product of the woodland, the harvest of the lea,
Pour down our roads and rivers to lake and town and
sea.

Flow forth, thou stately banner, upon the westering gale,
That flaunts her song of triumph o'er every hill and
vale;

From where one mighty city holds sovereign state to-day,
To mine and farm and forest, to hill and cape and bay!

Yet fairer than the pageant of mountain, dale and sea,
Is that free plighted tribute, O Lord of Hosts, to Thee!
Thine is the cause and promise, thine is the law and rule,
That shapes the church and forum, that moulds the
home and school.

Thou gateway of the nation, the constant tribute pours
From lands beneath the dawning, to these enfranchised
shores;

Hold up the ancient emblem* to show to after time
How from the slender seedling has grown the tree
sublime!

* The arms of New York State.

A SONG OF HOPE

DEAR heart, the clouds of even
Will fade away at morn,
And with the sun of heaven
New life and light be born;
Then do not now despair,
Nor live of hope forlorn;
The cloud that came with even
Will pass away at morn.

Let us be constant still
Through all life's care and cark,
Bearing a cheerful will
Though all around be dark;
The sun's behind the cloud
Though here his beams are shorn;
The cloud that came with even
Will pass away at morn.

Take Hope unto your bosoms,
All ye sad sons of care;
Her brow is wreathed with blossoms
That perfume lives of prayer;
Gather her to your hearts,
All ye of faith forlorn;
The cloud that came with even
Will pass away at morn.

CRADLE SONG

(Translated from the French of Madame Valmore)

IF baby sleep he'll see
The busy bumble bee
With the honey 'neath her thigh
Dancing 'tween the earth and sky.

If baby sleep in bed
An angel rosy red
(None else sees him without light)
Down will come and say "good-night."

The Virgin full of grace
Down to his sweet face,
If he'll quiet be, will bend
And long time in talk will spend.

"If my child love me,"
God to himself says he,
"I love that child who'll sleep
Make him golden dreams to keep.

"Eyes to close prepare!
When he's said his prayer,
He shall see my gardens grow
With the brightest flowers that blow.

“Angel hands down press
And smooth his long night dress!
And let whitest down be shed
Where he rests his sleeping head!

“Brood ye wings above!
Like the turtle dove,
From his eyes my sun to keep
When he wakens from his sleep!

“While he travels far
In my cloudy car,
Let him, whensoe'er he deems,
Drink my milk that flows in streams!

“Open to his call
Pearl and amber hall!
He while sleeping shall partake
Of my precious diamond cake!

“Broider ye his sail,
Stars so bright and pale!
When he sets his little boat
On my azure lake afloat!

“Waves be clearer soon
Than the shining moon!
While my fish with silver flakes
In the changing deep he takes!

“But I would he sleep
And in slumber keep,
Like the birds in downy hush
In their houses built of rush!

“If, an hour gone by
Still they hear him cry,
Everywhere they’d say abroad
That child’s disobeying God!”

“Echo down the street
Would the news repeat,
Saying, as the hour flies,
‘Hark, I hear a child that cries!’

“And his mother dear
In the night severe,
Won’t keep singing very long
To that naughty child her song!

“Should he cry and fret
For daybreak in pet,
From her lamb who won’t obey
Maybe she will run away.

“Or then she may flee
Through the roof, maybe;
Angry at his cries, alack!
Off she’ll go and won’t come back!

“Wander where he may
None will say ‘good-day!’
And I say that child unwise
Will not look on Paradise!

“Yes! but if he’s still,
The Blessed Virgin will
To his sweet face downward bend,
And long time in talk will spend!”

FRENCH FORMS

FRENCH FORMS

THESE blooms of song in minstrel time
Sprang from Provence's genial clime;
Fair as in Ronsard's lovers' lay
The rare exotics flower to-day,
Crowning de Banville's courtly prime.

As at the play the facile mime
Shows worth, love, chivalry, and crime,—
Change to all tints of fancy's play
These blooms of song.

Though here the stubborn English rhyme
Curbs the Chant Royal's tread sublime,
The Rondeau courts an English day;
The Ballade's tendrils bend and sway
'Neath northern oak as southern lime,
These blooms of song!

THE IMMORTALITY OF SONG

(*Chant Royal*)

ALL earthly state doth wither and decay;
Nor Pride, Wealth, Splendor, Loveliness, nor Might,
May in its course the stroke of Ruin stay,
As dreams they fade and vanish out of sight.
Perpetual change! the beggar and the king
Each turn to mould, and from their ashes spring
Conceptions for new life; o'er Xerxes' hall
Deep sands are drifting; lions nightly call
Across the waste where Babylon proud and strong
Towered to Heaven; yet safe from Ruin's thrall
They shine alway—the saintly stars of Song!

What is the conqueror's laurel? Where the sway
Of Cæsars with their purple robes bedight?
Like to a breath they came—they passed away
Like torches flashed across the breast of night;
However so mighty, Time's remorseless wing
Sweeps them along—of them scarce anything
Is left or known;—the centuries downward haul
Their palaces—the ivy on the wall
Hides all their wrecks of pride; oblivion long
Wraps crown and sceptre, throne and sumptuous pall;
They shine alway—the saintly stars of Song!

Where are the lovely forms of olden day—
 Proud Cleopatra's charms, all dusky bright,
 Helen's enrapturing beauty, Lais gay?
 Alas! frail Beauty first doth suffer blight.
 The rose blooms forth; to-day our plaudits ring,
 To-morrow, and the wanton world doth fling
 Its withered joy aside! In ruin fall
 Firm arch, proud plinth, and storied capital;
 The eternal hills themselves shall suffer wrong:
 Pure and inviolate from earth's changes all
 They shine away—the saintly stars of Song!

Youth with his garland takes his joyous way,
 Pledging the future with a proud delight;
 How veiled is soon the glory of his day—
 The years speed on and Time asserts his right!
 Changes no longer new enchantments bring;
 All niggard now of cheer and welcoming,
 The Seasons offer cups of rue and gall,
 And weeds for favors; round earth's rolling ball
 Youth creeps to age; bound as by iron thong,
 Blind fortune sweeps him onward past recall:—
 They shine away—the saintly stars of Song!

Yes, song survives! except the inspired lay
 Nothing of man's is stable; earth takes flight
 Itself; in vain we would for respite pray;
 Time soon or late our titles doth indict.
 Awhile around the past our memories cling,
 Awhile for loved ones lost we're sorrowing,
 Then Death our names doth in his tablet scrawl,
 And we are past the heart-ache and the brawl,
 Life's hopes and fears and Pain's envenomed prong;
 The armor-bearer sinks beside the Saul;—
 They shine away—the saintly stars of Song!

L'ENVOI

Friend, while to age and dusty death we crawl,
Till Time lays by his scythe and iron maul,
Songs are Heaven's choicest gifts; above the throng
Abiding—o'er the mighty and the small—
They shine alway—the saintly stars of Song!

THE RENASCENCE OF SPRING

(*Chant Royal*)

THERE dawns new gladness over holt and dale,
A rich prelude of melody and light;
The mating birds upon their branches hail
The regal morn—all things to joy invite.
The velvet grass is freshening o'er the lea;
The bloom is frothing over bush and tree;
The earth doth set her mourning weeds aside,
And flushes, joyous as a new-made bride,
Beneath the gaze of her glad lord and king,
The bridegroom sun, all warm and ardent-eyed;—
Maternal Earth rejoices with the Spring!

No snow whirl drives before the billowy gale;
Gone are the tokens of decay and blight;
Upon slant wing the twittering swallows sail,
Flashing their pinions lined with fleckèd white;
Nature stands crowned in all her majesty;
The heavens glow pure as a pellucid sea;
The soul with an intenser flame supplied,
Grows warmed, enlightened, and revived,
Till all its heart doth to the season sing,
Partaking Nature's generative pride;—
Maternal Earth rejoices with the Spring!

The burnished beetle in his jointed mail,
Wheeling across the fields in whirring flight,
Drums for the concert warblers of the vale
His overture to Summer's queenly might.
The blithe grasshopper from his bended knee
Vaults forth; the cricket chirrups loud in glee;
The dragonflies across the champaign glide,
Their filmy oars transparent stretching wide;
The cooing dove flushes his iris ring,
Wooring his mate who coyly steps aside;—
Maternal Earth rejoices with the Spring!

The ghostly beeches past the orchard pale
Are donning ruffled cloaks all emerald bright;
The vine begins to clamber o'er the rail;
The timid violets now are not affright,
But to the season's genial gaiety
They venture forth and make their beauties free;
The hardy crocus to the north allied,
Stands bravely up in raiment purple-pied;
The daisy soon her shield will forward fling,
The vaunted champion of the Summer-tide;—
Maternal Earth rejoices with the Spring!

This is Love's season—now he doth not fail
Of hearts; no mark escapes his cunning sleight;
Nothing can his keen arrows countervail,
When Spring hath wound her clarion on the height.
Nature's warm charms woo Youth voluptuously,
He may not from her flowery bondage flee;
For like a mistress true, companion tried,
Her gentle suasion may not be denied,
And with a thousand arts of welcoming
She lures him to her fragrant blooming side;—
Maternal Earth rejoices with the Spring!

L'ENVOI

Nature, true teacher, still be thou my guide!
Never by me be thy rich charms decried;
 Still to my heart thy choicest blessings bring!
Ride on supreme! in joyful triumph ride;—
 Maternal Earth rejoices with the Spring!

THE COMING AGE

(*Chant Royal*)

AROUND the wastes of Tyranny and War,
Athwart the clouds of Ignorance and Blight,
There falls a splendor from the heavenly shore,
A strong archangel standing in the light;
The angel's name is Peace—seraphic gleams
Adorn his robes and from his aureole streams
The gladness of the Morning; fair on fair
The lustres kindle up the pulsing air
And fling their radiance over every clime;—
Lo, Love will come with laurels round his hair!
So flushed with promise dawns the Coming Time!

Gone is the bigot's wrath—the open door
Of Concord doth on golden hinge invite
All nations; on Thought's steep and boundless shore
What leagues of Prescience lengthen on the sight!
The glory poets outlined in their dreams
To-day on us in amplest beauty beams;
The triumphs Hope to think would hardly dare,
The Sciences unceasing hands prepare;
The pageant Hours in pomp of trophied prime
Upon their heads their wreaths of conquest wear;—
So flushed with promise dawns the Coming Time!

Now sovereign Plenty hath unlocked her store ;
 Forth unto Want she holds her harvest bright ;
 Around her foaming vats and threshing-floor
 Dance jocund fays in gay and festal flight ;
 With bounteous wealth the fair-hued future teems,
 And unto joy the sons of grief redeems,
 Bringing to Labor ease and balm for Care ;
 While Love shall all the poor man's burdens share,
 While Freedom marching up her paths sublime
 Shall lead to wider views and clearer air ;—
 So flushed with promise dawns the Coming Time !

Fair Culture rules where Plenty held before,
 With hyacinthine locks and brow of white ;
 Even Pride himself shall yield to her devoir ;
 She stands the queen of Progress and of Might ;
 She calms and quells the discord of extremes ;
 Worth has her heart and virtue she esteems ;
 All hearts and minds are open to her prayer ;
 Her blooms most fragrant are, most costly rare ;
 She loves the lute, she loves the poet's rhyme ;
 No earthly beauty can with hers compare ;—
 So flushed with promise dawns the Coming Time !

The Olden Ages all their treasures pour
 Into the lap of Learning, at whose right
 The baffled fiends of Prejudice deplore,
 While Plenty, Culture, Freedom, with delight
 Wax mightier, while the golden sunburst seems
 To consecrate the page of Wisdom's themes,
 To track the dark-faced passions to their lair,
 Who soon in chains shall into bondage fare,
 'Til Love shall take the cruel sword from Crime ;
 Can mind conceive or tongue such bliss declare !
 So flushed with promise dawns the Coming Time !

L'ENVOI

Take heart, ye doubting and despondent! there
Grows Truth where Love has birth;—far up the stair
Of Progress shall enfranchised manhood climb;
Yea, Faith shall wed with Reason everywhere;—
So flushed with promise dawns the Coming Time!

THE ADVANTAGE OF LOVE

(*Ballade*)

TO Philosophy's heights he could soar,
Could decipher the stones of Copan;
He was versed in Rabbinical lore
From Beersheba even to Dan;
Ten tongues he could jabber and scan;
Like Noah's adventurous dove
He had travelled from Maine to Japan,—
But he lacked the advantage of Love.

He pondered Zoology o'er;
He collected the pot and the pan;
Over fossils he'd study and pore
And could tell when the fusion began;
From a star to an Indian fan
He had learning all others above;
His mind took a world in its span,—
He lacked the advantage of Love.

His soul could like Kepler's explore
The deeps of creation, he ran
The gauntlet of pedant and bore
And the straight-forehead orthodox clan;
On a pulpit he beat rataplan
With a hand that was soft as a glove;
He could pray and palaver, and plan,—
He lacked the advantage of Love.

L'ENVOI

Prince, though you win all you can,
 Though Fortune continues to shove;
You've missed the true scope of a man
 If you lack the advantage of Love.

UNDER MARLBORO'

(Ballade)

WE'VE drummed all the French out of Lille;
We'll soon have them drubbed out of Flanders,
When the trumpets of Marlboro' peal,
'Tis "on!" with our tough salamanders,
King Louis' proud pets and his panders
May carve new estates in Cayenne;
Let them call on their prince of commanders;
Pouf! Here's to their Marshal Turenne!

Tallard and Villars have turned heel,
They ran like a pack of train-banders;
The Johnny Crapauds, how they squeal
As we charge under Mordaunt and Saunders.
Messieurs, you are gallant Leanders,
Your vocation's in Paris, and then
The Pompadour dotes upon slanders;—
Pouf! Here's to your Marshal Turenne!

You may trim us in farce, vaudeville,
And dub us gourmands and outlanders;
We'll play you to fire and steel
And the stiffest of British right-handers.
You imagined us Hessians and Pandours;
Mes braves, you mistook us, and when
The Seine is your last of Scamanders,—
Pouf! Here's to your Marshal Turenne!

L'ENVOI

Your sheep and champagne to the branders,
Or, Louis, we'll claim them again!
For prog we are stoutest of standers,
Pouf! Here's to your Marshal Turenne!

BALLADE OF THE SEA-SERPENT

MYTHOLOGY'S knocked all awry;
Gods, demi-gods deader than punk;
To the Fauns and the Fairies good-bye!
Each Dryad has packed up her trunk;
Nymph, Naiad, and Oread funk;
The spook has gone off in a pet;
The Satyr is dead or dead drunk;—
The Sea-Serpent flourishes yet!

The Mermaid has gotten so shy
She siestas all day in her bunk;
The Triton is piping his eye;
The Nereids are all of them sunk;
The Gnomes to earth's bowels have slunk;
The Pixies have paid their last debt;
The Nixies are "nixy," *non nunc*;—
The Sea-Serpent flourishes yet!

No witch is now sweeping the sky,
The last one was burned for her spunk;
One cannot on devils rely,
Although we've the word of the monk;
In Time's nostrils the Centaur has stunk;
No hobgoblin or bogle is met;
Vanderdecken has flown with his junk;—
The Sea-Serpent flourishes yet!

L'ENVOI

Prince, clever headed or lunk,
Time soon will your glories forget;
You'll down to oblivion plunk;—
The Sea-Serpent flourishes yet!

BALLADE OF THE TAILOR

WHATE'ER philosophers may say,
Or men of texts and tariffs prose,
In toga, tea-cup times, to-day,
The greatest social fact is *clothes*.
Come good or bad, come friends or foes,
The wise or simple, great or small,
Where'er the wave of culture flows,
The Tailor, he is King of all.

The days of plumes and mantles gay,
Or ruffles, patches, furbelows,
Have like foam-bubbles passed away,
Vanished the age of wits and beaux;
The gallant mincing on his toes,
Both Nelly's grace and Ninon's thrall,
Have passed like pageants of the Rose,—
The Tailor, he was king of all.

Now dandies dress in black or gray;
They sport no more the silken hose;
The pantaloon has come to stay;
No dress shirt now a ruffle knows;
A "congress" is a flock of crows;
The broidered scarf is now a shawl;
But still, howe'er the fashion goes,
The Tailor, he is king of all.

L'ENVOI

Friend, while upon the Stage you pose
As fool or knave, as saint or Saul,—
In dress you mask or you disclose;
The Tailor, he is king of all!

THE SERVANT OF THE MUSE

(*Ballade*)

OH, callow youths, ye vaporeing lovers all,
Who pay your vows at some fair Circe's shrine,
If ye to one entrancing maid a thrall
Your ease of mind and sportive joys resign,—
If ye for her your liberties confine,
And all your former comfortings refuse,
Your case is not so desperate as is mine,—
Ye know not what it means to serve the Muse!

Ye middle-aged, who live false Fortune's thrall,
Who fondly deem her smile will constant shine;
Ye who beneath her ruthless chariot fall,
Or for her gilded toys and bubbles pine,
Your ear to a more hapless wight incline,
Who to a more capricious mistress sues;
Be thankful of your wage and drain your wine,—
Ye know not what it means to serve the Muse!

Old men, who throng to Wisdom's spacious hall,
And worship white-robed Science, the divine;
Who dig for light at Death's dark barrier wall,
And con life's mystic precepts line by line;
Straining your anxious vision for a sign
How to unravel cunning Nature's ruse;
If she be coy ye need not wince nor whine,—
Ye know not what it means to serve the Muse!

L'ENVOI

All ye smug Strephons, who prosaic dine
Upon the viands which your Phyllis stews,
Eat and be thankful for your chops and chine,—
Ye know not what it means to serve the Muse!

THE BOGEY OF ENGLISH FREE TRADE

(*Ballade*)

THE tariff's a dear little pet,
The child of Republican lout;
Protection its nurse (that is, *wet*),
Just now is much flustered, put out;
Monopolist, run with the clout!
Manufacturer, stand for its maid!
And fright away megrim and pout
With the bogey of English free trade.

Oh, swaddle it, dandle it yet,
Ye grave senatorial rout!
And teach it its tare and its tret,
And to keep clean its snub little snout.
Don't let depraved Democrats flout
Its failings, or make it afraid,
But after its enemies scout
With the bogey of English free trade.

Brother Jonathan's house is upset;
The mischief! What's all this about?
What caucusing furor, and fret!
What a headshaking, shiver and shout!
"The country'll be ruined, I vow it!"
"Let the surplus in pensions be paid!"
"Put the tariff's revisers to rout
With the bogey of English free trade!"

L'ENVOI

Ye sons, macaroni and kraut!
Ye wielders of dibble and spade!
They'd gammon you, make not a doubt,
With the bogey of English free trade!

BÉRANGER'S SONGS

(*Rondeau*)

BÉRANGER'S songs—ah, few to-day
Can such inspiring measures sway;
What muse can match the lilting strain
That dances down his sweet refrain?
Come—name his rivals! where are they?

Around his theme wit's flashes play;
He's France! in him France lives for aye;
They glow like sunshine dipped in rain,
Béranger's songs!

The modern muse is seldom gay,
Infrequent grows the heart-felt lay,
The voice of passion breathes in pain;
O come, ye gladsome days again!
Like stars they gleam along my way,
Béranger's songs!

MY TRICKSY MUSE

(*Rondeau*)

MY tricksy Muse! full oft you play
Me shy, when I'd fain have you stay;
The most coquettish maid I know
Are you, and though I court you, lo,
You're off for all I do or say!

Well, come or go howe'er you may;
Assertive, tender, grave or gay,
Yet never false, malicious grow,
My tricksy Muse!

