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# THE WINE OF MAY



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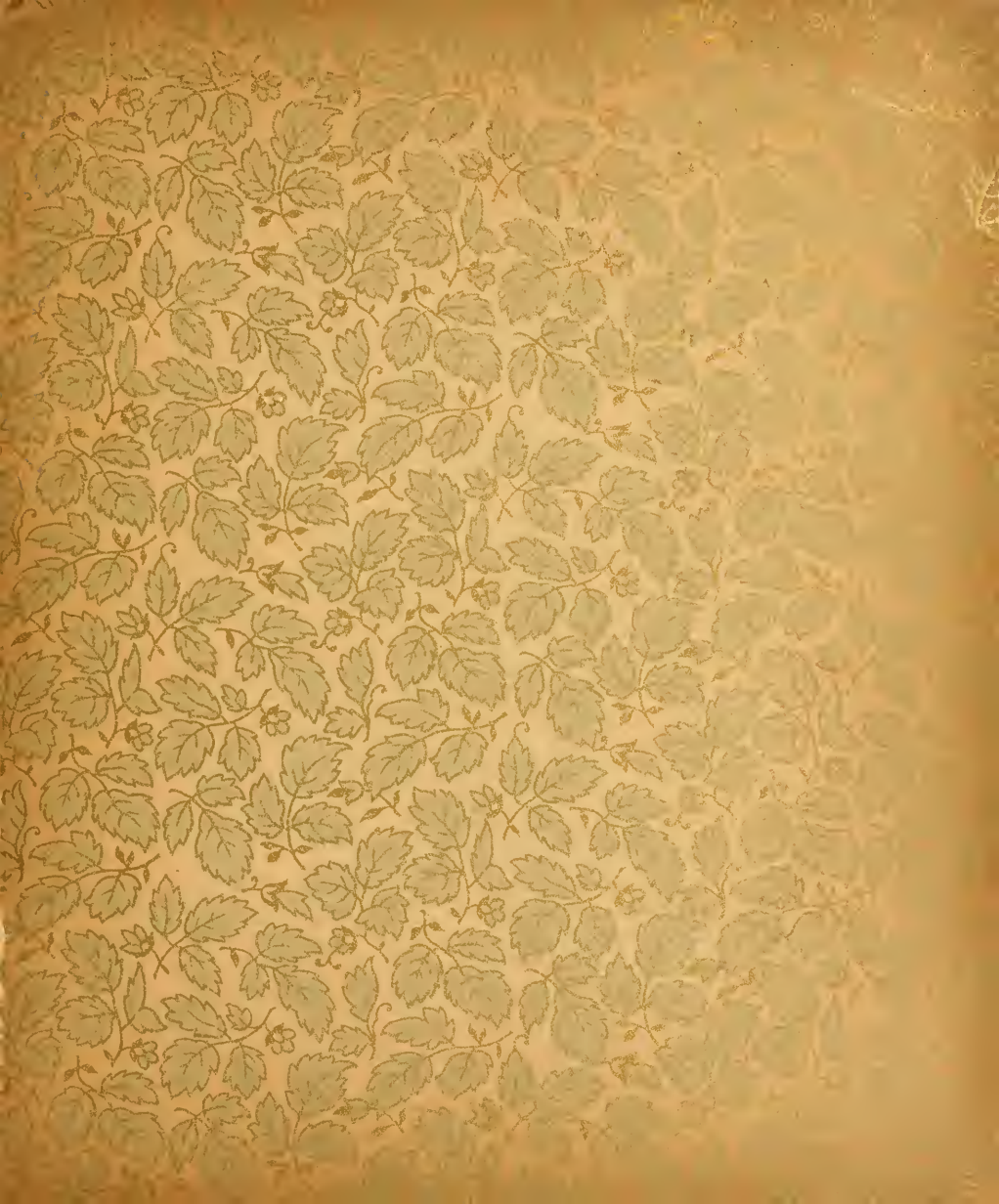
FRED LEWIS PATTEE





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Book A8W5









# THE WINE OF MAY,

AND OTHER LYRICS.

BY

FRED LEWIS PATTEE.

"

*"Visions of too lovely things  
To endure the strain of time,  
Ere we give you shape and wings  
Of harmonious thought or rhyme,  
Life so short is come and gone  
While we dream :  
Only touches of the dawn  
Glint our theme."*

HOSKEN.

CONCORD, N. H.:

REPUBLICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION, RAILROAD SQUARE.

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M-E W 22 May '18

DEDICATION.