The critic, waiting for his prey,
May scoff you, with my scorn I pay;
And should all wheels on Fortune's row
Spin by us, we'll no favors owe;
Afoot we'll travel life's highway,
My tricksy Muse!

A RUSTIC SCENE

(*Rondeau*)

A RUSTIC scene, *ma chère ami?*
Well, first a vine-flowered canopy;
A garden here—an orchard yon—
A fountain and a sloping lawn—
Some chairs—the china set for tea.

Yes, something more—ah, there must be
A hedge in bloom—a willow tree—
Thus far you think I've fairly drawn
A rustic scene?

A lake far distant—down the lea
A white-robed, gold-haired, winsome she,
Holding in ribbon leash a fawn;
Her smile, suggestive of the dawn—
A young Aurora; *you, ma mie*;—
A rustic scene!

A PERFECT FRIEND

(*Rondeau*)

A PERFECT friend, Miss Guenevere,
Come tell me who that is? 'Tis queer
A clever scholar such as you
Never that mental portrait drew,
And you thumb Shakespeare every year!

Heart, culture, grace, a voice of cheer,
Wit not too gay nor yet severe,
Tact, talent, sweetness, all are due
A perfect friend.

A woman? surely! Men appear
Less sympathetic, earnest, clear,
Resourceful—and I know but few
Of your sex, even, kind and true.
Look in the mirror—*you?* yes, dear,
A perfect friend!

THE HEART'S VOYAGE

(*Pantoum*)

MY all too trustful day is o'er,
Grey clouds draw darkling o'er the sea;
Youth's all enchanting tropic shore
Fades slowly o'er life's shadowed lea.

Grey clouds grow darkling o'er the sea
From out the deepening skies of time;
Fades slowly o'er life's shadowed lea
The freshness of life's summer clime.

From out the deepening skies of time—
The storm-wings veering down in force,—
The freshness of life's summer clime
I leave, upon my out-bound course.

The storm-wings veering down in force,—
I know not where they drive me on;
I leave, upon my out-bound course,
Bright hopes, full-blossomed at the dawn.

I know not where they drive me on—
The dark waves stretch an endless waste;
Bright hopes, ye blossomed at the dawn—
Roses, that once Faith's garden graced!

The dark waves stretch an endless waste;
One star beams through the gloom above;
Roses, that once Faith's garden graced,
Ye all were consecrate to Love!

One star beams through the gloom above,
The pale, pure star of Poesy;
Ye all were consecrate to Love,
Fair flowers that bloomed so tenderly!

The pale, pure star of Poesy!
My one blest guide when night is drear;
Fair flowers that bloomed so tenderly,
Would now ye smiled upon me here!

My one blest guide when night is drear;
Her light still cheers my wayward soul;
Would now thou smiledst upon me here,
Dear star of Love—the billows roll!

Her light still cheers my wayward soul,
Lend too, O Love, thy steadfast shine!
Dear star of Love, the billows roll!
Why cheer'st thou not this heart of mine?

Lend too, O Love, thy steadfast shine!
Then might the white-walled haven gleam;
Why cheer'st thou not this heart of mine,
Sweet guide of each night-opening dream?

Then might the white-walled haven gleam,
Calm port of rest, fulfilled desires;
Sweet guide of each night-opening dream,
Thy charm would gild its lofty spires!

Calm port of rest, fulfilled desires—
It were a paradise with thee!
Thy charm would gild its lofty spires;
Where may I that bright haven see?

It were a paradise with thee!

Ah, how the cloudy streamers fly!

Where may I that bright haven see?

How swift my light bark glideth by!

Ah, how the cloudy streamers fly!

My all too trustful day is o'er;

How swift my light bark glideth by

Youth's all-enchanting tropic shore!

O SOVEREIGN LOVE

(*Rondeau*)

O SOVEREIGN LOVE! there is no fear or stress
 May shake thy follower's rapt devotedness;
 Heaven hath no bliss surpassing this of thine;
 Thy favor makes the face of care to shine
And clothes the cruel with thy tenderness!

Lean from thy heaven! the wearied spirit bless,
Fair youthful god, to whom all hearts confess;
 Let not thy servants unrequited pine,
O Sovereign Love!

Thy arms round lives of earth born labor press
And soothe them with thy pure and soft caress;
 Warm the dull spirit with thy flame divine;
 To all who pray thee straight thy joy consign;
Yea, banish pain—bring sweet forgetfulness,
O Sovereign Love!

THE VISION OF THE DIS DEBAR

(*Villanelle*)

THROUGH the visions of the nights
What is this my fancy sees?
'Tis the Dis Debar in tights!

Oh, of all the awesome sights
That do oft the senses freeze
Through the visions of the nights;

This one most my spirit frights—
This one surely takes the cheese!
'Tis the Dis Debar in tights!

All ye gamesome Harlem wights,
Saw ye ever limbs like these
Through the visions of the nights?

There behind the platform lights
Nightly doth fair Cupid wheeze;
'Tis the Dis Debar in tights!

Still she haunts me, queen of sprites,
Sighing like a gusty breeze
Through the visions of the nights—
'Tis the Dis Debar in tights!

TRIOLETS

EVERY age has its craze,
Our day has the maddest;
'Tis a bric-a-brac phase.
Every age has its craze,
But of all work in "clays"
This "crocker's" the "saddest."
Every age has its craze.
Our day has the maddest.

Since Bellamy's book
The world's gone demented.
All's "social outlook"
Since Bellamy's book;
The co-operative cook
Is the last thing invented.
Since Bellamy's book
The world's gone demented.

Nina pouted when I said
All her sex are like Pandora;
But I straightway pleased the maid
When I called her my Aurora.
Flatter well the fair, ye men,
If you'd have your faith undoubted.
Tell them not the truth, as when
Nina pouted.

QUATRAINS

THE QUATRAIN

As thru a prism strains the circling sky,
Packed in four lines how much of life may lie;
Yet flashing forth its radiance down the years;—
A diamond flinging pent fire to the spheres.

THE UNIVERSAL LIFE

THE mountain's brooks divide, yet from one source
They plenish all the fruitful fields below;
So from the central, sole, eternal force,
The strong, life-giving streams of Nature flow.

∴

STANDING-ROOM

"A PLACE to stand, and I will move the world!"
So cried the wise-browed Syracusan seer;
Whereon to stand? Ay, had we that, unfurled
Across the age what banners Truth would rear!

∴

THE WORLD-MAELSTROM OF THE WEST

HERE seethes the o'erflow of Nations; from all shores
Earth's human rivers mix in one embrace;
Yet through this myriad-tided ocean pours
The Gulf-stream of the Anglo-Saxon race.

∴

KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

KNOWLEDGE is Wisdom's hand-maid; oft her gown
The servant dons—a masquerade complete;
Then goes she aping Wisdom up and down,
And few there are who recognize the cheat.

PENUEL

NOTHING of value comes unearned to man;
 The storm that scathes, roots yet more deep the trunk;
 All striving tells in earnest Nature's plan;
 Still wrest the blessing though your thigh be shrunk.

. . .

EVOLUTION

SOUL is developed Nature; from the sod
 Grows soul-stuff; Nature's but a thrifty wife;
 The field-flowers claim us kindred with a nod,
 And mothers kiss the babes that sap their life.

. . .

LOVE

LOVE is the rose of life, its natural zest,
 Its daily bourgeon woos the circling air;
 When Cupid plants it in some maid's warm breast,
 Its perfume doubles and 'tis doubly fair.

. . .

ON CERTAIN ACADEMICIANS

THEIR skill is all mosaic; rule of thumb
 Guides every groping hand and squinting eye,
 Ask for imagination—they are dumb;
 Point them to truth and, lo, they choose a lie!

OLD AND NEW ART

NATURE was with the souls of olden time,
 They loved her, spoused her, were by her misled;
 We are like husbands long outpast their prime,
 We know her moods—but passion now is dead.

∴

TO CERTAIN CRITICS

WOODPECKER-LIKE, intent on drilling holes,
 You seek nor leaf nor blossom on the tree;
 And cuckoo-like you echo other souls,
 And hatch your changelings for a beggar's fee.

∴

THE BASIC FORCE

RHYTHM must vibrate through the poet's mind
 Ere he can urge his verse to throb and glow,
 And feeling mount upon the spirit's wind
 Before the master-player draws his bow.

∴

THE CONVENTIONAL PARSON

EVEN the cholera is scarce his peer;
 The droning pulpit prig, how dread is he!
 One lays your body breathless on the bier;
 The other plagues your soul and takes a fee.

MIDAS AND COMPANY

MIDAS, 'tis said, turned all he touched to gold;
 "Wise act!" we cry, "how few his worthy peers!"
 His type how well preserved! It grows not old;
 But what a price to pay for Ass's Ears!

∴

CAVE CANEM!

XANTIPPE worsted Socrates, and few
 Petruchios conquer where are hosts undone.
 Even cunning Marlborough could not curb his shrew;
 The moral? Lovers, read it as you run!

∴

PEGASUS AT PASTURE

POPE, Milton, Byron, bankrupt poets these;
 The rustics now have taken all the trade;
 Long live the Hoosier bards! down on your knees
 To Cracker slang and Yankee gasconade!

∴

ORTHODOX LIBERALISM

THE Troy of creeds is down—the Greeks are in;
 The new Æneas flees the falling wrack;
 Seeking new lands he staggers from the din,
 Anchises and his gods athwart his back.

THE POETS AND MAMMON

POETS, like Swabia's free Knights of old,
 Build proud and high their castles in the air;
 Then Mammon comes, invests their straitened hold,
 And Rudolf-like demands allegiance there.

. . .

SONNETS AND SONNETEERS

MOST rhymesters now are jewelers, and would fain
 Their deft-carved cherry-stones for cameos sell;
 Like amateurs, who play the moody Dane,
 The counterfeit may pass—not "passing well."

. . .

THE SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET

LEAVE the strict mould to Petrarch's plastic hand,
 And frame your verse to Shakespeare's form divine;
 In *that* the sweetest, loftiest thoughts expand;
 The brave "fourteener" comes of English line.

. . .

POETS AND POETASTERS

THE hoarsest rhymesters, blundering in the dark,
 Most clamorous are for an immortal name;
 Still croaks and puffs the frog; the thrush and lark
 Are not inflated with desire for fame.

ON THE SPIRITUAL BARNUM

WERE I compelled to bide a donkey's bray,
 I'd choose a time the beast's turned out to grass;
 I'd never of my own volition stay
 To hear a roof reverberate an ass.

∴

TRUTH

TRUTH is the lode-star of free thought—nor can
 He earn its guidance who is thrall to pelf;
 Nor shall he gain perspective view of man
 Until his shadow shortens to himself.

∴

TO SOME NEW CRITICS

"SCOTT is no master!" no, my dainty soul,
 Weaving your cobweb verse or etching prose?
 You new time Della-Cruscan!—centuries roll,—
 He's Britain's Homer; who are you? who knows?

∴

FANCY

THE chord of Fancy is the slenderest string
 In rich Imagination's varied lyre;
 And yet some novice hand might make it ring
 Above the chorus of the veteran choir.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

MOST men desire yet fear to stand revealed
 Unto themselves; when forced, aghast they stare,
 As captives, long from life and light concealed,
 Start at their shadows in the sunlit air!

∴

TRUE AND FALSE FAME

NO mushroom is true fame; its hardy shoot
 Springs not the seedless changeling of a night;
 The soft, sweep rasp is summer's briefest fruit;
 The firm-grained apple mellows with time's flight.

∴

BÉRANGER

LIKE an æolian harp his tense-drawn soul
 Echoes the varying voice of France's will;
 Oft as she breathes her joy or bitter dole,
 Those rhythmic, trembling heart-strings answer still.

∴

THE RULE OF RAPACITY

THE robber sea-kings' rule left traces here,
 Though not in mouldering cairns along our coast;
 Our Danes to-day in legal rapine rear
 The Raven—plundering with protecting host.

THE PROFLIGATE OF KINDNESS

YOU'D dwell respected? hold yourself aloof,
 Nor spread your cloak too freely for your friend;
 The kindest hearts win ever most reproof,
 And earn the ass's nettles in the end.

. . .

TRAITS OF WOMEN

FLOUT her who loves you and she grows more fond;
 Yield to her whims—she will your grace despise;
 She has no magnanimity beyond
 Her gift of patience and her partial eyes.

. . .

THE INVINCIBLE SEX

THERE is no armor 'gainst a woman's eyes;
 Excalibur could not foil her dextrous wit;
 And when her tears join forces with her sighs
 The doughtiest heroes are the hardest hit.

. . .

THE CURSE OF THE COQUETTE

THERE is no fool, however wise he be,
 Like him, the pensioner of a woman's smile;
 No tyrant lives so dead to ruth as she
 Who pillories hearts and poisons faith with guile.

ARTIFICIAL REFINEMENT

THE hot-house nurtured woman more and more
 Would make men slaves, her bears to dance at will;
 Our Ninons know their business to the core,
 While o'er-exacting prudes die virgins still.

∴

WOMAN'S HEART

OH, miracle of mysteries, woman's heart!
 Misleading ever, even when meaning true;—
 As Gama's sailors conned the ancient chart,
 With risk and fear we steer our course by you.

∴

DOUBLE QUATRAINS

LIFE

PILOT, what gleam is that? What means that sounding
 Through the dim night afar?
 Soul, 'tis the breakers of the ocean pounding
 Against the harbor bar!

Oh, helmsman, steer your bark by yon fixed beacon
 Against the swerving tide;
 Keep well your course, nor let your vigil weaken
 Till you in safety ride!

THE ILIAD

FROM vast, unfathomed deeps of ages gone,
Swelling in surge and gathering voice sublime,
Crested with froth of legendary dawn,
A lordly wave sweeps up the shores of time.

Lo, how it roars through all the bays and creeks,
Strewing its wealth of ocean treasures rare;
Hark—now tall Hector thunders on the Greeks!
Look—how Achilles shakes his shining hair!

. . .

THE PRESS

“PALLADIUM of Liberties” ’tis called;
The skillet-lid of faction might be writ;
The editorial clothesman stands installed
To sell you mental garments that will fit.

’Tis Argus and Briareus in one,
And yet ’tis frailest of all things of power;
It quickens, brightens, searches like the sun,
And changes ever with the changeful hour.

THE YEARS OF LIFE

IN happy Youth Time goes with lingering feet,
And Hope, Life's herald, swiftly speeds before,
But, as we age, Time's pace becomes more fleet,
And Hope toils fainting or is seen no more.

Thus Heaven's compassion gives to pilgrim man
The brightest summer with the longest days,
And crowds the waning year in narrowing span
Down to the silent parting of the ways.

..

HUMAN EXISTENCE

LIFE is the sap-flow from the natal gloom,
Combining, mingling each essential force;
The Soul is life's refined, consummate bloom,
And Sense, the leaves, which are life's outer source.

Mind is the pistil where Thought's pollen clings,
Love is the perfume of the dewy hours;
Genius, the bee with swift and patient wings
Whom God hath sent to fertilize the flowers.

TRUTH

TRUTH—what is Truth? Ah, yet the mystery stands
 Veiled in the tissues of Eternal Will;
 And, as of old, upon Arabian sands,
 The world asks Pilate's vexing question still.

Yet inch by inch the drapery drops away
 And bares vast outlines of a shaped intent;
 Yet gleam on gleam springs up the brighter day,
 Till earth with heaven in Isis' smile is blent.

∴

SHAKESPEARE

"SWEET Swan of Avon," one who loved him well—
 A rival of that gladiatorial day—
 Called our loved Shakespeare; and no sweeter spell
 Than Shakespeare's ever held the world in sway.

Nor yet a mightier—with a grace sublime
 The Greek had worshipped in his proudest year,
 He strikes the key-note of all after time,
 And shows all nature in a smile or tear!

THE HUMBLE-BEE

HE is the thriftiest of the Buccaneers
Who sails to every port among the flowers,
And gathers golden tribute and then steers
To wassail it away in winter hours.

And like the mightiest Tudor is his queen,
Who in her hive presides o'er his increase,
And sends him forth to scour the seas of green,
The Gloriana of his war and peace.

. . .

HOPE AND DESPAIR

A GHASTLY crag, stark against lowering skies,
Beneath whose brow black sullen water lies;
One spectral tree upon it, barked and bare,
Where a blind raven mopes—that is Despair.

A vision in the desert's central grave,
Where crystal waters gleam and palm-trees wave,
A caravan beneath the burning cope,
Expecting blest possession—this is Hope.

FAITH AND LOVE

FAITH like an eagle on aspiring wing
 Looks up undazzled to her God on high,
 Scorning the earth, ay, every earth-born thing,
 Beyond the pinnacle where her fledglings lie.

But Love, as bravely pinioned, turns and keeps
 Her wings above us while the tempest raves,
 Like the white albatross, and, like her, sleeps
 Rocked on the inconstant bosom of the waves.

..

PLEASURE AND JOY

PLEASURE, a sylph with gay transparent wings,
 Hath flattery's smile, and like a siren sings;
 But if you strive to bind the flitting sprite,
 She'll off and send you Sorrow out of spite.

But Joy, her gentler sister, oft is found
 Musing in nooks and pacing holy ground;
 And oft a tender tear-drop dims her eye,
 And oft she breathes her rapture through a sigh.

BALLADS

CANADA TO ENGLAND

WE come to your call, O Mother, great mother of steadfast men;

The days of earth are darkened, the morrow beyond our ken;

Stress of war is upon us, the star of Empire shines,
A clouded and glimpsing beacon along the battle lines.

But know by the God above us, by the tale of a thousand years,

By the blood of our countless heroes, by the rain of our women's tears,

By the faith in our past and future, wherever our standards fly,

We pledge our souls to this service, are prepared in this cause to die.

Do not forget, dear Mother, we have proved our faith of old;

Those memories of pain and struggle have not in our hearts grown cold;

Here in the homes they cherished, the fire that holds and strives

Once warmed the breasts of our fathers, they suffered and gave their lives.

On the dank rice fields of India, on the sun-scorched kopjed veldt,

On the snow-swept hills of Crimea, our manhood was tried and felt;

From the times of Wolfe and Amherst to "Twelve," to the
Transvaal days,
We have lusted our country's annals, we have fought and
earned your praise.

Now in our prouder freedom, here in our fuller strength,
Round every field and forest, through our great land's
breadth and length,
To every city and village, to every ranch and mine,
Your call to the children echoes to fill the battle line.

Far off the fisher hears it on the Banks of Newfoundland,
The coasting trader hears it off Fundy's fog-bound strand,
The lonely woodsman hears it on the rafts of Temiscaming,
The call of the Mother in harness, "Bring me your thou-
sands—bring!"

We are coming, O Trident Wielder, we are coming ten
thousand score;
The seven-fold shield is lifted high on Valcartier's shore;
The flag that tripped stern Cronje, the flag of a hundred
fights,
Is flying to-day for battle with the spirit of Queenstown
Heights.

To every shore of the British around the Seven Seas,
The sons of the soil come trooping, their banners aslant the
breeze;
They will not fail you, Mother, their best are freely given;
With hearts for England's honor, with souls by Freedom
shriven.

Hail to the Three-Cross standard, with its streaming blood-
red field!
Hail to the bright-leaved Maple, hail to the Seven-fold
Shield!

Hail to the stout Four Nations, Britons of blood renowned
Who carry our old time prowess to the ocean's outmost
bound.

And hail to you, Mother England, proud mother of stal-
wart men,
As you sprang to front Napoleon, you are grasping the
spear again.

Hark, do you hear our trumpets! as in the past days of pain,
We march to strike for Freedom, to strike for the whole
world's gain.

Never the English spirit sheathes the reluctant sword,
Till the reaping days are ended for the Harvest of the Lord;
Woe to the proud oppressor who follows ambition's lure
To the lair of the angry lion, the Lion of Agincourt.

And shall the God-flaunting Teuton shake in our face his
gyves,
Trample the weaker nations and mangle our babes and
wives?
Roar "Deutschland über Alles" to the torch-fed cities glow;
In the name of the Great Protector, in the name of Nelson,
No!

Lead out, lead out, Brave Mother, for the sake of sacked
Louvain!
Give us our own Smith-Dorrien, yield us the van again!
By our pledge to martyred Belgium, in the cause of harried
France,
Sound the unbending onset, let the bugle scream, **ADVANCE!**

THE BONNET BLUE

THE day is done, the gloaming hour
For lovers' trysts is near,
And she hath left her turret bower
To meet her cavalier.
She is the daughter of the earl
For whom the counties sue,
And he's the grandson of a churl,
And wears a bonnet blue.

Oh, sweeter is the whispered vow
For what might come between.
No likelier youth than he, I trow,
Was e'er in greenwood seen.
No grace than hers is more divine,
No heart more fond and true;
She lets the lordly suitors pine
To pledge a Bonnet Blue.

She thinks upon her lofty state
And drops a pensive tear;
She looks upon her lowly mate
And she is straight in cheer.
He holds her in his strong embrace,
He plights his troth anew;
She dreads not donger nor disgrace
Beside her Bonnet Blue.

Next morn the bower maidens wait
In vain their mistress' call;
The servers stand with cup and plate,
The vassals throng the hall.
But where is she, the proudest born,
The fairest Scotland knew?
She wedded ere the blush of morn
Her dear loved Bonnet Blue!

SOLDIERS' HOME

WHAT, Pete Hawes? I'm glad to see you;
Stand up closer, near the light!
Just the match of when I faced you,
Old Pete Hawes, at Shiloh fight.
You come chargin' up with Longstreet,
I with Wallace kep' the hill;
Say, old Reb, my schoolboy crony,
P'raps that wa'nt a scrumptious mill.

'Member, Pete, you'd lost your shako?
How you puffed as on you came!
Just as many a time I've seen you
In some rough an' tumble game.
With your face as red's a turkey's,
An' your hair not dressed to kill;
You jumped at me with the bay'net,—
Didn't you thrust it with a will!

But I've played at "prisoner's base," boy;
There I learned a trick or two,
And I dodged or that derved bay'net
Sure as guns had run me through.
Gosh! it sot my dander risin',
An' I grabbed my gunstock tight;
If I'd let the daylight through you
It had served you blamed well right.

Fur, you mind, you'd stumbled forward,
An' before you'd got your feet
You'd a' been the prettiest corpus
That was ever made dog meat;

Fur I'd draw'd my skewer this way,
Up an' back to sock it well;
All the chance you'd then for livin'
Could crept in a walnut shell.

But as quick as lightnin' on me
Come the thought of childhood days,
When we used to fight, play hookey,
Ride down hill, tell yarns and laze;
So I hadn't heart to do it,—
Rammed the butt end in your breast,
An' you tumbled down the earthwork;
Went to bed already dressed.

Three times up the hill like tigers
Charge on charge you rebels came,
An' we druv' you back as many;
Our boys' blood was up and game.
Thunder, how our Sniders rattled!
You chaps tumbled by the score;
That blow saved your life, my hearty,
Guess you'd seen the other shore.

When you rebs got tired of maulin',
Left us masters of the field,
There I found you, Pete, a-lyin'
Like a Roman on his shield;
With three dead men piled on top you,
T'other one beneath your head;
'Twas a cur'ous kind of cover,
Fine old bolster fur your bed.

Then I fished you out, all dazed like,
Blinkin' awkward with your eyes;
Poured you down a horn of brandy,
Druv' away the pesky flies;

Then I felt three ribs was broken,
Didn't mean to hit so rough,
But when men for life is strikin'
They're dead sure to strike enough.

An' you can't say, Pete, old feller,
That I didn't treat you square,
Though they might a' used you rough like
In the prison over there;
Twice, my boy, I sent terbacker
By some chaps was goin' back;
'Twasn't much, but I was thinkin'd
Keep your wits from gettin' slack.

An' I see you live and chipper,
Like a rooster up at morn;
I, you see, was not so lucky,
Got laid up, was badly worn;
And I see you notice, Peter,
I've three legs in place of two,
Them's my stumpers in the corner,—
Ain't they hansum pegs, fur true?

How'd I lose it? O at Vicksburg,—
Knocked off by a Parrot ball;
Then they sent me here, I've been here
These three years come late in fall;
But now sit ye down, old hearty,
Smoke your pipe and drink your can;
I was Blue an' you was Grey, lad,
But we're both yet solid man.

Blame them blasted politicians
Holdin' up the bloody shirt;
If they'd not that rag to cling to
They'd be in some other dirt;

But for us as seen the service
We'll remember Shiloh's day;
Grab, old pard, your horn of plenty,—
Here's, my boy, the Blue and Grey!

GOOD SAINT VALENTINE

KIND Cupid, god of tender wiles,
Who rules the hearts of men,
Great Sovereign lord of tears and smiles
And of the lyrist's pen,
Is my dear love still true to me
As e'er he was lang-syne?
What message from him o'er the sea
Brings good Saint Valentine?

He brought my lover first to me;—
As from my dreams he came;
Full-browed with thought supremacy,
His voice a thrilling flame;
And wit that like a rapier flew
To clip the sparks from mine,—
While blithe, a day-bright laugh he threw
To good Saint Valentine.

A gallant, handsome, fearless, proud,
As e'er was hawk on wrist,
With every manly grace endowed,
True steel to plighted tryst.
He pressed his parting on my lips,
Then said, his hand in mine,
"I'll write, my dear, when come the ships
Of good Saint Valentine!"

The ships are past the harbor bar,
All anchored nigh the quay;
Each sail gleams like the happy star
Of Love's nativity,

But has my dear one sent his word
Beneath his signet's sign?—
Come tell me tidings, wandering bird,
Of good Saint Valentine!

Uncourteous bird!—no message kind
By page or marinere!
There's but the sobbing of the wind
Along the lonely brere;
O where's thy token, blue sea wave,
To light this care of mine!
Oh, sigh not, wind, as from his grave,
For good Saint Valentine!

This tree is ours where last we met,
And carved here on the rind,
Within the green moss-livery set,
Our names stand intertwined;
O tree, tell me what wind of love
Brings thee his whispered sign:
I'll carve the dear words here above
For good Saint Valentine.

* * * * *

She heard no step across the leaves—
She saw no snow-white plume;
She gazed where bound in glittering sheaves
The sunbeams lanced the gloom,
Then started with a sudden shriek:
He clasped her,—“Mistress mine,
He's come himself his word to speak
For good Saint Valentine!”

THE EARL'S DAUGHTER

THOU hast my secret, I have told
All, all, my father, even his name;
My love hath made my duty bold;
I can for his sake bear thy blame;
Here am I, all thy anger prove;
'Twill root him deeper in my love.

What though his be no princely race,
Must pride then tear two souls apart?
Lo, worth is stamped upon his face,
Nobility is in his heart.
No knight of all thy halls so free
To do proud deeds of chivalry.

I loathed the high-born butterflies,
That paid me court with fawning smiles;
I hated all their varnished lies,
Despised their mean, transparent wiles,
He seemed to all that smirking band
A prince who held in his bare hand

More honor than their gilded scrolls,
More worth than all their leagues of land;
How trifling seemed their little souls
By that high look and bearing grand;
Might he not scorn their borrowed fame
And accident of noble name?

Thou frown'st—I know what thou wouldst say—
I'd lower forsooth thy honored race;
Yet our forefathers in their day
Plucked fame from even as low a place;
'Tis worth from which all honor springs;
Without it, crowns disgrace their Kings!

How came it that I loved him then?
I had a heart could match his own;
Had he been more like other men
He might have loved—but he alone.
Where have the schoolmen writ in books
That eagles ever mated rooks?

Threat me with no false, loathed tie—
My spirit ne'er would brook to be
The slave of low desires, to die
Were then my soul's last liberty;
Think'st thou this breast a heart doth bear
Less free-willed than my fathers' were?

Rememb'rest when, a little maid,
I pulled some wild-flowers in a wood,
And of them did a chaplet braid
And crowned me in a merry mood,
You said, "Sweet, here's a wreath more rare,"
And placed these jewels on my hair.

And how I cast the gems aside
And chose my floral crown instead,
And how you laughed in easy pride
And said a shepherd I should wed?
I were content to wear even now
That humbler garland on my brow,

And with its emblems, at thy feet
 Lay state—lay all whereto I'm born;—
 Ay, would the lowliest fortunes meet
 Ere I to him would prove forsworn!
 That truly is dishonor's part—
 To lie against a loving heart.

But yet I know that thou art kind,
 I know thou art my father still;
 That 'tis the one wish of thy mind
 Thy daughter's heart with joy to fill;
 Could'st thou take from her e'en in thought
 That, without which all else were nought?

Dear father, is not true love fair?
 Unbend that frown upon thy brow!
 My father, kind beyond compare,
 Thy daughter's heart is 'gainst thee now!
 Dost hear?—'tis the warm throb in mine
 Speaking to that proud beat in thine!

Now thou dost smile! and now I know
 That thou art all my father still;
 Why do my tell-tale blushes glow?
 Father, he waiteth on thy will!
 This forward youth, forsooth, would be
 A sharer in thy bounty free!

Look forth! What prince hath nobler air?
 Hyperion was not such as he!
 He sees—he bounds the castle stair!
 And now he kneeleth at thy knee!
 Must we dismiss him? Say you so—
 This forward youth? My father, *No!*

THE OLD SABRE

TURN my chair, old comrade, toward the window,
Where the sunbeams fall
On my old and rusty battered sabre,
Hanging on the wall;
For my failing eyes would look upon it
Ere I breathe my last;
How like burnished gold the flaming sunset
On its blade is cast!

For three generations has that sabre
Waved amidst the fight;
Many a blow for Freedom it has stricken
And for England's right;
For my father's father once did wear it
Through the Flanders War,
When the French our soldiers under Marlborough
Followed long and far.

It has oft in battle with my father
To the hilt been dyed;
Twice with him across the broad Atlantic
Was its temper tried;
Up the heights of Ti' it led the stormers;
Downed the Oriflamme,
When with gallant Wolfe it faced the Frenchmen
Under stout Montcalm.

Me, too, it has served in many a battle
On the Indian sands,
When from out Mysore black Tippoo Sahib
Led his cut-throat bands;
And on many a field of Spain I've worn it,
From the days when Moore
Marched us into Leon, fondly trusting
To the Spaniard's lure.

Yes! I won my stripes as color-sergeant
On Vimiera's height,
When I, wounded, reeled all sick and bloody
From the desperate fight;
How we chased the cowed and beaten Frenchmen
Through the fields of Spain!
Drove them out of Andalusian vineyard
And Castilian plain!

And my sword waved victor from the Tagus
To the Pyrenees;
Loud we cheered as forth our colors floated
To the mountain breeze;
How we smashed Soult's scarred and veteran legions,
Laid his eagles low;
My old comrade, Wellesley, king of heroes,
Led us on the foe!

But my sabre's crowning hour of triumph
Was that day in June,
When we Guardsmen gathered under Picton
To the cannon's tune;
When we formed across the miry corn-field,
Mid the trampled rye,
And we spied out Boney's hundred banners
Flaunting to the sky.

And my old and rusty battered sabre
As I gripped it fast,
Seemed to thrill unto my heart's quick beating
With its glories past;
For the Iron Duke still looked upon us
And we thought of home,
And we vowed we'd be no slaves to Frenchmen
And the dogs of Rome.

See that nick upon the edge! 'twas cleft there
By a cuirassier,
As he sideways leaned from out his saddle,
When in full career;
And you see the point is turned and broken,—
'Twas the thrust I sped
Through the ribs of a frog-eater did it
As I stretched him dead!

Give me here the grand old sabre, comrade!
For my failing hand
Would at touch with new life nerve and quicken
Of my trusty brand;
How as light as reed it bent and quivered
In my sinewy grasp!
Hardly now my palsied, trembling fingers,
Round the hilt I clasp!

Fades the daylight, and the sunbeams waver,
And their lustres fall;
And the deepening shadows of the twilight
Chase them from the wall;
And my life is slowly ebbing, ebbing,
And the muffled roll
Of a drum is through the dimness beating,
Summoning my soul.

'Tis the order of the Great Commander
 Signalling to rest;
Mother land, I've loved you well, I'm dying
 On your dear-loved breast!
Reach your hand, old comrade, I am going,
 With my long discharge,
Where there'll be forever rest from fighting,
 All the ranks at large.

Take the sabre—for my chilling fingers
 Feel the hilt no more;
'Tis a memory of pain and struggle,
 May its reign be o'er;
But it helped the righteous cause of nations
 As the good God willed;
And I trust that he will grant us pardon
 For the blood it spilled.

When you lay me in the grave, my comrade,
 Under yon gray oak tree,
Let my dear and faithful old companion
 Buried be with me;
'Tis the only thing that I have left me
 And we ne'er shall part;—
Lay it, comrade, in the coffin with me,
 Hilt against my heart!

LAMOND

A LIKELIER lad than Lamond was
God wot was never seen;
No lither foot e'er dashed the dew
From off the bracken green.

No surer hand in all Argyle
Drew bow or wielded brand;
In sport or hunt, in dance or song,
The first in all the land.

'Twas when the leaves began to fall,
With youths some eight or nine,
It chanced that Lamond chased the deer
One day thru far Glenfine.

Both rough and toilsome grew the way;
His friends lagged far behind;
Yet Lamond on the wounded stag
Pressed faster than the wind.

When, lo, a huntsman's shrill halloo
Broke on his startled ear;
Yet dashed he forward on the bent
Without one care or fear.

When straight, the stag, a bow-shot length,
Fell dead, before the lad,
And lo, a hunting band drew nigh
Who wore Macgregor's plaid.

Out stepped Macgregor's only son,
A comely boy was he,
His foot he planted on the deer,
Then loud and bold spake he.

"Come you as friend or come as foe,
'Tis little reck to me;
But come you here to claim this deer,
Well proved your claim must be."

Right forward sprang the fearless youth
And seized the branching tyne;
"Stand back!" he cried, "I roused this deer
This morn beyond Glenfine!

"Against your numbers stands my right,
With this I urge my claim,"
And from its sheath his good claymore
Leaped forth like flash of flame.

"Art then so bold?" Macgregor cried,
"Stand back my clansmen all,
Whoe'er shall now the worthier prove
To him the deer shall fall!"

Right short and desperate was the strife
The fiery youngsters made;
For soon his foeman's generous blood
Flowed forth on Lamond's blade.

With one exulting cry the youth
Flung up his sword in air,
When round him closed Macgregor's band
Like bloodhounds round a bear.

But striking down the foremost man
He cleft the ring in twain;
As starts an arrow from the string
He fled with might and main.

Yet breathing curses dark and deep
The clansmen throng his track;
The foot of no Macgregor yet
For deed of blood was slack.

Thru brake and wood, o'er cliff and hill,
For life did Lamond strain,
And swift as swallow now he skims
Across the heath-clad plain.

When straight before his starting eyes
Macgregor's fastness rose;
Now sure the runner seeks his fate!
Exultant yelled his foes.

With one low cry and headlong bound
He burst the foremost door,
And, lo, what chance can save him now,
He stands the chief before!

"Chieftain, we met, 'twas mortal strife,
Your son was slain by me;
Take now my life, for I have left
No strength to further flee."

Black grew Macgregor's swarthy brow,
Forth flashed his ready dirk,
As with an ague, all his frame
Did with his passion work.

Thrice fell the weapon at his side,
And thrice it rose in air;
Not fiercer on the hunter glares
A wild-cat from its lair.

Close drew the tramp of hurrying feet,
"Enough," he sternly said,
"Though vengeance lives, beneath my roof
No harm shall touch your head."

Then strode he quickly to the door,
"What seek ye, clansmen, here?"
As hounds that list the huntsman's call,
They checked their fierce career.

"Death to the murderer of your son!
Make way, my chief, make way!"
But with his long and sinewy arm
He made their boldest stay.

"Thou'rt mad, my children," cried the chief,
"Away and search the wood!
A hundred kine I give to him
Who spills the murderer's blood!"

Like famished wolves around the wold
They sought the vanished prey;
But Lamond 'neath the chieftain's roof
Lay safe 'till close of day.

Then when the moon her lantern hung
Above the lonely height,
Two silent forms moved swiftly forth
Within the fold of night.

The chieftain strode before, the youth
Trode light the fearsome shade;
E'er as the wind-swept foliage stirred
His fingers clutched his blade.

Till with a joyful heart he viewed
Once more the treeless land;
Then as they gained the midmost heath
The chieftain took his stand.

His face showed ghastly pale, his voice
Was hoarse with hate and grief,
And his proud, stalwart frame was shook
As is an aspen leaf.

“Stout be your arm and true your sword”—
(His brow grew dark and wild),
“When in the open next I meet
The slayer of my child!”

He turned and pulled his bonnet down;
His plaid he round him drew;
Next instant and the beechwood shade
Concealed his form from view.

Years passed, Macgregor aged apace;
He chased the deer no more;
But yet in memory of a wrong
He wore his broad claymore.

Till like a flood in harvest-time
The northern clans came down;
They harried all the country-side,
And burnt both hall and town.

The aged chief was forced to flee,
And, wandering in the wild,
All sudden in his path he met
The slayer of his child.

But Lamond dropped his ready blade,
He broke in sobbing grief;
"Long have I mourned my hasty deed,
Forgive me, generous chief!

"Come to my home, I do repent
What my rash hand hath done.
Be thou the father I have lost,
And I will be thy son!"

He clasped the old man's wasted hands,
He kneeled upon the heath;
But straight Macgregor backward stept
And drew his sword from sheath.

He raised his arm—it faltering fell—
Nor yet the chieftain spoke.
His form was shook as thrills a tree
Beneath the woodsman's stroke.

His cheek grew pale,—a passion tide
Across his features swept,—
Then sternness melted from his face,
He bowed his head and wept.

He flung the claymore from his hand,
"Brave youth," he broken said,
"Heaven gives me back my son, and takes
My foe; revenge is dead!"

ON THE FRONTIER

HELLO yerself! Well, stranger,
What's news with you down East?
Will ye have a bite? A hump steak
Isn't very much of a feast
But ye're welcome. I see you've ridden
A good many mile to-day—
Jest take off yere hoss's bridle
And let the critter stray.

We don't get much news on the prairie.
The 'lection is over, ye say?
The Repubs thrown out? Well, dang it,
That crowd have had their day.
We've been scouts here on the frontier
And we've drawed Uncle Samuel's cash
Nigh thirty year and mebbly
Seen some notions go to smash.

All through the war we served, sir;
Fit for the Union then
In Custer's Brigade,—for a fighter
He was the boss o' men!
I never took stock in niggers,
But 'twas fair to give 'em a show;
Then we drifted out here on the prairie
Twenty-five year ago.

There was Injuns all about us
And not a white in the land;
All that country dotted with houses
Was clean as the palm o' yer hand;
And me and Hank, my chum here,
Many a night we've passed
Watch and watch 'til mornin',
Thankful our scalps held fast.