*The days are flying, love ;*

*The youthful spring is winging fast his flight,  
The May is fading 'neath the summer's kiss,  
The rose is yielding to the clematis,  
The morning fades to noon, the noon to night.*

*The years are flying, love ;*

*The friends of long ago we know no more,  
The dreams of May, our galleons rich and dim,  
Sank one by one below the ocean's brim,  
And now we stand alone upon the shore.*

*Let days and years flow on ;*

*Let fortune fail us, dear, and worldly fame ;  
Let fade the daffodils, the summer rose ;  
Let autumn blight, let fall the winter snows ;  
We murmur not, our life flows on the same.*

*The years are flying, dear ;*

*Our love is deeper now with every day,  
We know each other better with each year,  
For each but draws us nearer and more near ;  
We're finding now the galleons lost in May.*



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THE WINE OF MAY.





## THE WINE OF MAY.

“And sometimes a few half-ripe clusters were pressed, even in May, but September was the month of the vintage.”—*Bib. Ency.*

*Ah ! vinter, why pluck now the vine ?  
Why press the early grapes for wine ?  
The harvest month is far away,  
And who will sip the wine of May,  
The tasteless vintage such as thine ?  
We have rare wines of every brand,  
Of every age, of every land.  
A thankless task is surely thine  
To pluck in May the callow vine  
And press for wine with unskilled hand.*

I hailed the vinter, while he sang  
A droning song, now low and sweet,  
A song that with a cadence rang  
To guide his treaders' busy feet.  
I hailed him, but he heeded not ;  
I heard the rustling of the vine,  
I heard the treaders' rhythmic beat,  
I heard the gushing of the wine,  
And as he sang his words I caught

## THE MONTH OF DREAMS.

## I.

Tell me of the month of dreams :  
Comes it in the mellow days  
When the barley and the maize  
Crown the field ?  
When the breezes and the streams  
Sing a far-off melody ?  
When the songsters all are gone,  
And the summer meads are shorn  
Of their yield ?  
When a mist is on the sea  
And a spell on hill and lea,  
Till like Arcady it seems ?  
Say, is this the month of dreams ?

## II.

Tell me of the month of dreams :  
Is it not the winsome May,  
Wilding month of roundelay  
And of love ?  
When the sun with joyous beams  
Warms the lush and steaming earth,

And the dreamy days are long,  
Perfume-haunted, filled with song  
    From above ?  
    Month of promise, month of mirth,  
    When a thousand joys have birth,  
And the future golden seems,  
Is not this the month of dreams ?

III.

When tread out the wine of dreams ?  
    Why not in the maiden May,  
    Ere the dreams all flit away  
    Of the spring ?  
Why when autumn's dying beams  
    For a fleeting day bring cheer ?  
Sing, O treaders of the May,  
Mystic month of minstrelsy,  
    Joyous sing !  
    We press not with sigh and tear,  
    Mingling with the wine our fear ;  
But the heart with laughter teems  
As we tread the wine of dreams.

*THE WINE OF MAY.*

He ceased, and now the motley throng  
 Of treaders caught the droning song,  
     A dreamy song, that o'er and o'er  
     A festive, cheery burden bore ;  
         Their bloody feet  
         With rhythmic beat  
 Arose and fell with cadence sweet,  
     Arose and fell, and as for mine  
     Unconsciously they beat the floor.  
 Within the alcove where I sat,  
     I saw the vintner pluck the vine,  
     I caught the sparkle of the wine  
 That gurgled from the gushing vat.

## SONG OF THE TREADERS.

## I.

Come, brothers, for the day is fleet—  
     The day is fleet, however long ;  
     It is not ours to tread alone  
     The heaping vat with sigh and moan,  
     But ours to join the choric song,—  
 The seasons roll with music sweet,  
 Let us roll round with merry feet.

## II.

Come, brothers, for the day is fleet—  
 Our path is o'er the purple grape ;  
 Our path is one of blood to-day ;  
 'T is ours to tread the grapes of May,  
 To tread them all that none escape ;  
 Their hearts must burst beneath our feet,  
 For hearts must burst as well as beat.

## III.

Come, brothers, for the day is fleet,  
 And dance with merry feet around.  
 For all revolves—the days, the years,  
 The clumsy earth, the distant spheres—  
 Without a stay, without a sound,  
 Our life rolls on with rapid feet,—  
 Oh, let us toil, the day is fleet.

*O vintner, there are floods of wine ;  
 Should all imbibe the liquid vine,  
 And quaff till Death with pallid hand  
 Dashed down the chalice to the sand,  
 Not half the vineyards of the Rhine*

*Would yield their nectar-scented store,  
Not half the wealth of Lesbia's shore,  
Of Italy, and sunny France,  
Upon the beaker's brim would dance :  
Why, vintner, dost thou give us more ?*

Half thoughtlessly I sipped the flood,  
The tasteless, unfermented blood  
Of budding May, of dreamy May,  
Of laughing, nimble-footed May :  
I, too, did dream. I seemed to be  
In fair Seville across the sea.  
A southern night, a southern moon—  
The rounding treaders seemed to me  
To fade in air; their droning tune  
Came like the music in a swoon,  
And far away, oh, far away,  
I caught the murmur of a lute,  
I heard the sighing of a flute,  
I saw—oh, let me dream again  
And pass in dreams the crawling day :  
I knew but of the poet's Spain,  
A lotos land with murmuring streams,  
And now I dreamed a dream of dreams.

THE DREAM OF SPAIN.

I.

O will you hush, dear nightingale,  
Your noisy song, your plaintive lay?  
I hear a murmur far away  
Of music in the moonlight pale,  
Of mandolins like hearts that throb,  
Of languorous lutes that sigh and sob—  
I know thy song, I know thy light,  
O dreamy Andalusian night!

II.

O may I breathe, dear Philomel?  
They come upon the languid night,  
Arrayed in soft, voluptuous light;  
They glide like shadows down the dell.  
O Spanish maidens, lithe and fair,  
With eyes of night, with sable hair,  
I know thy sweet, bewitching train,  
O laughing, dreamy maids of Spain!

## III.

Oh, sing with joy, sweet nightingale !  
Ring mandolins upon the night !  
With mad, delirious delight,  
The perfumed air, the haunted vale,  
Are throbbing with their ecstasy.  
She comes—oh, joy !—my queen, to me.  
My queen, my own, the years shall roll,  
O radiant maiden of my soul !

The music died in sighs away ;  
The moonbeams lost their dreamy tone ;  
The Alameda's royal way  
Was gone ; and I was all alone.  
I looked, with eager eyes, to see  
My myrtle bower, the orange tree,  
The haunted air,  
The maiden fair,  
With rippling laughter, rippling hair,  
That tripped adown the night with me.  
I only saw the sweat and toil  
Of treaders at their weary toil ;  
I saw the dregs within the bowl  
That I had emptied just before ;  
My temples throbbed ; my heart was sore ;  
A great disgust swept o'er my soul.



*Ah, winter, shake from thee thy dream,  
As I from me have shaken mine.  
My heart is aching : it doth seem  
But mockery to press for wine.  
Thy vineyard lies on barren soil ;  
The winds of winter chafe it sore ;  
No harvest can it have in store  
To pay the worker for his toil.  
To sunnier lands we look for wine :  
To vineyards old in dreamy Spain,  
Along the Arno and the Rhine,  
Amid the dells of Appenine,—  
Ah, cease thy toil : 't is all in vain ;  
For, even if thy wine has charms,  
'T is due to other hands than thine.  
Methinks I taste the Rhenish wine  
In thy pale vintage, and the palms  
Thou twin'st about thy leaden bowl  
Conceal the leanness of thy soul.*

He heeded not, but once again  
His dreamy voice caught up the strain ;  
A wave of sadness o'er me stole :  
His longing song with hint of pain  
Had struck a chord within my soul.

## SONG.

O love, why do you haste away  
 And leave my burning soul behind?  
 I fain would wed thee, maiden May,  
 Sweet, fleeting month, O stay, O stay!  
 For I can hear the empty wind  
 That sobs among the autumn vines;  
 I hear the reaper as he twines  
 The barley sheaf with mournful sigh—  
 Oh, must thou die in summer's stream?  
 Then leave a pledge, sweet maiden May,  
 Yet leave thy wine that I may dream.

*Press, then, thy wine, O youth of dreams,  
 Thy tasteless wine, with dance and song;  
 Thy Maytime cannot last thee long,  
 And rapid Summer's burning beams  
 Will parch thy veins and rouse thy fears.  
 Alas! too soon the blast that sears,  
 The autumn with its hint of death,  
 The winter with its icy breath,  
 Will stop thy song and start thy tears.  
 Farewell! I seek the Lesbian wine,  
 The priceless blood of vanished years,  
 The Autumn's mellow store, not thine.*

MOODS OF DEFEAT.

I.

I can no more contend,  
I'm weaker than my foe.  
Why fight? I cannot bend,  
With all my power, his bow :  
My arm is weak, and God has made it so.