We was down on the Platte just yonder
Huntin' some buffalo,
When we struck a pioneer's wagon,
Wife and baby in tow;
They was young and townty people,
And we wondered to see 'em there
Away on the lonesome prairie,
Out of Uncle Samuel's care.

Well, we chinned with the chap and his woman
And we found 'em smooth as silk;
They hadn't even a tan on,
As white, sir, as new milk;
And Hank and me it stumped us
How such critters got out here;
Why folks like them should rough it
It 'peared outrageous queer.

But that young chap 'dmired his wifey
The best I ever seen;
For ye see she was slim and pooty
And ladylike as a queen;
And delicate and sweet-natured
As a blade o' young spring corn,
With an eye as clear and pleasant
As a mountain pool at morn.

And the dear little baby girl, sir,—
 Jest about two year old—
Was the cunnin'est, cutest creter,
 With its hair all curly gold.
'Twas a toss up which or t'other
 Of that little family nest,
The chap or wife or baby,
 Loved either the others best.

They pitched their claim just yonder
 By the river's wooded bank,
And he started to build his shanty
 With the grit of a true-born Yank;
And Hank and me took a fancy
 To the chap and give him a hand
And helped him raise his log-house
 And root up his patch o' land.

But no sooner they got to livin'
 In the shebang than he fell sick;
Worked too hard for a green hand
 And the fever ketched him quick;
But we hung around the country
 And helped the poor little wife;
And by and by with care, sir,
 She nursed him back to life.

And, be jing, if they'd had millions
 They'd a' given it all to us;
You'd a' thought we was Kings in exile
 They made on us such a fuss;
And when we'd cross the country
 On our way back from the Fort
We'd stay at the Yankee's log-house
 With his mail and the last report.

'Twas just a year from their comin',
Hank and me was out for news
On the trail o' some restless Injuns,
Foxes, Cheyennes, and Sioux,
When down on us come a-ridin'
Like mad, barehead, and wild,
That Yank chap hollerin' to us,
"My wife—my wife and child!

"Good God!" he yelled, "the Injuns!
There—there—that way's the track!"
No time for axin' questions,
We turned our mustangs back,
And the style we streaked that prairie
I never went afore,
Since the day when we chased Morgan
In Missouri in the War.

We struck the trail o' their ponies—
Six sets o' hoofs they were,—
And straight to west they pinte
Like a line drawn through the air;
We chased 'em down to dark, sir,
And all the followin' day,
Till we saw their camp-smoke curlin'
Far through the evenin' grey.

We hitched our nags to some bushes
And waited for day to pass;
Then armed with our guns we started
To crawl through the prairie grass;
Till eatin' there by the fire
Was six Injuns big and tall,
And the Yank's wife was sittin' near 'em
With her baby wrapped in a shawl.

Jiggers! it raised my dander
To see them Injuns feed,
And nary a bite to the woman
Though she looked in the worst o' need;
But the young Yank's face was a pictur,
And his two eyes flashed like flame,
And I knowed we would count to the letter
He would kill or die there game.

We each one singled an Injun
And let go like one man;
We dropped three dead, and the others
They give one yelp and ran;
And next moment, tremblin', faintin',
But safe from the Injuns' harms,
The wife with her baby tumbled
Kerflop in the young chap's arms.

And what a huggin' and kissin'
Went on for a little while!
You'd a' hurd them smacks he give her
Well on to half-a-mile.
They laughed and cried like time, sir,
And Hank he blowed his nose,
And I felt all kind o' crawly
Way down to the ends o' me toes.

Well, they'd had 'bout 'nough o' the frontier,
Ye can bet yer dimes on that!
They moved East, but we've hurd from 'em often
Out here on the river Platte;
And that chap was as slick a feller
As I'll ever see or hear,
For many's the pound o' pigtail
He sent us these twenty year.

ON THE FRONTIER

And if ever ye come acrost him—
Ye may, perhaps, ye see,—
Jest mention we're live and chipper,
My old chum here and me.
Don't I know ye? Never sized ye
Afore—did *you* ever, Hank?
Why, bless my stars and garters—
If it isn't the little Yank!

DEVON AND DRAKE

HO, Pelicans, tip the flagon—*
Here's to Devon's old renown!
May we have such ale to brag on
When land luck has run us down.
Now here, and to-morrow the ocean,
To follow the Spaniards' wake
And to breathe a life of motion
In the Spanish Main with Drake!

Ay, lads, all men are civil
To the Kings of the open sea,
For we fear nor saint nor devil
And we spend our ducats free.
All cheer the bold freebooter,
When they see his topsails shake,
For silver is cheap as pewter
In the Spanish Main with Drake.

Last cruise by tempests pounded
We scudded the nor'east breeze,
With joyous hearts we rounded
Cape Horn to the southern seas;
We upset Sancho's scheming,
How he would for harbor make
When he saw the Red-Cross streaming
In the Spanish Main with Drake!

* The name of Drake's vessel was the "Pelican."

We made short work of the slaver,
 He gave us an offing wide;
 We asked of man no favor,
 For Heaven was on our side;
 Of all sea-rovers the vanward,
 We threw for a splendid stake
 When we sailed the track of the Spaniard
 In the Spanish Main with Drake.

We scuttled their barques and traders,
 And their galleons plundered too;
 Like heartiest sea-crusaders
 On the monsoon's wings we flew;
 From Lima to Portobello
 We kept the Dons awake;
 A hero was every fellow
 In the Spanish Main with Drake!

We ravaged their rich plantations
 And ransacked their convents' gold;
 To their Popish lamentations
 We were deaf, like Britons bold;
 But our hearts were warm and human
 For our wives' and sweethearts' sake,
 And we harmed no child or woman
 In the Spanish Main with Drake.

The spawn of the Inquisition,
 Who had wrought through two worlds harm,
 We gave a high commission—
 'Twas the end of our long yard-arm!
 We flung their bones to the raven
 And the shark, for acquaintance sake,
 And burned their blood-stained haven
 In the Spanish Main with Drake.

We brought an Infanta's dower
A present to good Queen Bess;
Our captain won fame and power
And was knighted for our success;
We've feasted at home in Devon
On the best they brew and bake—
But here's to a breezy heaven
In the Spanish Main with Drake!

Let the Jesuit snarl in rancor—
Let him loose his hounds of Spain;
We will lift with Drake the anchor—
We will spread our sails again!
Let them look to their Lisbon and Cadiz
As we'll down their sea-coasts rake,
St. George's God to aid us
In the Spanish Main with Drake!

The Pope may send forth letters
And Philip his war ships too,
But our limbs for Castile fetters
Are too stout and our hearts too true!
Let them flourish and make bravada
And threaten our pride to break,
But we'll stand to their huge Armada
When Devon's afloat with Drake.

MARY JANE

OF all the maids in Brooklyn City
There's none to match my Mary Jane;
She is so pretty, sweet, and witty
She fills my heart with loving pain;
Whene'er I see her in the arey
A-polishing a window-pane,
She looks just like a story fairy,
My dainty, white-armed Mary Jane.

She's chamber-maid at number seven,
Her master is an overseer,
And I sell meat at number 'leven
The butcher-shop of Rufus Grier,
I cuts the steaks for man and missus
And many a flattering smile I gain;
I wish them smiles were turned to kisses
And came to me with Mary Jane.

When she goes out to take her airing
On some fine Thursday afternoon,
Her pretty fixings all a-wearing,
She's fairer than the silver moon;
There is no lady in the street here
That sweeps along in satin train,
Who's rigged more stylish and completer
Than sweet and lovely Mary Jane.

I took her to a ball last winter,
'Twas given by the B. P. U's;*
She broke the fellers' hearts to splinter
A-tippin' on them pinks o' shoes;
Them shoes—they'd done for Cinderella!
Her dress was only blue delaine;
But blest if there was half so swell a
Miss there as my Mary Jane.

The dearest wish I've for the future,
When I can stock me up in beef,
'S t' turn an independent butcher
And Mary Jane make Mrs. Keefe;
Though storms may come and cloudy weather,
We'll nothing of the storms complain;
We too will make sunshine together,
Me and my sweetheart, Mary Jane.

* Butchers' Protective Union.

BLIND MILTON

(*Loquitur*)

I HAVE lived late and come on evil days;
Some lewd-tongued revellers even now crost my door
With brawl and uproar and the sottish crew
Jeered as they passed my blindness; were it not
For memory of what this land has been,
What it has borne thru suffering for the truth,
The uncontaminate, burning hearts that mourn,
Indignant, pitying her uncrownèd state,
Hope with me had departed and my darkness
Were night indeed; but that pure Spirit Eterne,
Whose Voice is heard in silence, and whose Word
Is full of the promises of Him whose arm
Upholds the heavens, sustains me.

I have seen
Frothing the measure of this yeasty time
Rash, licensed spirits, stuffed with vanity,
Dregs of spume faction and adulterous birth,
Pestilent, rapacious, unabashed,
With venal function and blood-guilty lust
Fouling high place; and masquered, mumbling Faith
With greedy palms outstretched, impious in prayer,
With fulsome lips agape—or with haught brow
Trampling the elect of God beneath her feet,
Bawd to the subtle harlot, crowned and throned
Upon the Seven Hills; her pander, State,
Holding his swinish revel, satyr-eyed,

Insensate, swol'n with pride; the honored seats
Of God-enfranchised men trafficked and sold
To buy the smiles of wantons, and the throne
Of the great Edwards, Henries, made the pawn
Of mockers, rakes and masquers, and debased
To foreign thralldom, while a courtesan
Plays Juno to the giggot rule of him,
The spawn of that late tyrant who betrayed
Our commonwealth, and would have broken down
Our liberties, had not the Highest raised
Men like to Joshua and Gideon who
Fired the indignant hearts of humble men
To rise and overthrow him, and so sealed
The charter of our freedom with his blood.

How has our greatness fallen! the foul block
Dripping with blood of martyrs; the honored bones
Of those whose names still thunder round the earth,
Hurled from their graves, grappled in gibbet irons,
Bared to the sneering and unholy gaze
Of sycophants and mummers, while the Dutch,
Who shrank to cover when our trumpets blew,
Insult us in our shores, and the French court
Lampoons our infamy, and the Triple Crown
Recovers, threatening all the Saints of God,
While rufflers, duelists and gamesters crowd
The honored of our land into their graves.

But this is in God's hand; as David purged
His spirit, so this land will cast aside
The grave-clothes of her sin, and rise again

A mightier nation than this world has seen,
A beacon to the ages;

I foresee,

In that fair land beyond the western surge
New Hampdens, Cromwells, leading forth a race
English in speech to empire, bearing the rampart
Lion of English valor at the fore,
And spreading witness of His Holy name
Who bends the heavens, portents comets and shakes
The stars out of their spheres; filling the void
Of virgin forests, leveling the hills,
Bridging the mightiest rivers, making bloom
The desert, city studded, till a new
England of mightier presence than the old
Shall rise across the ocean, queen-like, fair
As Venus Amphitrite, with throned bows
Majestic, wreathed with vine-leaves and full corn,
Her rippling tresses clustered; in her hand
Sheep-hook for sceptre, her star-shimmered robe,
With fragrant cestus girdled; in her eyes
The morning of the young Democracy,
Whose leaven working thru the world unseen
Shall permeate the castes, and overthrow
Privilege and the pomp and power of kings;
Voicing its claim within Tradition's halls,
Echoing with din of war and prelate strife
And footfalls of receding centuries.

Oh, England, oh, my mother, in that time
Bear thyself well! for 'gainst thy strength shall crowd
Envy, distrust, and malice; with the seed
Of Freedom grow the tares of sensual sloth
And self-sufficiency; the prosperous years
Enervate, and the vigor of thy arm

Which steered the world may slacken; not for long,
If I may read aright the pristine worth
Of spirit which endures, and greatly tried
Shines forth the brighter for the stormy wrack,
Leaving thee still serene, the pride of earth,
The patron heir of time;—

Prithee lead in;
The night grows chill, and wide invisible wings
Of contemplation tent above my thought
Calmed from the outer world. - My heart is stirred
Strangely, and on my lifted spirit grows
The theme of that great argument I told
Thee yester-night of. I give thanks to him
Who while He took the sense of sight hath left
The inner vision, spared the varied lore
I drew in youth from many a storied fount
Of ancient inspiration; calmed my soul
That I unmoved within this evil time
May trust His promise for that ampler day.

DEFENCE OF THE LONG SAUT

[The defence of the Long Saut, as told in the pages of Parkman, is one of the most spirited episodes in the history of New France. For thirteen days the Sieur Dollard of Doulac, with sixteen devoted companions of the garrison of Montreal and five Algonquin braves, defended the renowned Pass against the whole armed power of the Iroquois Nation, and though all were eventually slain, their defence so disheartened the savages that they gave up all hope of driving the French from Canada.]

THE Iroquois with wasting torch and cruel butchering hand,
East, West and North resistless sweep across New France's land;
Along Ontario's northern shore they range with none to check,
And muster bands around Champlain to threaten the young Quebec.

Each hour some hut or hamlet flames—the foe strike everywhere;
The lumberer in the woods is slain while swings his axe in air.
From every savage girdle hangs some pledge of ghastly strife,
Torn reeking from the quivering flesh beneath the scalping knife.

Now, who would live out length of days nor court a tortured death,
Must hasten to the palisades by stealth with bated breath;

The venturous *couriers du bois* all still and watchful go;
 The winter wild cats are less fierce than this blood-famished
 foe.

The Hurons from their villages like deer are hunted forth,
 And hide within the trackless wilds that fringe the frozen
 North;

The Melicites to Tadousac the awesome tidings tell,
 Where every shrieking blast forebodes the Mohawk's mur-
 der yell.

But to the fort at Montreal have crossed the champing sea,
 From Mother France a chosen band of youthful chivalry;
 And he, the proud young commandant with high-born, peer-
 less port,
 Is Dollard, Sieur of old Doulac, the star of Louis' Court.

'Tis Dollard speaks to Maisonneuve, the governor of New
 France,

While flashes round the council hall his proud and burning
 glance,

"Had I one score of willing hearts to hold the narrow Saut,
 These prowling wolves of Iroquois would soon their mas-
 ters know.

"Now, who will dare to stake his life upon a desperate
 chance?

Who'll earn with me a deathless name—who'll win renown
 for France?

Or will ye slink and cower still within your fortress wall,
 While on your desolated fields in flames your roof-trees fall?

"What, would ye send the tidings home that by a savage foe
 The royal Lilies are besmirched and torn and trampled low;

The stock of Bayard and Navarre, of Conde and Dunois,
Quail like a pack of well-whipped hounds before these Iro-
quois!

“Speak, fellow-soldiers, comrades, friends—who now will
go with me
To drive the painted devils hence, come death or victory?
In name of King and Christ’s dear faith, let whoso will ad-
vance,
And draw his blade to strike for fame, for Dollard, and for
France.”

An instant’s pause—then sixteen youths spring forth with
martial glee;
Out flash their swords, at once they cry, “To death we’ll
follow thee!”
They snatch the gun and corselet down, they seize the pike
and lance,
Then throng the shore their muster cheer, “For Dollard
and for France!”

Forth leap the light canoes—they breast St. Lawrence swift
and wide,
To where the stately Ottawa rolls down her wine dark tide;
Yet still they stem the rushing stream, their paddles sweep
the flow,
Until they win the rugged rocks that hem the famed Long
Saut.

They land within the pass’s jaws—their lonely camp is made
Beside the bastion’s rough-hewn wall, a loop-holed palisade;
There, lined along the swarthy cliffs that bind the frothing
sea,
This band of New World Spartans hold their new Ther-
mopylæ.

"Ho, yon canoes hold surely friends! 'Tis they our red allies!"

Right joyous ring the welcome shouts that round the camp fires rise.

"Annahotaha, fighting chief, with forty Huron braves—
Now come, you cursed Iroquois—come now and find your graves!"

"Ay, here stands France!" As hunters watch the mountain streams for game,

They scan the rock-strewn, foaming pass, athirst for war and fame;

Yet, true Crusaders, night and morn to Christ they bend the knee

Beneath the oriflamme of God, the peerless Fleur-de-Lis.

"Arm! arm!—they come! now strike for France! the foe are fair in view;

The Iroquois, a thousand strong, shooting the rapids through!"

Hurrah! the muskets volley death! a thousand yells reply;
A leap—a splash—three first canoes upturned go drifting by!

"Vive, vive La France!" the paddles swerve—the redskins leap to land;

Their scalp-locks tossing in the wind, their tomahawks in hand;

Like wolves around a lone battue to shore the Oneidas crowd;

They come, the bloodhounds of the Lakes, the Mohawks fierce and proud.

In plumed and painted panoply the glade the warriors throng;

Each scalping-knife hangs glittering keen within its deer-skin thong;

Beside each quiver sheathed with quills a hickory bow is borne,
And round each waist the wampum belt with leathern fringe is worn.

They rush—in vain! the dauntless band repel the fierce attack,
And many an eagle plume goes down in dust and bloody wrack;
While storms from out the palisade to greet each fresh advance
The Frenchman's stern defiant cheer, "For Dollard and for France!"

Five days of stealthy, bold assault the stubborn French have stood,
'Til all the trampled sward is now besmirched with savage blood;
No sleep by night, no peace by day, the worn-out band have won,
For hourly rings the piercing whoop and cracks the answering gun.

Five days! the Hurons, man by man, desert the leaguered walls;
Their haughty chief alone remains, for naught his soul appals;
With only four Algonquin braves, who to him constant stand,
He fights beside the roaring Saut for France and Fatherland!

But yet, high o'er the closing din—the yell and crackling round,
Bursts forth the war-cry of the French with hoarse, defiant sound;

And still the Lilies flaunt the sky—still, as the foe advance
 The muskets rattle to the cheer, “For Dollard and for
 France!”

Eight long days more! and yet around the fire-scathed pali-
 sade,
 The baffled, vengeful redmen throng the encircling forest-
 shade;
 Eight hundred more of Iroquois adown the Richelieu
 sweep;
 Now, gallants, look your last on earth—now must your loved
 ones weep!

Pile high the blazing birch canoes against the timbers
 brown—
 Make one more rush, you Iroquois, for half your foes are
 down!
 While sore with wounds and spent with toil, and dazed for
 want of sleep,
 How worn the few survivors now who still the barriers
 keep!

Oh, Blessed Mary! but how weak has grown their stalwart
 cheer,
 As round that slope of blazing logs the boldest foes draw
 near;
 But far above the strife of death the banner streams on
 high,
 And while it waves, you Iroquois, some Frenchman lives
 to die!

Ay, by the Rood! as 'tween the logs the Mohawks rend
 their way,
 There stand that stubborn handful yet, like hunted stags,
 at bay;

“One cheer, my lads—La Nouvelle France! one cheer for
Ville Marie!
Then die like Frenchmen to the last, for die you must
with me!”

'Tis Dollard's voice—he dashes forth—he hurls a hand-
grenade;
Too weak—too weak the cast—it bursts within the pali-
sade!
Ah, God! it scatters ruin and death! midst blinding flash
and roar,
Fast through the charred and gaping wall the furious red-
skins pour.

Stand stoutly still, you desperate few, God's rest is large
for all;
Now close with pistol, pike and sword, and round your
Lilies fall!
Spent, wounded, hopeless, overborne, front still the swarthy
ring
Where thirsty knives and tomahawks a thousand foemen
swing!

Ay, staunchly round your banner close!—all sternly back
to back,
They meet with sword the tomahawk, the knife with pistol
crack;
Still o'er the black and blinding smoke the pale blue Lilies
dance,
While fainter, hoarser grows the cheer, “For Dollard and
for France!”