The final deal has been,  
And from the game I'm barred.  
I cannot hope to win,  
Should I try e'er so hard,  
And why fight on without a master card?

I once was rashly brave,  
I struggled with my might,  
And each defeat but gave  
New courage and new light ;  
I hoarsely cried, "Though down, I still will fight."

I toiled as toils the slave,  
And fiercely watched my foe ;  
I said if I were brave,  
My strength in time would grow,  
And when he weakest was, I'd strike my blow.

Yet, toil I as I may,  
I ne'er can hope to be  
As strong as he to-day;—  
Why toil to win from me?  
And yet I can no fiercer work than he.

Why fight a fight with fate?  
I am inclined to yield;  
God made him for my hate,  
Yet made for him a shield.  
I can no more contend: my fate is sealed.

## II.

What boots it then to win?  
Why toil brief life away  
In fever, fret, and din  
To gain a paltry pay,  
The triumph of a day?

Who wins must pay the cost,  
Must rest and gladness sell,  
Count every pleasure lost.  
He first must pass through hell  
Who would of victory tell.

And even while the throng  
Its empty plaudits yell,  
While rings the triumph song,  
And while the hot veins swell  
In ecstasy of joy,—the knell.

What boots it then to win?  
And is it worth the toil,  
The heart-ache and the din,  
The torment and the moil,  
To gain our home of soil?

## III.

Forgive me, I was wandering yesternight;  
Forget my weakling wail, my maudlin cry;  
It was not I who fain would quit the fight,  
Who fain would yield the palm and whining die:  
A demon of the night it was, not I.

I am a man, and am I less a man  
Than other men? And shall I shrink and groan  
In black despair, and curse God's noble plan,  
When other men have fought the fight alone,  
Have conquered, or have died without a moan?

What care I for his scorn, his ringing taunt,  
 That I am here of all save fierce desire?  
 A roaring reed, with strength alone to vaunt  
 My impotence? Ah! better dare the fire,  
 Like Icarus, and die, than mount no higher!

Beware, my foe! although my strength is small,  
 Though baffled and beat down, I still can fight!  
 Antaeus like, I rise from every fall  
 With fiercer strength, new courage, and new light.  
 Who conquers me must struggle with his might!

## IV.

Lay on with all thy fury, Boreas,  
 Blow with thy vengeance, mighty god of gales!  
 I dare defy thee, though thy strength surpass  
 Mine myriad-fold: the weakling coward quails,  
 Not I, although thou smite with all thy flails.

Lay on: where man has fought, I fight.  
 The shouting foe, the clangor, and the spears  
 But serve to keep my armor strong and bright.  
 I may not always stay my foolish tears,  
 But I shall fight, and fight with none but peers.

MY SONGS.

I sang a song, a mournful song,  
To tell my grief, to voice my wrong ;  
It died upon the air unheard,  
For none would listen to a word.

I sang a song, a truth to preach,—  
A song to please, and yet to teach ;  
It perished even on my tongue,  
For none would hear the song I sung.

Again, I sang a song for fame,—  
A labored song, to sound my name ;  
It died upon the mocking wind,  
And, dying, left no note behind.

I sang of love, a little song,  
Of two whom fate had sundered long,  
Until, upon the battle plain,  
She soothed him back to life again.

I sang, nor thought of what I sung ;  
I found my notes on every tongue,  
And one—why do my pulses start?—  
Had learned my little song by heart.

## TO A WATER LILY.

On Death's dark lake there blooms a flower,  
With perfume of such wondrous power,  
That should a mortal take its breath,  
That moment he were cold in death.

Its petals are of dazzling light,  
Its calyx is of radiant white,  
But should its cup a mortal see,  
The blissful look his last would be.

With this sweet flower the angel Death  
Deprives the blessed of their breath ;  
A moment of its joy to gain  
Is worth a thousand years of pain.

O flower that ravishes my sight,  
Thy odor were a god's delight,  
And thou can'st soothe life's leaden ache  
Like that which grows on Stygian lake ;

But with a beauty less intense,  
And fragrance dulled for mortal sense,—  
Thou givest all the gods can give,  
That we may breathe thy breath and live.



But did I know my earthly sight  
A glimpse of thee would surely blight,  
And that thy nectar-scented breath  
Would woo my soul away to death,

Yet would I seize thy spotless cup  
And drink thy wealth of odor up,  
And, in revel of delight,  
Would fade with thee from mortal sight.

---

THE PICKETS' SONG.