And still the tufted braves go down, as falls the plumed
maize
Beneath the sturdy peasant's scythe across the furrowed
ways;

'Til maddened at their frightful loss, the whooping, crowd-
ing foe
One close and deadly volley pour and lay the Frenchmen
low.

No—one stands yet—the sword-hilt dropped from out his
nerveless hand;
'Tis Dollard, of the snow-white plume, bold brow and
lightning brand;
He leans against the banner-staff, he lifts a last fond
glance—
Then falls with one death-throttled shout, “For Dollard
and for France!”

And o'er that smoking holocaust the peace of God comes
down;
But why is raised no victor shout?—why spreads that sullen
frown?
Lo! heaped within yon blackened pyre, and strewed the san-
guine plain,
The whole Six Nations view dismayed their best and bravest
slain!

This night, ye nuns of Montreal, resume your ways of peace,
And you, ye watchers at Quebec, take now from fear re-
lease;
For ne'er was ampler, prouder deed, since Clovis lifted
lance,
Than that which hath been wrought to-day by these few
sons of France!

And pause in time, you Iroquois, and count your hundreds
slain,
Ere you in closing strife would cross the Frenchmen's path
again;

How many, think ye, of your braves, will hunt the fields of
blue,
If every soldier of New France dies like these twenty-
two?

GORING'S RIDE

ONE bumper, our sweethearts! then up and away!
For there's hot work to do ere the close of the day;
The train-bands of Essex are out in full force,
And Cromwell's black troopers are mustered to horse.
All round,—the King's health! for morn's breaking light,
Now up, boot and saddle! away for the fight!

What's here? A despatch! the North's up in arms!
They swarm out like bees at the sound of alarms!
Rupert's over the Humber like hawk on the wing,
And Lunsford and Astley have joined with the King;
Each turnpike from Scotland to stout Oxford town
Is clatt'ring to horse-hoofs fast galloping down!

Unfurl the old flag! It has flown for the Right
At Edge Hill, and many a tough, bloody fight;
Who'd exchange its old tears and its dingy blood-stains
For the gayest new silk the King's army retains!
And though tarnished its lustre still proudly it waves
As we dash sword in hand at the psalm-singing knaves!

Open line, you in front! thrust a torch in yon pane!
Give the churl a house-warming in high Spanish vein!
Let the jade go, you sirs! Close up the rear ranks!
You Roger and William—out on the flanks!
Noll's pets are abroad—it were best to take care
Or we'll stumble full tilt on their pikes unaware.

Eustace, ride on ahead! we are nearing the plain;
Keep a sharp look around! gag that ribald refrain!

Look to primings, my men! pass the word through the troop!
And see that each carbine hangs right of the croup
The churls if we're careless may play us a trick,
And they'll follow Noll's nose as the fiends follow Nick.

Boy, whom see you there? by St. Denis of France
The sight of a Roundhead's like prick of a lance!
What make you their colors? you rogue, look again!
Pray God it be Ludlow's or Ireton's men!
Left wheel! Line advance! Steady! Give your nags
breath,—
These foxes don't run that we hunt to the death.

Now fellow, your trumpet! a good rousing blast!
Pikes to front! Ready? DRAW! We have them at last!
Three cheers—for the Church! for the King! for the Cause!
Now down with all traitors, and up with the laws!
No quarter, my lads! Cleave the Knaves to the gorge!
Charge, Cavaliers, CHARGE! *Now for God and St. George!*

LADY MAUD

WAKE, Lady Maud! the stars grow dim, the morn in
heaven is high,
And I beneath thy lattice wait, sweetheart, to bid good-bye;
My carbine's slung my baldric fro', at side my sword is
pressed,
Thy scarf doth deck my saddle bow, thy glove swings on my
crest.
Wake, maiden, wake! the day-god's shafts o'er-slant the
upland sod,
While I beneath thy lattice wait, my dream-bound Lady
Maud.

Wake, mistress mine! the time grows short, I must with
speed away,
For Rupert's reckless cavaliers will brook no long delay;
The clarion call rings shrilly out, the silken flag floats free,
I hear the tramp and muster shout, the brandished swords
I see;
My champing charger paws the ground, he scents the war
abroad,
Yet I beneath thy lattice wait, my fair-haired Lady Maud.

Wake, lady, wake! this well may be thy gallant's last fare-
well,
For o'er the stiff-necked Commons' arms doth Victory clang
her bell;
From point to hilt my burnished blade deep red shall soon
be dyed,

For Rupert oath this day has made to humble Cromwell's
pride.
He vows the crop-eared, canting rout shall kiss this day the
rod;
Rise, rise! and look thy lattice forth, my bright-faced Lady
Maud!

Up, up! my fair one,—'tis no time to dream of song and
dance,
Thy lover now must stride a horse, and handle sword and
lance;
Nor now in sport thy sandal fan thy doting gallant strikes,
He seeks the sword-play in the van, he braves the rush of
pikes;
Ope, dear one! ope those eyes of blue that all the world doth
laud,
And shine *two* victories down the morn, my peerless Lady
Maud!

Our standard floats on Naseby heath wide o'er the king's
array,
And I and every loyal blade must meet him there this day,
And by Saint George! will they and I now ride the victor's
course,
Or, piled a rampart round him lie, o'erthrown by Crom-
well's horse.
One kiss—the last! and then farewell, and put thy trust in
God,
If ne'er on earth, we'll meet in Heaven, sweetheart, my
Lady Maud!

SONNETS

FOREWORD

SONNET, Child of Petrarch and the Lyric Muse, thou wert born in the days of Chivalry and Romance, and all thy earlier youth was touched by love. Angelo, the Immortal, found for thee a deeper note, and the magnificent Lorenzo gave thee added grace. Next, Surrey and Wyatt, twins of English rhyme, rescued thee from the neglect of Fame, and nourished thee on English ground. "The gentle Spenser loved thee," and the high-born Sidney was thy servitor.

But thy crowning glory was to be the guest of Shakespeare, the Prince of Song. He took from thee thy Italian mantle and decked thee in his own royal robes. No man shall henceforth do thee ampler honor. Under the hand of the mighty Milton thou obtained an organ tone—thy note of Reverence and Prayer. But the degenerate children of English Song abjured thee or gave but grudging habitation, until Wordsworth, Priest of Nature, ushered thee into his calm and stately cloisters. There thy plastic soul took on fresh harmonies and delights; new aspirations, fair hopes, sweet consolations and confidings. In thy turn thou becamest a teacher of men; and henceforth thou must remain the favored heir of the English Muse.

It behooves not to tell of all the illustrious masters who have taken thee to their hearts. The Old World still loves thy ordered walk, and the New has opened wide its doors and enriched thee. To each hast thou spoken in a different key, for thy nature is variant as the flowers of mountain and field, of garden and forest. Thee, dwelling in the strict bonds of rhyme, I love best of all the Children of Song, for, if thou demandest much, thy favors are bountiful to them who worthily seek thee.

But for them not of the true Brotherhood, wilt thou dig a pitfall and cover the pretender and the careless wooer with shame. Therefore, O Sonnet, may my feet tread reverently in thy service, and in the name of these Masters be all this my cherishing of thee—so shalt thou obtain the larger honor and I perchance a favor more sweet. For my offering I bespeak the good-will of all true votaries of the Muse, and of all others who worship and love her but have been holden from bringing gifts to her shrine. In their hands I leave thee, beloved Sonnet, my companion and the solace of my heart!

C. L. B.

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

I

I HAVE seen Freedom nailed upon the cross;
I have seen Truth outraged, and in that lie
A nation damned, another nation die;
A world at strife, stricken with bitter loss.
Faith's counters in a game of pitch and toss,
And ruthless Rapine with her hue and cry
Urging the dogs of war, whose victims lie
Strewing the scarp and heaping high the fosse.

And with a deep despair for this fair world
I gazed upon the blood-reek and the smoke,
Till from my lips a quivering protest broke
At all that waste of fair things, broken and hurled
Into the jaws of Moloch, and the tears
Not to be stanch'd or wiped away in years.

II

Yet midst that ruin and carnage I have seen
Honor, a falcon, rise and breast the gale;
And Fortitude expand her daring sail;
And Love, the evangel, gliding in between
The serried ranks; and Charity, in sheen
Of service white, bidding the wounded hail,
Clutching the hands of women, driven and pale,
And children, fearful-eyed, unmirthed and lean.

And out of all this hell,—this furnace flame
 Of warring nations,—I have marked thee rise,
 My Mother England, girt in shining mail,
 Thy Spenser's armed queen, and in the name
 Of thy great past look in the demon eyes
 Of Hate and make the dreadful Gorgon quail.

III

'Twas his design,—queen Mother of five free
 And stalwart nations; from whose loins have sprung
 Sons of proud pith, by mightiest minstrels sung;
 Thee to whom Earth brings tribute, and the Sea
 Fences with thy Viking liberty,—

It was his hope, the overweening Teuton, stung
 With envy—plunderer since his horde was young—
 To rape the Hesperian apples from thy tree.

Thou island Britomart, thy courage swells,
 Thy prowess strengthens as the test draws near.
 Upon thy breast the cross of service dwells;
 What foe can make my Mother England fear?
 Not he, the Outlaw, with his leash of hells;
 With murder in his heart and on his spear.

BRITAIN AND HER COLONIES

THRONED on the sunset marge of the old world,
 She sits in state, by all the new surveyed;
 The broad Atlantic at her feet is laid,
 O'er which she hath so oft her thunders hurled.
 O'er continents of virgin land unfurled,
 Far floats the Red Cross of her new crusade,
 The genius of her language, law and trade,
 Supreme where'er an ocean wave is curled!
 She reigns not conqueror only! o'er the main
 Speed forth her milder servitors of renown,
 Law, Justice, Freedom, and Commercial Faith;—
 Unlike the misruled, aliened wards of Spain,
 Her proud young statelings, all untouched by scathe,
 Are bound through love to her redoubted crown!

ENGLAND AND THE ARMADA

A CRESCENT moon in mists of steel-gray hue
 Presaging dire disaster, o'er the main
 Rode the impending puissance of Spain,
 The Invincible Armada! Rumor flew
 With thousand tongues before it; awestruck drew
 Their breaths the bodeful nations; "England, vain,"
 They cried, "to face proud Parma's hand of bane;
 Behold Sidonia's squadrons on the blue!"
 Rash doubters! throned upon her island steep
 She raised her dreadful trident; round her swarmed
 Her sea-dogs—marked their quarry; o'er the deep
 Her warlike trumpet pealed, her shout upstormed—
 "A Drake! a Raleigh!" where the blue waves sweep
 Round all her shores her dauntless spirit warmed!

BELGIUM

THE mandate of a haughty empire rang,
 "Be thou my roadway!" To the o'erweening foe
 Belgium from all her ramparts thundered, "No!"
 And soon across her fields the bullets sang.
 On your devotion, Liège, the issues hang
 Of Europe's fate! before your walls are low
 Forth to the front the Gallic legions flow,
 And England rouses to your cannon's clang.

Small among nations,—stout and high of heart;
 Nor last upon the honored scroll of fame.
 Even Cæsar feared your prowess; Charles the Bold
 Respected you alone; the Spaniards' art
 And arms were shriveled on your battle flame,
 And still your ancient war-shield you uphold.

JAPAN

THE war clouds lower, are riven—and high in air
 Burns the far portent of the Rising Sun;
 Late promise of an empire long begun,
 Japan, whom Fate hath pledged, Japan the Fair!
 The lotus wreath still clinging to her hair,
 Yet in her hand the sword and smoking gun,
 While from her feet the western wolves have run,
 And from his prey crawls off the crippled Bear.

The Orient queen, flower-robed and crowned with arts—
 Nippon, the nurse of chivalry and dreams,
 Yet dread in battle. From his roadstead starts
 Togo the Watcher, while his banner streams
 Defiance. When those thunders die away
 Where are his foes? Answer, ye waves at play!

MONTENEGRO

THE thunders of five stormy centuries broke
 Full on thy mountain! Frank and Ottomite
 Brested in vain that black, redoubted height;
 Vainly they strove to bend thee to their yoke.
 Down those ravines, steaming with musket smoke,
 Thy cliff-reared heroes drove their hosts in flight,
 While that stern Amurath, the Christian's blight,
 Fled headlong from their swift avenging stroke.

Still, Tsernagora, stand and front the world
 As when, wide-rolled, the Moslem breakers swept
 Around thy rock of refuge;—Freedom there
 Still keeps her ancient Slavic flag unfurled—
 Thy deeds unfold thy passion; still are kept
 Faith unto death and hearts that all things dare.

SWITZERLAND

AMIDST the sharp-clawed European kites,
 Eager to flesh their ruthless beaks with prey,
 And watchful where to strike and when to slay,
 This brood of falcons, nested on the heights,
 Nursed their staunch wings of freedom; days and nights
 For centuries they faced their foes—yes, they
 Have held their cloud-wrapped eyrie to this day,
 Inviolatè, bounded by their ancient rights.

The homes of Switzers! built too firm and free
 And near to Heaven to brook the rule of kings,
 Though kings were emperors; let the invader be
 Howe'er so mighty, forth to oppose him springs
 The hardy patriot, and each rock and tree
 Becomes an altar whereto Freedom clings!

HOLLAND

RESCUED, half-drowned, from surly Neptune's hold,
 Whose white-maned steeds, still foiled, incessant leap
 Athwart the bulwarks of thy sunken keep,—
 With smouldering hearts, although thy skies be cold;
 Mother of crafts, with trading manifold,
 Yet dread to war with as in Cæsar's day,—
 Holland, no grind of traffic scours away
 The gravings of thy struggle stern and bold.

For those are records, wrought within thy soul,—
 Freedom's eternal dower! The Spaniard saw
 Thee, waif of nations, to thy succor draw
 The foe that wasted thee yet kept thee free;
 Than brook his rule above thy homes might roll
 The desolating chariots of the sea!

A WARNING TO THE KAISER

AY, nurse thy pride and vaunt thee of thy state,
 O purple-robed Belshazzar! pour the wine
 And pledge thy fortune! let the cressets shine!
 Behold thy walls and watchmen mock at fate!
 Do not thy guards in proof around thee wait?
 Where, coward, fails thy majesty divine?
 What! thy soothsayers cannot read the sign?
Thou'rt wanting—lo, the Mede is at thy gate!

Freedom, for every pang thy votaries feel
 Thy retribution grows! thy way is long
 And thou far patient, but thy hand of steel
 'When once 'tis closed about the throat of wrong
 No power can loosen;—Tyranny is strong,
 But thou wilt break him on his own red wheel!

THE LIGHTED LIBERTY

(Viewed from Brooklyn Bridge)

ABOVE the glow-worm glimmering of the town,
 Beneath Heaven's dusky vault all spangled wide,
 The spider-latticed cables curve beside
 The spectral pillars to the Bridge's crown.
 'Midst the night-folded stillness looking down,
 Where huge, mysterious, dim-drawn phantoms glide
 Like shadow towers that swim the darkened tide
 Of some fantastic dream of old renown—
 I stand and gaze where, an embattled star,
 Dwarfing the ruddy sparks on shore and sea,
 One pure and constant beacon gleams afar,
 The flame that led us, cheered us, kept us free;
 Our lamp in peace, our fiery guide in war;
 The outflung torch of august Liberty!

THE HALF-CENTURY REUNION AT
GETTYSBURG

HERE rolled the iron tempest up the height,
 And here fell soldiers thick as new-mown hay;
 Three days the smoke of thundering battle lay
 Along these ridges; each succeeding night
 Fresh heaps of slaughtered forms appalled the sight
 Of torchmen on their rounds; till drew away
 The Southron; then the uncrowded face of day
 Stared at the dreadful trophies of the fight.

Here Reynolds fell; there Armitage went down,
 With Pickett charging 'neath the thunder pall.
 'Twas fifty years ago;—the old renown
 Stands regnant. Peace her trophies brings to all
 Those sons surviving;—mark the olive crown
 For laurel, brothers of the bugle call!

EVENING AT CITY POINT, JAMES RIVER,
1890

How peaceful is the scene! the unshrouded moon
 Casts benediction o'er the daylight's grave.
 Scarce doth a vesper breathe, a ripple lave;
 Earth in her green, voluptuous garb of June,
 Faint o'er the verges of the wide lagoon,
 Exhales the breath of flowers; the azure wave
 Lies bright and steadfast as a crystal pave,
 Yea, even men's souls seem with this rest in tune.

Yet here, too, passion raged; here once the roar
 Of mortars stunned the drowsy ear of night;
 Thundered the battery—screamed the hurtling shell;
 Here smoke and havoc blackened wide the shore;
 This deep floor shook beneath the shock of fight,
 And men were demons,—this fair calm a hell!

CHARLOTTE CORDAY

THAT gentle, dark-haired maiden—can it be—
 Hounded with curses by the wolfish throng
 Of libertine Paris? What hath been her wrong?
 The Judith with her blood-bathed dagger see!
 Oh, how her eyes burn deep with ecstasy!
 "For love of France"! Why bind the cruel thong
 About her tender wrists? Your hands are strong;
 Have pity—Heaven's pure sacrifice is she!

Ah, friends, how young and beautiful! Love's part
 In her flames on life's altar; innocent-wise
 And proudly-sweet she stands; as on the cart
 She rolls to death she lifts her dawn-bright eyes
 And views with welcoming the kind Sunrise
 That comes to shrine her in its deathless heart!

SHAKESPEARE

ONLY to name thee is to bring thy spell!
And when I drain the intoxicating bowl
Of thy rapt passion, lo, that sweet control
Makes free my heart and burdens it as well.
At times thy voice breathes Orpheus' plaintive shell;
At times Jove's thunder, echoing pole to pole;
Again thou dost Apollo's lyre control,
Or Pan's sweet pipe, or Mars' stern trumpet swell.

In thee all life grows regnant; thy proud range
Of passion runs its gamut forth to God.
Thine is a world of beauty's constant change,
Sunrise and sunset, star and flowering sod.
Yet with dim vistas terrible and strange,
Into whose depths no one but thou hast trod!

LINCOLN

FOUR square he stood—and on all sides a man.
The dust of party strife has fallen away
And shaped this figure 'gainst the light of day,
Built on the rugged, broad Cromwellian plan.
Throughout the state his pregnant message ran,
"For, with and by the People"—and that ray
Of counsel o'er our destinies holds sway,
An earth to Heaven irradiating span.

He loved, toiled, fought and conquered; all the while
The brother murder madness bowed him down.
His mirth saturnine eased the iron crown
Of public service; with no plaint or guile
He faced the age, filled wide with his renown;
And foiled blind hate with calmness and a smile.

ALFRED AND CHARLEMAGNE

TWIN stars of that long twilight! England, thine,
 One, and thine, France, the other; History
 Records no ampler names; and we who see
 Statecraft with glittering hook and flimsy line
 And specious bait of protestations fine
 Catching its gudgeons, and the sweaty crowd
 Trafficked and trampled by Wealth evil-browed,
 Might well for such stout, simple rule repine.

Oh, English Alfred, wert thou living now,
 How would they vex at times thy steadfast mind,
 These Danes of politicians! How thy brow,
 Truth-teller, oft would darken! by the blind,
 Corrupt, and vaunting ring-rule of to-day,
 How grandly stands thy strong, old, earnest sway!

CROMWELL

Ay, call him a usurper—what you will—
 But, tyrant, never! for no vengeful frown
 Clouded the brow of the imperial clown;
 Who, erring oft, in malice wrought no ill.
 His hand was hard, yet England loved him still,
 So like his bride he held her; while Renown
 Gave him her blood-sprent amaranthine crown,
 And Prescience did with might his councils fill.

Nations revered or feared him;—pale alarm,
 Stretched from the cloister to the Papal throne;
 The oceans then were England's and his own;
 France, Holland, Spain, and Algiers felt his arm;
 Broadcast by every wind his fame was blown;
 And Freedom, Fate, dwelt in that dreadful charm!

ABDUL HAMID, THE "SHADOW OF GOD"

I SEE in the seraglio's secret hold
 A venomed wretch, alone, in guarded state,
 While sexless murderers his caprices wait,
 Their service bought with blows and blood-stained gold;
 And thru the casement lattice come, deep-rolled,
 Mutterings and curses, until urged by hate
 The groundswell of sedition floods his gate;
 The Giaours' armed hand grows daily bold.

The ghosts of martyred Christians haunt his sleep;
 The black assassin thru his nightmare strays;
 He hears the women scream, the children weep;
 The Crescent dewed with gore appals his gaze;
 "Allah is Great! the Shepherd loves his sheep!"
 For him Hell yawns and all her pits upblaze!

GARIBALDI

THE child-sweet southern spirit! how it shone
 In thee, blithe player of war's desperate game!
 O'er Piedmont's venturous shield her sword became
 In thy swift hand a meteor, flashed a dawn,
 A herald streak of noontide! Thou art gone
 From earth, but thy unmatched heroic name
 Is zenith star in thy fair country's fame,
 The topmost jewel round her forehead drawn.

Freedom's bold knight—she her resistless art
 Taught thee, her lion will; opposing odds
 But swelled thy triumph; like an antique god's
 Thy soul unstintedly played out its part;
 No more, Italia, bow to Europe's rods,
 His name upon thy lips, within thy heart!

SALVINI

I SAW him once—he was that tortured Moor
 Whom Shakespeare limned with his earth-startling pen;
 An awe-inspiring figure to one's ken,
 Whose suffering scarce could lengthen and endure.
 Maddened and bending to Iago's lure,
 Yet noble thru his frenzy; of all men
 Most thwarted and despairing; greatest when
 He made the vain heart-breaking murder sure.

Sublime concept—that can so shake the soul
 With mimic thunder that the grave has stilled.
 Even now those rhythmic imprecations roll
 Thru memory till the heart of mind is chilled.
 Art has no ampler triumph—that takes toll
 Of feeling where no sense can shape or build.

OTHELLO

ALAS, for love unwise that loves too well!
 She was the queen of thy most loyal heart;
 Dark Intrigue on thy trusting spirit fell,
 And Jealousy thrust deep her poisoned dart.
 Honor and Pride were throned midst thy desires.
 Honor and Pride both lost their sovereignty;
 Upon their altars flamed Revenge's fires;
 Fate to the Furies turned thy destiny.
 The greatness of thy Faith was made its loss;
 The merit of thy Love was found its blame;
 Foul Murder bore a sacrificial cross;
 Rash Retribution stood in Justice' name;
 These broke thy heart, thou could'st not choose but die,
 Too great for life with Crime for life's ally.

IRVING

I SAW him last as Shylock—time had then
 Mellowed his art and furnished the sublime
 To round his action; 'twas his later prime,
 The most impressive presence among men.
 As in a herd of deer a stag of ten
 He towered above his fellows; after time
 Never may see again such wondrous climb
 Toward the ideal in the craftsman's ken.

Shylock has passed with him—save in thy page,
 O Shakespeare! he has vanished from our view.
 That father love, that avarice, pride and rage,
 That hate and cunning, no one may renew;
 He was not all of genius, but a mage
 So potent, doubting were not wise nor true.

BOOTH

THE poetry of action claimed its king;—
 The realm of rhythm knew its overlord;—
 He *was* the Dane—his foot upon the board
 Fell with the tread of fate,—his soul a-swing
 'Twi'x doubt and certainty; Revenge's wing
 Sweeping him on and yet to qualms restored;
 Irresolute to the last; then with his sword
 Cutting the snarl of Circumstance's string.

The impress of that scene is with me still;
 The dim-lit chamber and the mother's tears;
 The ghostly figure, towering and chill;
 The prince's courage shining thru his fears;
 The grace of movement, the upsoaring will,
 Abide and strengthen thru the passing years.

ON READING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
BENVENUTO CELLINI

WITH swagger and with cloak about him caught,
Here view the vain, vindictive Florentine;
Clothed with an artist spirit proud and keen,
Which through a rapt and fiery passion wrought
Works of undying beauty, and so bought
The world's allegiance; bringing from that scene
Of struggle purity out of ways unclean,
That spirit of art for whose uplift he fought.

Cellini, thy no less immortal book
Lays like a scalpel bare the form of man,
That inner frame, the soul. Through all thy time,
Bloody and turbulent, thou didst not brook
One faltering of thy hand, while thou didst plan
Thy life-work flowering to its princely prime.

JOHN HENRY BONER

I KNEW him well, the gentle pensive soul
Death had untimely marked; and in his eye
The pathos of the doomed that to the sky
Lifts a long hope disease may not control.
Unto the warm, bright South his heart was whole;
Far from the whispering pines that wooed his sigh,
He trod life's fettered round, nor made reply
To the rude fevered strife that claimed its dole.
He passed beyond my ken, yet left behind
The lingering memory cadence of his voice,
And of his verse, so passion souled and kind.
Alas, the first is soundless, though the choice
Gift of his song survives, and in my mind
And heart it echoes, "mourn not but rejoice."

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Ay, let them go! too long they've held at bay
 Hedged in by precedent the people's right.
 Once they were bold to quell a tyrant's might;
 They stood a mail-clad rampart in their day
 'Gainst foreign thralldom; *those* have passed away
 Like stars that vanish in the dawning light.
 Now outworn rule and old observance trite
 With cankering blight and poison shadow sway
 Over the realm of England—o'er the height
 Of Time's new mason-work those branches gray,
 Moss-grown, decrepit, weave a creaking night
 Of old obstructions; rise, let in the ray
 Young heart of English Freedom! deep then bite
 Thine axe, Democracy! to the trunk's base lay
 And clear the sapless dotage from your sight!

DON QUIXOTE

GAUNT, rueful knight, on raw-boned, shambling hack,
 Thy battered morion, shield and rusty spear
 Jog ever down the road in strange career,
 Both tears and laughter following on thy track;
 Stout Sancho hard behind, whose leathern back
 Is curved in clownish sufferance; mutual cheer
 The quest beguiling, as, devoid of fear,
 Thou spurrest to rid the world of rogues, alack!

Despite fantastic creed and addled pate,
 Of awkward arms and weight of creaking steel,
 Nobility is thine;—the high estate
 That arms knights-errant for all human weal.
 How rare, La Mancha, grow such souls of late;
 Dear foiled enthusiast, teach our hearts to feel!

TO THE MOON-FLOWER

PALE climbing disk, who dost lone vigil keep
 When all the flower-heads droop in drowsy swoon;
 When lily bells fold to the zephyr's tune,
 And wearied bees are lapped in sugared sleep;
 What secret hope is thine? What purpose deep?
 Art thou enamoured of the siren moon
 That thus thy white face from the god of noon
 Thou coverest, while his chariot rounds the steep?

Poor, frail Endymion! know her lustre fine
 Is but the cold, reflected majesty
 That clothes the great sun's regent—borrowed shine
 Of Him who yields restricted ministry,
 Thy bright creator; he did ne'er design
 The proud, false queen should fealty claim of thee!

THE CONDOR

HIGH above clouds and mountains, through thin air
 Prone on his waving vans he rushing flies;
 The great dread corsair admiral of the skies,
 For prey and plunder ravening everywhere.
 The sun doth not so pitilessly stare
 As those red eye-balls glare with fierce surmise;
 He stoops, but only to obtain a prize,—
 The struggling victim that his talons bear.

Heroic strength and lawless majesty
 Dowering a ruthless vulture! born to slay,
 And rob the peaceful flocks of their increase;
 He shrinks at naught, untamed as he is free.
 He holds his stern and unremorseful way,
 And screams defiant protest against Peace!

HONOR AND FAME

HONOR, the virgin knight, bright vigil keeps;
May Heaven assoil him and prevent him blame!
While Fame, the pander, rides in Honor's name,
In Honor's mail and his fair guerdon reaps.
Honor upon his arms securely sleeps,
While midnight phantoms shake the soul of Fame.
Honor's clear saintly eyes are void of shame;
Fame his misdeeds now vaunteth and now weeps.

These ever cross each other in the field,
Supposed allies; yet Honor holds in scorn
The boaster, Fame, and when he winds his horn
Fame shrinks beneath his gaudy, glistering shield.
For Honor's titles stand secure and broad,
And on his breast he wears the cross of God.

LOVE AND TRUTH

LOVE's rosy robe is wrought with Truth's design,
And Truth's white brows by Love are garlanded;
Blindfolded Love by clear-eyed Truth is led,
And Truth austere smiles oft on Love benign.
While Love stands strong Truth doth not fret nor pine;
While Truth holds firm Love fears no path to tread,
But wears the amaranth on his royal head,
And his fair hands bear clusters of the vine.
These are the twain that ever walk the earth
With offerings rich and greetings manifold;
These the proud sponsors for the sons of Worth
Who curb the traitor, Self, cruel and cold;
Yea, without them no gracious thing hath birth;
And Heaven by their high counsels is controlled.

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

KNOWLEDGE the Proud sits oft in Wisdom's seat,
 With robe and sceptre, crown and orb of power;
 While Wisdom wanders lone thru sun and shower
 With few to grant her shelter or to eat.
 Yet to proved souls is Wisdom Paraclete;
 Her heart is pure, her mind blooms like a flower;
 And quietly she waiteth for that hour
 When she shall reign with Knowledge at her feet.

Wisdom hath light within;—few recognize
 Whence comes that smile, the sweetener of pain;
 Or how the yearning of those patient eyes
 Works all unseen like fertilizing rain;
 Knowledge is moon-bright, hosts her rule obey,—
 But Wisdom turns the world and leads the day.

PEACE

PEACE—what is peace? Not this—to dwell secure,
 A moth upon the downy edge of time,
 Wasting in careless ease life's summer prime,
 While others fight the battle and endure.
 Ah, no! this is the selfish devil's lure,
 A pinchbeck peace that hath no ringing chime;
 Peace knows no earthly price, no age or clime,
 But comes unasked to upright hearts and pure.

No! war is the world's province—stress and strife
 And strenuous toil that never quits the field
 'Till Death reaps in his harvest; 'tis in pain
 That Progress brings her offspring into life;
 Peace hath no quality that earth doth yield—
 It comes from God and goes to God again.

FORTITUDE

THAT is not failure, rightly understood,
 Though lacking furtherance, when we've wrought
 our best;

If we have put our manhood to the test
 Nor found it wanting; if we, unsubdued,
 Suffer defeat, we have but taken food
 And water to our souls; shall be twice blest;
 Stronger in heart, not shrunken in the breast,
 Stamping Faith's signet on the hardening mood.

Thus did Coligny, still defeated, rise
 Proudly unconquered; thus did Alfred crown
 Constancy with success; thwarted likewise
 Columbus reached the summit of renown;
 Thus Washington opposed the troops of George,
 Undaunted, midst the snows of Valley Forge.

THE UNSEEN WORLD

THE spirits of the dead are with us still;
 Part of our being, instinct to our life,
 Familiars light and dark; all space is rife
 With influences that mould our plastic will,
 Unseen yet felt, unknown yet guessed at, till
 Death plucks away the mask of flesh, or strife
 Of soul wears out the body as a knife
 Frets thru its sheath then feels a naked thrill.

For nature wars within us with a sense
 Mysterious, conjoined, yet not of her,
 Subduing yet subdued; but when the tense
 Bond of their union slackens, then the whirr
 Of the soul's wings is heard, our essence soars
 Transfigured, lighted from the eternal shores.

HUMANITAS

THOUGH faith in heaven be gone, not so in man;
 Nor is God wanting, though we know him not.
 If our primeval visions be forgot,
 We still weave dreams though on a saner plan.
 If once again we turn to reverence Pan,
 Love none the less has angels, and I wot,
 That should this life be all our bound and lot,
 Hearts still will yearn as erst when faith began.

Hearts will o'erflow with larger, sweeter thought;
 Hands will uncloseth and close in brotherhood;
 Blood will not flow for naught or worse than naught;
 Man will know man and life be understood;
 Religion's chain of orient pearls be brought
 To wreath the shrine of Nature's holyrood.

PERSONALITY

I AM not what I seem, nor any two
 See me alike or as myself I see;
 Nor does myself with my own self agree,
 But e'er in counterfeit myself I view;
 Ay, even to myself I stand untrue;
 Some see a ghost and think that ghost is me;
 And when they turn a searchlight on I flee
 Into that self whence all my shadows grew.

For Nature doth in me exhaust her arts
 And weave her mysteries beyond human ken;
 For my true self is made of many parts;
 In some one part I touch my fellowmen;
 Yet I, unknown, unknowing other hearts,
 Am but the dream life varies o'er again.

DUTY

I HAVE pledged life, not for itself alone,
Nor for the happiness or renown it brings,
Nor wealth, nor power, nor beauty, nor the wings
Of enterprise, nor gay-browed Pleasure's tone.
I have pledged life that ere my span be flown
I might be known as one who earnest sings
Of faith and love, of high and noble things,
Unto the youth the coming age shall own.

Yet I am little better than a voice
Heard daily in the market-place whom men
List idly and 'turn upon their way again;
But on my spirit there is laid this choice
Of service; let me do my duty then
And let me in my duty's path rejoice.

SCIENCE

I SAW the spangled curtain of the night
Drawn backward by the radiant hand of day,
Till like to streams of molten silver lay
The water courses; soon wide grew the light
Across the misty valleys; bathed each height
And hoary mountain in its kindling ray,
And gave o'er wakened earth a newer sway
To life, a new enfranchisement to sight.

So Science, not with miscalled wings of lead,
Nor harpy-like, confounding—but with plumes
All lustred with the rays of morning's prime,
Dawns a benignant goddess;—on her head
The amaranth of new faith and knowledge blooms;
And through her soul and vision wake sublime.

THE TIDE OF TIME

BORN out of earthquake and the tempest's night
 I saw a mighty wave; and tossed like straw,
 Swam on its crest the drift of years; its maw
 Crowns, coronets, mitres, swords, gulped down from sight;
 And momentarily, from that long scarf of white
 A roaring came as of voices, and great awe
 Fell on me, and I heard a cry, "Old law
 Is dead, is dead! We live in the new light!"

Still onward surged the wave, until the sky
 Rent suddenly, and Heaven's prismic bow was cast
 Across the waters; the contention vast
 Stood hushed, all still the swollen flood did lie;
 I heard a trumpet voice, that cried, "At last!"
 And lo, a dove with green palm branch swept by.

DEATH

DREAD foe to life, thou bearer of the seal
 Of mystery and fate, I argue nought
 Against thee nor repine that Joy and Thought
 Must reach thee in the round of Fortune's wheel;
 For thy domain brings rest; to thy dread steel
 Are dragged Time's favors; prince and priest are brought
 To the one rôle with knave and drudge and wrought
 Into the framework of the common-weal.

Yet Genius arms against thee—ceaseless toils
 The free, unquenchable spirit of the Lamp;
 Revives the fainting and the dead assoils;
 Even where thy banners surge, thy legions tramp,
 Art, life's proud Avatar, thy purpose foils,
 While Love, the evangel, braves thee in thy camp.

THE CLOSING WALLS

FEW live the truth,—in fortune few are free,
 And fewer still in spirit. We but wear
 The cap and badge of worldly, servile care,
 And catch faint glimpse of higher destiny.
 God help us! what we would we may not be;
 Our hearts, like opening flowers were pure and fair;
 Now lords are we of spirits starved and bare,
 We live no wiser for the ills we see.

Oh, deadly blight of soul! the world doth gain
 Upon us daily, and sweet Nature's voice
 Is heard no more or faintly; we but strain
 To play the rôle of petty Cæsars; choice
 Is ever leagued with interest, and we sneer
 Across the grave of what our youth held dear.

LIFE'S VOYAGE

FATE drives me forth upon an unknown sea—
 Ever I view the shoals that round me lie.
 Fond youth, adieu! Come, manhood, strong and free,
 Courage and purpose are the oars I ply.
 My sunny morning dreams, I pass them by;
 All gray the noon-tide clouds that hem me round;
 I hear afar the curlew's woeful cry,
 What care I if my boat is staunch and sound.
 Better to sink, than in sad soul profound
 To drive my bark amidst embaying cares;
 Better the tempest and the gaping wound
 Than stranded log-like on the world's affairs;
 Spread sail, and fly the banner from the truck—
 The voyage is on, bold heart, now try your luck!

THE RETURN

ONCE more the green turf bends beneath my feet;
 The brooding silence of the woods sifts down
 Across my spirit; gone the dusty town,
 The noise and fretful fever of the street.
 Here spreads the balm of Nature, soothful, sweet;
 No Timon's curse comes here, no Cæsar's frown;
 Breaks not the clangorous strife of sword or gown;
 Only the soft breeze and the birds' "weet, weet!"

I throw aside life's sombre cloak of care;
 Good-bye, Convention! Hope renew thy theme!
 Take, Mother, back thy world-worn, wayward child;
 The soul grows rhythmic in this charmed air.
 The floweret's zest is mine, the woodland's dream,—
 And with all life again I'm reconciled!

GRAND MANAN

A HUGE, black fort of Neptune,—'gainst the sky
 It heaves its bastion through cold Fundy's pall,
 Scoured by a million winters; round it brawl
 The hoarse-tongued breakers; there long-trailing fly
 The West-wind's rainy streamers; there untie
 Their hair the storm's shrill mænads; down its wall
 The lightning's jagged javelins carve and scrawl
 Jove's words as on the gust they thunder by.

The gull screams wheeling o'er it—round it dives
 The deep, dark-green abyss; when days are fair
 The dingy fisher skiffs their lines unreel
 Close to the base; but woe to him who drives
 Blind on in storm; there hope hath no appeal—
 The monster's sides stand steep as man's despair!

THE WATER LILY

I

GEMMING the bosom of thy mother lake,
Swayed to and fro through morning's zephyr hours,
Or ripple-rocked to sleep as evening lowers,
Folded until the sun's bright javelins shake
Grey riot to heart of darkness—thou dost break,
Wooping all hearts that haunt thy reedy bowers,
Light as blown foam, the Nereid of the flowers,
And virgin-pure for thine own beauty's sake.

Pale lovely blossoms! as my rowboat slides
Among your level targes floating green,
Spreading a wind-swept carpet o'er the waves,
Upon my sense your fragrant whiteness glides
With ravishment; are ye the souls all clean
Of fair frail girls who sleep in watery graves?

II

No, we are Daylight's children—we are born
From out the ooze where lurks the water-snake,
And where the perch and minnow harbor make,—
White as the blest of Resurrection Morn.
When from our watery cradles we are torn
We droop with grief—in sweet complaining break,
And fading die; we, vestals of the lake,
Give praise to Him who doth our forms adorn.

We envy no one's wealth; we dwell alone,
Unthought of by our sisters of the plain;
Ever we in our peaceful passion lie,
Stars of the light-time, gazing up the sky
As long as Day's fond glance is on us thrown—
Then sleeping, dream that he will come again!

SPRING MORNING

ROUGH hearted Winter yields his realm to Spring,
 His diamond crown and ermine stained in flight.
 Lo, Spring hath ta'en the valleys! With delight
 She winds her echoing horn; on home-bound wing
 The truant birds flock to her welcoming;
 O'er earth her emerald cloak, embroidered bright,
 She flings; she doth the tongue-tied brooks invite
 To gossip while the early zephyrs sing.

Now red-cheeked Morn in saffron vest, a-field,
 Trips down the hills and wakes the drowsy swains;
 The Earth hath washed her morning face with rains;
 The Buttercup her golden chalice rears
 To dews; the Daisy's gold-bossed, silver shield
 Gleams gaily, buttressed by a sheaf of spears!

SUMMER NIGHT IN THE COUNTRY

THERE is a veiled quiet in this night;
 A few faint stars peer through the curtain dun,
 Nor hath the stately moon usurped the sun,
 Who to the under world transfers his right.
 The drowsy shadows thicken o'er my sight
 Blotting the landscape out; the dark close-spun,
 Drips dews unseen, and now clear chiming run
 The pebbled brooks from yon fir-crested height.

The winds lie dead asleep upon the wold,
 Tired with their wandering. Hist! one tinkling bell
 From a nigh pasture breaks the rhythméd spell
 Then leaves the stillness deeper;—a vapor rolled
 From off the mountain like a ghost doth glide
 Athwart the darkness—there is nought beside!

THE BATHER *

IN musing mood, listless and happy eyed,
She sits upon the green bank of a stream,
Wrapped in a veiled sun's summer woodland dream,
While round her feet start windflowers purple-pied,
And many a wilding shrub springs free beside
Her sweet nude limbs, which in the sunlight gleam
With maiden majesty, as they might seem
Those of a forest nymph, half-deified.

O friend, in her the creature of thy hand,
I view the poet painter's loving task,
That nothing doth of lust or traffic ask,
And only speaks to brethren of the Band,
The few who feel and, feeling, understand,
And view the burning soul behind the mask.

SUMMER NOON

A NOONTIDE languor melts into the air;
The brook beneath my feet is keeping tune
Unto the lazy breezes' dreamy rune;
The thrifty bees are humming everywhere;
The blackbird whistles blithe and debonair;
Around me is the varied, vivid June
Of opulent Summer with her pleasant croon,
Bathing the lea side with its mellow glare.

Away, dull care—join soul in Nature's mirth!
The favor of this pulsing morn is thine.
See all the fallows drest in gala trim!
Down such a mead Silenus with his girth
Of vine leaves passed, his visage stained with wine,
While flower-crowned maidens trolled the Bacchic hymn.

* To Warren Davis on his gift of the picture to the author.

TO A FRIEND

DEAR friend, long distant, oft my thought to you
 Looks forth as mariner to the Northern Star;
 For you have stedfast shining, comrade true,
 That night but brightens, distance cannot mar.
 And I have faith, what griefs to leeward lie,
 Or head-winds take aback my steady sail,
 Or calumny o'er-cloud the smiling sky,
 Your cheer, accord, and favor will not fail.
 True fellowship hath a touch most wondrous fine,
 A voice that strikes no dull material ear,
 A gaze that draws the soul; no pinchbeck shine,
 No counterfeit custom, passes current here;
 For he hath fortune, beyond need to spend,
 Who makes his heart the treasury of his friend.

LOVE

LOVE frees us from ourselves yet makes us slaves;
 He moves our souls yet gives us fixed intent;
 He whelms us like a barque o'ercome with waves,
 Then towards the stars he lifts us, eminent.
 Before his shrine the haughtiest crests are bent,
 And oft he clothes the clown with princely rage;
 He hath a will brooks no arbitrament,
 Yet hath he patience of a meagre wage.
 His sweetest pleasures ever are kin to pain;
 His choicest blessings oft bring direst curse;
 Man would lose all for Love and count it gain,
 Though howsoe'er a niggard of his purse;—
 Thus in Love's quiver all contention lies
 Twixt good and ill—his shafts are women's eyes!

THE CONJUNCTION OF LOVE

LIKE as two waves, by spheric pulses driven,
 Rolling from Orient and from Occident,
 Meet in mid-sea beneath the arch of Heaven
 And forthwith mingling are forever blent—
 So may two souls, though Nature at beginning
 Long from sweet converse sundered them afar,
 Yet fatefully their destined courses winning,
 Meet and unite beneath Love's fixèd star;—
 For come all winds and sweep the earth-round ocean,
 Bearing the thunderbolt within its breast,
 Till the lashed deep is fevered to commotion,
 Making his moan and never finding rest,—
 Yet these two souls once met can never part,
 For mind hath wed with mind and heart with heart!

THE SECURITY OF LOVE

THERE bides no bulwark against adverse fate
 Save in the shield and helm of faithful love;
 With them a man, though shaken, towers above
 The throng, investured with that proud estate.
 The hell-born host will shun such brow sedate,
 Nor e'er attempt that heart's rich treasure trove;
 For, like to Noah's olive-bearing dove,
 The promise fails not nor the hopes abate.

For mutual strength o'er-tops the mutual need;
 And mutual faith o'er-crowns the mutual fear;
 And mutual toil shall earn the double meed,
 And mutual hope bring forth unchanging cheer;
 For in thy love I must prove all indeed,
 While in my love thy favor grows not sere.

THE FORTITUDE OF LOVE

SWEETHEART, what storms may come (and not a few
 May dark our lives' horizon), yet I know,
 Clasped hand in hand, come all the winds that blow,
 We shall not blench but front them, for we two
 Sail not for pleasure of the public view
 Through shallow bays, but to the ocean go
 Where the skies ring the sea, the deep tides flow,
 And lay our course by one clear star and true.

And round our course the ocean bird shall scream,
 The harbinger of faith, against the gale;
 Yea, every sea-mew shall take up the tale
 And bear it to the ocean's fartherest gleam,
 How our two hearts have trimmed the tautest sail
 That ever held the love-winds o'er the beam.

THE FAVOR OF LOVE

To me hath Heaven given a work for doing,
 I may not shirk it or I wreck my life;
 All slothful instincts to my nature suing
 Wage with my high intent a civil strife.
 My day is overcast nor can I see
 The path to lead me up the steep incline;
 And all the summit's wrapped in mystery;
 Alone must bear the brunt, this heart of mine.
 Yet not alone—for love is at my side
 To cheer me through the dark and devious way;
 I can bear all if love with me abide,
 Its patient hope adorns life's toilsome day;
 For of my life is love the treasure trove;
 For love is life, and life to me is love.

THE QUALITY OF LOVE

MY love is like a river still and deep,
 Not as a swollen torrent rushing strong;
 Round tender memories its lingerings creep,
 They bear a burden of bright hopes along;
 Its banks are broidered o'er with flowers of song;
 Its depths reflect the rainbow tinted skies;
 Its beauteous landscape doth to me belong;
 Intrudes no poacher with unhallowed eyes.
 And as I float upon its limpid breast,
 I near the confluent wave of my desires,
 On which the darling of my heart doth rest,
 To whom the manhood of my hope aspires;
 And lest rogue Fancy should a recreant prove,
 I'll drown him in the deepest depths of love.

DEVOTION OF LOVE

WHENE'ER I read the mighty bards of old
 Where mortal love weds immortality,
 I would as high thy own dear image hold
 That after time thine heir through me might be.
 I first would laud thy passion pure and free,
 Thy sweetness next that grudgeth not its dole,
 Thy grace which charms all life, thy constancy,
 Thy beauty last which mirrors all thy soul.

For half my heaven is born in thy bright eyes,
 Those twins of deep, dark splendor, kind and true.
 My wintry care in genial summer dies
 When thy full sun of beauty breaks anew.
 Even Death itself would one last sweetness be
 If I, in dying, could but die for thee!

IMMORTALITY OF LOVE

WHEN you and I commingled are with dust,
 Nor one survive who knew our forms in life—
 When we have crossed beyond the bounds of strife,
 Nor may one say, "I found them kind or just";
 Then will the leafage of our love, I trust,
 Bloom in this verse and in true hearts grow rife,
 O maiden, sweetener of the name of wife,
 A star whose shine no smirch of time may rust.

Your life thru me may best expression find;
 And I in you best prove what life is worth;
 For while I sing you queen of womankind,
 Each lover there will read his own love's birth.
 Ay, we in lovers' hearts shall live enshrined;
 I for my song—you as the Flower of earth.

CONSTANCY

CONSTANT to thee! ay, while these lips take breath,
 Or while the heart throbs to its spoken vow!
 Constant to thee! even beyond Time and Death,
 And when the laurel withers from my brow!
 Yes, I am thine! for I of truth am nought
 Unless I find my complement in thee;
 Then why should I indulge a wayward thought?
 I lose myself when I inconstant be.
 For Constancy is the first-loved of Heaven,
 Twin sister of the anchor-maiden, Hope;
 Then let me in thy gracious heart be shriven,
 Though Fancy wander with the world for scope;
 If blue-eyed Faith gave birth to Constancy,
 Then am I constant, who keep faith in thee!

TO _____

Ay, more than when in blush of girlhood's bloom;
 The world a fairyland around thee lying,
 And every sylph of sun-dyed fancy flying
 Between thee and the nearby cypress gloom,
 With Innocence thy handmaid, Joy thy groom,
 Ere Hope had strayed and Faith had no denying,
 When only thy Ideal taught thee sighing,
 And only Pity led thee to the tomb—
 I love thee—for the chrism of earthly pain
 That robbed thee of thy gayness, yet did thrill
 Thy rarer sensibilities, made plain
 The higher grace of life with lowlier will;
 The lily is sweeter for the cloud and rain,
 And care and grief have left thee lovelier still!

TO _____

WHEN I reflect that this warm heart of mine
 Must chill, fail, wither and to dust decay,
 And I no more shall view the face of day,
 Nor drink again the air of Spring like wine,
 Nor hear the birds their matin loves refine,
 When all my memory is a mouldered bay,
 And I have mingled with the shadows gray
 That throng beyond the senses' border line;—
 Then when I think of all thou bringst to me,
 Fresh pleasures of the Spring or music's voice;
 Thou of sweet shade and fruitage, my palm tree
 In this parched desert—thou my only choice
 In the whole world of women—heart and breath
 Grow sorrowful at wasteful, envious Death.

THE IDEAL

I

I HAD a vision of a fair maid's face;
 A dream of brook-brown eyes and midnight hair,
 Of swan-like neck and breast, the queenly air
 Of Dian, full accoutred for the chase;
 Thus Fancy led her radiant forth from space,
 All sweet and stately, beauteous, kind, and rare;
 "Alas!" I said, "where may I find her, where?"
 And locked my heart upon this for a space.

Then, like the rose-bud swelling with its dream,
 My fancy heaved those breasts and brimmed those eyes;
 Oft from those outlets of the soul a beam
 Fell on me from the spirit's inner skies;
 I said, "Lie there within my heart,—I deem
 O Love, no flesh may ever make thee prize."

THE IDEAL FOUND

II

So, like a miser fondling his dear gold,
 Oft would I count those pure perfections o'er,
 Hugging to heart my wondrous, earthless store,
 Whose charms shamed all life's glories manifold;
 Then with a bitter mockery I grew bold,
 For there was not in prose or poet's lore
 Such jewel found as my proud fancy wore—
 "This, too, will vanish when my veins grow cold."

But as I went all dully on my round,
 Nought hoping, seeking, for my dream-land mate,
 I entered suddenly on enchanted ground,
 Invading Heaven by some rosed postern gate—
 For in thy form my loved ideal I found,
 And in thine eyes I stood betrayed of Fate!

TO ASTREA

(Eight sonnets in the Elizabethan manner.)

I

FAIR art thou as when Spring and Summer join;
 Spring o'er thy form and Summer in thy heart;
 Like the opposing image on a coin
 Beauty and grace their equal world impart.
 Like the Spring's blossoms stand thy cheeks in bloom,
 And like the Summer cherry is thy lip;
 Yet Spring and Summer both shall front their doom,
 And wintry Death thy buoyant beauty trip.

Then think on all the raptures thou shalt lose,
 If thou to love too long thy charms deny;
 For Fate may then thy foolish claims refuse,
 And thy proud favors withered all shall die;
 While the pale ghosts of lovers thou hast slain
 Will rise and thy cold cruelty arraign.

II

LIKE the queen bee art thou and they the drones
 Who on thy course triumphal still attend;
 Lovers who mark thy passage with their moans
 And for thy favor life and substance spend;
 Or like the pelican who doth repast
 Its young with its own blood, so do their hearts
 Squander their pulses, even to the last,
 On thee who dost repay them with false arts.

For tho thou art Time's darling, Summer's joy,
 Thy soul is barren of Love's flowering ruth;
 Created wert thou lealty to annoy
 And make thy mock of fealty and truth.
 So frozen thy heart, that let Love shoot his best,
 His arrows still fall blunted from thy breast.

III

LIGHT as the wandering thistledown thou art,
 Sowing in fallow soils its freight of tares;
 For Nature formed a bubble of thine heart
 Wherein is limned its fancy's flaunting wares.
 For thou dost smile on all with equal grace
 And seem'st to grant yet ever dost deny;
 Like as a snare outspread thy beauteous face
 Ever shows love yet giveth love the lie.

Surely God did thy comely features plan
 To shine around thee here an earthly Heaven;
 Surely instead of torment unto man
 Nature intended thee all joy to leaven;
 Yet God and Nature both are disobeyed;
 Joy hast thou slain and Love thou hast betrayed.

IV

GIVE me thy love I say or take my breath!
 One of the twain englobeth my desire;
 I am consumèd; Heaven in his ire
 Reads me in torture what thy sweet lips saith.
 Upon me oft thy false smile lingereth,
 Like winter's sun upon a woodland byre,
 Coaxing some early hyacinth to suspire
 In bloom, and then forsake him to his death.

Sure thou hast none with God, tho thy blest face
 Might draw impassioned angels from the skies;
 Nor sanctified art thou with Heaven's grace,
 Altho my Heaven is regnant in thine eyes;
 Tho love for thee should drag me down to Hell,
 Even there thy feignèd love would make me well!

v

WILT thou condemn thy servant to despair
Whose only fault is too much loving thee?
Lo, thou shalt stale and he become Time's heir,
While even thy scorn shall his advancement be.
For with his pen while he thy beauty paints,
A just revenge upon thee shall be taken;
For Love himself, thy cold caprice attaints,
When Age shall prove thee faded and forsaken.

So in this verse when future time shall read
Thy rivalship to Venus' empery;
It will as well for flattery paint thy greed
And thy disdain and cruel mastery;—
That stripped by Age of charms and without friend,
Love did against thee poisoned arrows send.

vi

WHEN in my dreams I am by Hope beguiled,
And thou art kind as thou art fair in face;
Queen of this earth and Heaven's own favored child,
Who dost abound in wit and sprightly grace;
Then when I wake and sense the cruel cheat,
With all my happy dreams abused by day,
Could I the witness of hard fact defeat,
And with illusion still my spirit pay,—

If I could hood the falcon of my heart,
And make its jesses of thy witching hair;
As thou art false redeem thee in mine art,
Until men's lips should laud thee everywhere;—
Then, tho thy falsehood still gives Truth the lie,
Truth grows in me and durst not thee deny.

VII

THOU hast no truth nor I no recompense;
 False as thou art I must for needs be true;
 Thy craftiness I miscalled innocence,
 For which I now in heart must wear the rue.
 That voluntary bondage I renounce,
 Yet daily to my conscience am forsworn;
 So light thy heart it weighs not sure an ounce,
 Mine hangs like lead yet proves the prick of scorn.

Sweet as thou art and fairer than the rose,
 Thou bear'st a deadlier weapon than a sword;
 Thy hapless victims are transfixed by those
 Darts from thine eyes which no address can ward;
 Content if they may warm their hearts awhile
 In the false, fickle solace of thy smile.

VIII

THY beauty like an ignis fatuus plays
 Across the yearning gaze of trusting souls;
 Lovers who wander forth in devious ways
 Yet never swerve the nearer to their goals.
 Moths are they, by the traction of thine eyes
 Drawn to their death, and on their passion's wing
 Crippled and scorched and made a hapless prize
 To thy caprice's thoughtless cruel sting.

For thou dost on the ruin of those hearts
 Build high the triumphs of thy peerless face;
 Queen of vain prayers and mistress of false arts,
 Thou grant'st no quittance and thou yieldst no grace,
 Content to pleasure thy remorseless way
 Over the graves of those whom thou dost slay.

A GARLAND OF SONNETS

TO SHAKESPEARE

*If I have earned some favour of good men,
Or if my song hold aught of just or true,
This happy fortune to thy grace is due,
Who things unseen hast brought within my ken;
Who hast redeemed my shallow courses when
I would run glittering on the public view,
And led'st me into quiet fields anew,
And turned'st me safe from many a noisome fen.
I fly to thee when wounded, worn, and faint,
And thou upholdest me against thy knee;
Thy volume is my rubric; no attaint
Dwells in its page, nor no absurd decree.
Companion, guide, then friend—while Life's acquaint
With love, thy words sustain me, make me free!*

HOMER

TIME hath no shore, nor History port for thee,
Thou first great admiral of the fleets of Song!
To thee the winds, the waves, the clouds belong—
The heart and brain of broad humanity.
Thy theme swift-winged, an eagle's flight, and free,
All tireless sweeps this varied world along,
Wide-shadowing all the crawling, fluttering throng,
Unbounded as the shining, thundering sea.

From thy stored coffers craftsmen age on age
Have filled their treasuries to remind the gold;
No alien verse can thy full soundings hold;
While wise Ulysses' guile, Achilles' rage,
Doomed Hector's love, from thy dead tongue are rolled,
And still dead gods war in thy deathless page.

CHAUCER

THE heart of Merrie England sang in thee,
Dan Chaucer, blithest of the sons of Morn!
How from that dim and mellow distance borne
Floats down thy chiming measures pure and free,
Minstrel of Pilgrim pleasaunce! Pageantry,
And Revel, blowing from his drinking-horn
The froth of malt, and Love triumphant, lorn—
Thy England lives in these that live through thee!
Thine is the jocund Springtime;—winsome May,
Crowned with her daisies, wooed thee, clerkly wight!
The cheer of pastoral breath is in thy lay,
And in thy graver verse thy country's might.
O, Pipe of Pan at England's break of day,
Her noon re-echoes with thy clear delight!

TASSO

LOVE gilds thy laurel,—love was found thy blame;
 Yet, brightest in the dungeon shone thy muse.
 Not Este, no, nor Italy, might refuse
 Thy due—the poet's wreath, the deathless name.
 Thine honor lustres in thy tyrant's shame;
 The cold cell's damps were Inspiration's dews;
 The world hath won through what thy hope did lose,
 O Tasso, king of hearts, and heir of fame!

Ferrara's court is dust. Thy passioned dream
 A grand, immortal pageant did create
 O knightliest bard! Rinaldo's hero-gleam
 Is thine, thrice glorified; thy proud estate,
 The Lyre, the Sword, and Love—in each supreme;
 Life's splendid protest at the doors of Fate!

SPENSER

I'VE watched him stroll with Raleigh by the wood,
 Or Sidney, near the Mulla's rippling brim,
 While Nature crooned her Summer-evening hymn,
 Till o'er the fields the new moon's sickle stood.
 I've heard calm words of courtly brotherhood
 Chime like an Angelus through the ages dim,
 And they, whom all else honored, honored him,
 My Spenser, votary of the Holy Rood.

They rose and passed through Honor's troubled sky;
 Each quenched in blood his fitful, fervent star;
He dwelt apart, unknown, and fixed his eye
 Where aureoled Beauty beckoned him afar.
 Thy Lion, Maid, and Knight shall never die,
 O Childe, for of them England's glories are!

MARLOWE

FOR him the ancient heavens relumed their fires
 And starred his crown of songs with lambent gleams;
 Down one sweet song a nightly cresset gleams—
 'Tis Hero's beaconing her love's desires.
 Yet dark and thundrous, as when Faust expires,
 And veined with lightning stands that mount of dreams
 Down which the lava of his passion streams,
 Or soars from off its cloud-enshrouded pyres.

He was the Baptist heralding the morn
 Of Poesy's adorèd Prince of Light.
 He hath no sponsor save his muse forlorn;
 A voice all sweetness and impetuous might;
 A heart unbridled and a hope death-shorn
 Remains—and squandered blood that hides from sight!

SHAKESPEARE

WHEN the brave tackle of Life's craft is torn,
 And Hope's high pennon frays before the blast,
 My star of guidance vanished in the Vast,
 And the dun night grown deathful and forlorn—
 Then, turning fain to thee, the gates of Morn
 Swing heaven-wide, and the clouds, all overcast,
 Are rolled from sight; the rocks and shoals are passed;
 Safe on thy affluent ocean I am borne;

There I hear Ariel singing; there they file,
 The birds of Faery to their hid sea lair;
 There with unnumbered kiss Aurora's smile
 Beams roseate, there she shakes her golden hair;
 While down the enameled deeps, in sportive guile,
 The sea-nymphs flash their ivory arms in air!

MILTON

NEXT to our mightiest mightiest dost thou stand,
 Great heart of patience, charged with patriot flame,
 Shining thy stateliest midst thy country's shame,
 A nobler Samson to that time's demand.
 Thou Orb of Song! whose prismic beams expand
 Still o'er thy country—brightening forth her claim
 To empire; prouder, sweeter for thy name
 Than all the prescience that her courts command.

As when within that green Italian vale
 The Kiss of beauty touched thy sleeping brow,
 So did the Muse thy purpling years endow
 With consecration to that sounding tale
 Of Earth and Heaven that moves before us now,
 And doth o'er Time and shifting modes prevail.

DRYDEN

STOUT, crowned with praise, the wits around his chair,
 Sipping his cordial or his cup of tea,
 Full primed with aphorisms choice or free,
 Sat "glorious John," who trimmed to every air!
 The biggest brawn on the arena there,
 He shook the town with vauntings, then on knee
 Bartered his birthright for a huckster's fee,
 And thrust his muse aneath a lordling's care.

Still he brought valiant service; none that day
 Might bide the baited gladiator's blows;
 His ponderous truncheon crushed the foe at bay;
 How grand to watch him on MacFlecknoe close!
 The drums resound, the trumpets loudly bray
 As down the age that lordly galleon goes!

POPE

BEHOLD the foe of Grub Street's rival schools,
The Richard Crookback of the kings of rhyme,
Forging firm couplets of heroic chime,
And routing all his masters at their rules!
How brave an arsenal of shining tools
He brought to shape his fanciful sublime,
Spurning each proud Mæcenas of the time,
And shoving all the dunces from their stools!

And you deny him greatness? Would to-day
Your acrobatic bards could fill his place!
His art and range were bounded? Who can sway
More forceful measures in such narrow space?
Yield him, O Fame, thy brightest three-leaved bay,
Mind, manners, modes—the Horace of his race!

BURNS

HE was my earliest, nearest, sweetest friend!
His songs starred all my firmament of dreams;
Through them I caught the first auroral gleams
Of Her whose smile will haunt me to the end.
Here was my gold, the gold I might not spend;
Here was my heaven, a heaven of earthly beams;
I heard that rapture rippling like the streams;
I heard the Loves their rhythmic voices blend.

Ye banks of Ayr, how happy should ye be
Whereon the feet of your dear minstrel trod!
For even the sun, methinks, more tenderly
Than other turf must kiss your lowly sod.
O happy Scotland, earth doth envy thee
Thy kingly ploughman, thy disguisèd God!

SCOTT

THOSE broad bright Marches, Ballad and Romance,
 Never were ruled by baron bold like thee!
 No knight to Heaven or Beauty bent the knee
 With more proud-souled devotion in his glance.
 All stately as the Lilies of Old France
 The banner of thy Fancy floated free,
 O'er damsels, gallants, clansmen, monkish glee,
 Pageants and courts, and tourney's crash of lance.

It gathered brilliance from ancestral skies;
 It pictured Love, his dole and holiday;
 Widely it blazoned deeds of high emprise,
 Or flung forth wassail, feud, and gramarye;
 Or caught the gleam and glint of targe and glaive,
 And blew to Border gales and watched the tartans wave!

BYRON

BELOVED Greece, thy wreath adorned his pall!
 The hero of thy resurrection time.
 The vine-crowned Titan girt with power sublime,
 Almost accomplished Heaven; unfearing all,
 He faced the levin and the thunder brawl
 Scaling the heights of Song; his rebel prime
 Pelion on Ossa planted; then with rhyme
 Transcendent on his lips reeled down the wall.

He fell, hard-fighting; dire the clash and clang
 Earth heard through all her limits—then sleek jays
 Piped chattering funeral, and foul charnel kites
 Fed on the warm, proud heart; but wide outrang,
 Sweet Poesy, thy plaint along the ways,
 And Love and Freedom brought their tribute rites.

KEATS

JUST as the earliest flowers began to blow,
 (He felt the daisies growing o'er his grave)
 His fevered heart found rest; those grasses wave
Unconscious o'er the form that sleeps below;
Yet there the "rathe primroses" surely know,
 And tender violets (howsoever rave
 The rude winds o'er his slumber) that he gave
Them human love in human hearts to grow.

His "name was writ in water?" still 'tis called
 By every dryad's ghost that mournful fleets!
That name the Summer's pageant hath extolled;
 That name the Autumn's requiem repeats;
But he, with charms of Faëry deep enthralled,
 Hears no dull earth-tones echoing "where is Keats!"

SHELLEY

To shore the sea-nymphs buoyed their captive dead,
 Touched by a human grief; yes, there lay hand,
 Heart, tongue, and brain of that august command,
All—save the soul that Heaven to music wed.
Clung curling yet the pale locks round the head;
 Silent and prone upon the drifted sand,
 He clasped her still, his loved Italian land,
The foster-mother to whose breast he fled.

We raised him on the pyre—in one great shine
 The body chased the fleeting shade—'twas meet,
That which had given the flaming soul a shrine
 Should incorrupt as that bright soul retreat;
Yet, heart of proof, thy substance still divine,
 Lingering in earthly love, lay at our feet!

COLERIDGE

THY mind and heart—the dome of Kubla Khan!
 These twain were wed, like mountain joined to sea,
 In lofty, broad, cloud-merged sublimity,
 With words that awe yet soothe the soul of man.
 From Earth to Heaven thy circling vision ran,
 Yet, free in thought, thy life thou couldst not free;
 The Knight of Poesy, enchained in thee,
 Slept on his arms and ne'er fought out his plan.

Yet, Truth, divined in dreams, blooms best in Art;
 One dream, O mystic, blown within thy mind,
 Thy Mariner's tale, of Love's own life a part,
 This wizard bay-wreath doth thy temples bind;
 This orphic banner floats to every wind—
 One cross of service blazoned on thy heart!

WORDSWORTH

THE quiet of the woods was in his soul
 And in his song were winds and murmuring streams;
 Across his vision broke Love's rarest gleams,
 And English faith held o'er him proud control.
 He was Truth's eremite with beechen bowl;
 The wayside life and legend shaped his themes,
 Led softly through his meadowy realm of dreams,
 But round the heights rang Freedom's trumpet-roll!

Prophet and priest and bard—the humble throng
 He loved and voiced, from the great Mother drew
 His litanies and choruses; the blue
 Of Heaven and green of Earth illumed his song.
 He was the Joshua of an art made new,
 And of his peers the Godfrey chaste and strong.

HOOD

THERE, midst his children's noisy, prattling play,
 Hard by the dusty city's iron clang,
 A wing-spurred Hermes from dull earth he sprang
 And soared untrammelled through the azure day.
 That plumèd Fancy oared its joyous way
 O'er magic oceans where the mermaids sang;
 Then veered once more where human voices rang
 Of Love, Want, Crime, and Boyhood's happy day.

Alas, again the pack-horse of the Press,
 He folded close his pinions' glistening pride,
 And to the mill of jesting Rhyme was tied,
 To strain his heart-strings in that vile duress;
 Yet even the ignoble task he glorified—
 Through that sad mirth still flashed his loveliness!

SCHILLER

BOTH lyric wreath and Thespian crown were thine,
 And thine the Germans' pledge from mount to sea;
 For thy first thought, *to make the people free*,
 Was to those hungering souls Love's corn and wine.
 The hapless Mary's hope illumes thy line,
 While Wallenstein's dark form abides with me
 Since, when a lad, I laid upon my knee
 Thy heart, all throbbing through its leathern shrine.

The nations' tocsin thine! Thy Bell is heard
 On ocean coasts scarce known to thee by name;
 The deathless cadence of Tell's dauntless word,
 Hath wed the Switzer's Fatherland to fame;
 While Swabian youths, by thy bold measures stirred,
 Their proud old Eberhard's liberties proclaim!

GOETHE

FORTH from the jungle of dark creeds he may
 Who wills walk by thy star's unfaltering shine,
 O Liberator Soul! Thou dost define
 And hold life's secrets in wise-guarded sway;
 And yet thy art looms amplest, and thy lay
 Pours forth enlightening flame; and as the Rhine
 Ripples to sea, thy human-pulsing line
 Speeds world round, broadening its imperial way.

Goetz, Wilhelm Meister, Faust—no haughtier themes
 By wizard genius e'er conceived or penned!
 These will not cease "to feed our lake of dreams,"
 Nor will churl Time outbrave them at the end.
 Thought—Love—inwoven thus thy laurel gleams;
 Poet and Seer—yea, wisest, truest Friend!

BÉRANGER

(*At the Coronation of Charles X.*)

YES, there he stands—you mark him down the street,
 Yon, dream-eyed, little, bald, round-shouldered man!
 While Paris thrums her day-long rataplan
 Of loud huzzas and million-surgings feet.
 Tyrtæus bold is he, Catullus sweet!
 Or well had passed in Tempe's Vale for Pan
 In modern garb; draw nearer now and scan
 The form of one whom kings have feared to meet!

Ay, sirs, *here is the king!* That shape who goes
 All drums and trappings merely stuffs the crown;
 Here rusty black and there the ermine shows;
 The throne's a candle for our clerk's renown;
 That galley toward the hungry Maelstrom rows;
 This shallop storms nor hidden rocks may drown!

HUGO

THOUGH banished, Prospero, to thy mid-sea isle,
State thou maintaindst most ample; thou could'st call
Thy choiring Ariel, or sea-monsters haul
From sounding caves by magic's strenuous wile;
Thou could'st the storm unchain, make ocean smile,
Or hold the hearts and minds of men in thrall;
Yet Jeanne (Miranda, dearer far than all
Thy art) could aye thy darkest hour beguile.

Beyond the surge thy natal dukedom lay,
Dominion of brave hearts; thy dreaming eye
Watched with paternal longing day by day
Its coast-line, where pale Freedom rose to die,
'Til fell the usurper; then to ampler day
Restored thy passionate slave of sea and sky.

TENNYSON

THY fame stands wide as England's! If I lay
One song-wreath at thy feet, 'tis not to grace
So much thy triumphs, or thy high-throned place
Amongst the minstrels of the modern day.
As to confess thy erstwhile sovereign sway
O'er my affections; thine was once a space
Near Shakespeare; if that splendor Time efface,
Its beam grows mellow, may not pass away.

Thou art our own King Arthur—I, a knight
Unscutcheoned, unannounced in lists of fame;
Content to win, when proved, some slight acclaim
From lips like thine; unwilling most to fail
In service or in vigil; keeping bright
Armor like thine in quest for Holy Grail.

BROWNING

THE tangled currents of the rhythmic seas
 Stream through thy song with many a swirl and sweep;
 With storm and cloud and sunshine o'er the deep,
 And bright waves lapping to the variant breeze.
 Thou hast conned secrets 'tween Jove's mighty knees,
 And kenned the vision of life's toiling steep;
 Hast heard the strong men groan, the women weep,
 And drank earth's gloom and glory to the lees.

What though thy careless hand hath jarred the strings?
 Thy harp still rings to Thought and Beauty true;
 Though from Italian earth thy phoenix springs,
 Her gaze strikes ever toward the English blue.
 O, teacher, brave and wise, the proudest things
 Of Faith and Love through fire have come from you!

ARNOLD

THE World denied thee gold—Heaven gave thee verse;
 A burst of morn on Learning's peaks of snow!
 Under sweeps ever Emotion's tidal flow
 And therein Love her fair form doth immerse.
 Nature and Art, these twain, thy mother and nurse,
 Mixed fine thy mould through thy grand age to grow;
 Sonorous, pure, their mingled clarions blow,
 Unchecked by Time or Change, above thy hearse.

Sohrab and Rustem, Tristram, Marguerite—
 The twain of Homer's large, authentic breed;
 The third, Love's Knight, faithful in word and deed;
 The last, Love's perfect flower—a kindred sweet!
 These for thy fame, O royal palmer, plead,
 And lay their chaplets blooming at thy feet!

BAYARD TAYLOR

HERE find the poet's scrip,—his ready pen,
The staff of service on his pilgrim round,
Now laid aside; for he in sleep is bound,
No more to wander through the ways of men;
But these his furnishings, ingathered when
He wandered all Arcadia's laurelled ground,
The cheer and nurture of his journey found,
He hath bequeathed them to the world again.

Herein note Love, his crust of daily bread,
Romance, his flask of wine, and Reverie sweet,
The rich-chased missal brought from Orient clime;
Here also Hope, his belt, and from his head
His scallop-shell of Fancy; from his feet
The rhythmic sandals of his passion, Rhyme!

EMERSON

VOICE of the deeps thou art! But not the wild,
Ungoverned mouthing of the wind-lashed waves;
Nor yet the dirge of billows over graves,
But crooning, like a mother o'er her child.
Through thee gross earth with heaven is reconciled,
Thy songs, like anthems through cathedral naves
Dispel confusing passion; never raves
The storm along thy cloisters undefiled.

Light of the deeps thou art! as forth I glide,
From rock and whirlpool far, and tempest's roar,
Sudden there looms an ever verdurous shore,
Whose towers in the still wave stand glorified,
Where thou, the Virgil who hast been my guide,
Lead'st me and leav'st me rapt at Heaven's door!

LONGFELLOW

THE New-World's sweetest singer! Time may lay
 Rude touch on some, his betters, yet for me,
 His seat is where the throned immortals be,
 The chaste affections answering to his sway.
 As fair, as fresh as children of the May,
 His songs, spring up from wood and sun-bathed lea,
 Yet oft the rhythmic cadence of the sea
 Rolls 'neath his verse and speeds its shining way.

In borrowed robes our English buckram yields
 Small charm of style, but his he wears with grace.
 Thru him the grave-eyed Florentine finds place
 Among us; but across Acadian fields
 Who is it moves with rapt and pensive face?
 Evangeline—to all thy love appeals!

LOWELL

POET, who bore thy crown of seventy years
 As greenly as the chaplet of thy bays,—
 Who from thy throne of thought o'er-looked the maze
 Of human life, high lifting midst thy peers
 Heaven-lighted minstrel brows,—no envious shears
 Of fate may clip thy laurels, but thy lays,
 Brightened by Fame, bloom thru thy winter's days,
 Sunned in our smiles and watered with our tears.

Not to the craftsman merely, nor the calm,
 Keen-sighted critic, nor the patriot stirred
 With passion, do our grateful hearts belong—
 But to the new Crusader with his palm
 And cross of valiant service, viewed and heard
 Through the long, vow-knit vigil of his song.

WHITTIER

THE call was Freedom's loudest—'neat that blast
 Down crashed the walls of Slavery's Jericho!
 (Beware, ye proud, the fighting Quaker's blow,
 When once he strikes ye well may stand aghast!)
 Now all those storms are far forspent and past,
 Thy martial trumpet long attuned to peace,
 While still to bring the courts of Heaven increase,
 Those olive blooms of song abroad are cast.

O, strong and faithful watchman—may this state
 In memory long that lifted warning keep!
 Thy strenuous voice hath given us bonds to fate;
 We dread no harm while we that blessing reap;
 Old age, 'twas never thine—a warm, sedate,
 A mellow sunset brooded o'er thy sleep!

WHITMAN

IN him, time-balanced mind and cosmic heart
 With common human speech were reconciled.
 Heed not the jargon tongue, the phrase defiled,
 The roughened hand, ignoring forms of art.
 Nay, from his breast what yearning sighs depart!
 Hark how those vibrant tones grow pure and mild!
 While with the freeborn heart-beat of the Child
 His Earth-song rises and the echoes start.

What sentient wind makes answer? 'Tis thy breath
 Borne round these shores, O Queen Democracy!
 He stands thy spokesman, thy new prophet, he;
 He leads those souls whose faith o'ermasters death;
 She triumphs still! whate'er the Preacher saith,
 The horn of Odin blows and men are free!

MORRIS

CHAUCER and Spenser, gather him to your heart,
 That burly Radical of dreamy rhyme!
 And crown him with the Trouvère's bay sublime,
 That ne'er till now had graced the British mart;
 Tho late, for him the story-teller's art
 Came glamorous out of Fancy's buoyant clime,
 The mintage of the golden ore that Time
 Draws from world childhood; for he voiced in part
 Your mid-sea swaying melodies, the breath
 Of pastoral lands, of flowery meads, and meres,
 And your pale, poignant picturing of death,
 And your dear, tender ruth for love in tears.
 No idle singer, he, whate'er he saith;
 His pilgrim torch relumes the shadowed years!

KIPLING

THE East hath reared her Viking! lo, he comes
 Laurell'd with victory to the purple'd West,
 Voicing the proud, vexed century's unrest,
 With fifes, harps, sackbuts, psalteries, and drums.
 His galley, pitched with rare and odorous gums,
 Floats far the Dragon o'er the billow's crest;
 Neath bellying sail his round world keel is pressed;
 The Empire trade-wind through its cordage hums.

No vassal laureate he! he wears the crown
 Of English hearts, the roses never sere;
 The rooted loves that bloom in bold renown;
 Those sheaves of promise ripening in the ear,
 The pledge of birthright nations! 'gainst the frown
 Of Fate herself, stands England's faith writ clear!

MISTRAL


O FAIR Provence, thou land of corn and wine!
Provence, thou brave, sweet home of Love and Song!
In arts, in arms, in princely feeling strong,
Once more the dream of Poesy is thine!
Thine is the latest Troubadour whose line
From Ronsard runs in honor; of that throng
King gleeman, who still wind their pipes along
From towered Avignon to Camargue's blue brine.

Mireio, of Death the dearest bride,
Thy love and grief for aye, for aye are sung!
The Homer of his cherished vineyard side,
His heart e'er tender, bountiful, and young,
Swells bold with song, with more than Roman pride—
The brave Horatius of his native tongue!

L'ENVOI

*Go forth, my little book, my child of Song!
My chiefest solace all these years along.
I've writ thee with small thought of praise or pelf,
I've writ thee studiously to please myself;
I've writ thee lovingly; but, comrade, now
Godspeed! my true interpreter be thou.*





Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2009

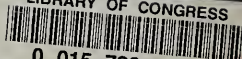
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