Softly, comrades, they are sleeping,—  
Since the morning, oh how long has been the way!  
Though we sleep not, we are dreaming  
Of the days when steel was gleaming  
And when rifle clashed with rifle in the fray.  
But the army now is sleeping:  
We are but the pickets, keeping  
Ward and watch before the camp till break of day.

Softly, comrades, they are sleeping,—  
They, the muscle of the North, the Nation's stay.  
Some, when shell and death were flying,  
In the Southland we left lying,—

They were sleeping when their comrades marched away.  
Now the Northern ranks are sleeping :  
We, the few, are pickets, keeping  
Watch and ward until the breaking of the day.

Softly, comrades, they are sleeping,  
And we watch them while the slow years steal away.  
One by one to rest we 're going,  
For our eyes are heavy growing ;—  
There is silence o'er the campground erst so gay ;  
For the Northern ranks are sleeping :  
We are but the pickets, keeping  
Watch and ward until the breaking of the day.

*May 30, 1891.*

---

NATURE IS A DAINTY BELLE.

Nature is a dainty belle,  
With a thousand dresses,  
Never wearing one an hour,  
Every day a different flower  
In her sunny tresses.  
Ah! she is a winsome maid,  
Every one confesses.

And she wears a thousand shades,  
Like the frosted bowers :  
In the summer green and blue,  
In the autumn every hue,  
In all seasons flowers.  
Ah ! she wears as many shades  
As the year has hours.

And the older she becomes,  
Brighter are her dresses,  
Till she shines with every hue  
When the hands of winter strew  
Gray among her tresses.  
Ah ! she is a spendthrift dame,  
Given to excesses.

---

*EVENING SONG.*

The sun is low and fair Pasquaney sleeps,—  
Breathe softly now your vespers, linden leaves ;  
The thrushes chant her evening lullaby,  
And reeds and rushes murmuring reply,  
“ Pasquaney sleeps ; hush, waves, no more she grieves.”

Thy bride is sleeping, gray old mountain peak,  
Guard her sweet beauty from thy rocks above ;  
Bend down thy shadows ; kiss her rippling hair,  
For she is pure as is thy mountain air,  
And fair as are the rosy lips of love.

Hush ! hush thy babbling, lawless mountain stream,  
For evening mists are robing her in white ;  
The darkness veils the wooded landscape o'er,  
And whispers from the ripple-haunted shore,  
“ Good night, sweet lake ! ” and echoes lisp, “ Good night.”

---

INDIAN PIPE.

Pale ghost of flowers,  
That in the midnight hours  
From dankest mould  
Doth from the inmost covert of the wood  
Rise gaunt and cold,  
Thou art akin to those dim lights that glower  
From pestilential marsh at midnight's hour,  
Or phantom fogs that glide  
Along the river's brim at eventide.

Art thou some fay,  
Who, at the break of day,  
    Forgot to flee?  
    Or yet, a relic of that elfin crew  
    That 'neath some tree,  
At midnight's hour, doth hold high carnival  
By moonlight scant, or light of glow-worm dull?  
    Surprised by owl, or wind,  
    Did they in trembling fright leave thee behind?

Ah, phantom flower,  
Thou art from Pluto's bower,  
    A noisome spray,  
    Beloved by Hecate and by Proserpine.  
    Speak, flower, and say  
If from <sup>thy</sup> petals pale and clammy vine  
A mortal hand might press a leaden wine,  
    A cup to banish pain,  
    And woo to Lethe's opiate domain!

## THE OLD FARMHOUSE.

It silent stood, alone,  
With mould and mosses gray,  
Beside a grassy way,  
Till years and years had flown.

'T was there in childhood's days,  
And every winter gale  
About its walls did wail  
And shrubs choked up the ways.

In boyhood's romps we came  
And tried the shaky door,  
With whispers trod the floor,  
And stole without again.

And once, dear, long ago,  
We wandered through the dew,  
And here I told to you  
Of love in whispers low.

But now the house is gone,  
And every passing year  
Lets fall a burden here  
To hide its wreck forlorn.

## MANISSES.

Lov'st thou the angry sea ?

Lov'st thou a rocky coast, a storm-beat shore,  
Where winter strews the drifting sand with wreck,  
And waves howl evermore ?

Lov'st thou the hale old sea ?

Lov'st thou the rattling block, the rustling sail,  
The hearty sunburned toilers of the wave,  
And riders of the gale ?

Lov'st thou the laughing sea ?

His dimpling waters in the sun at play,  
His scattered toys upon the soft sea sand,  
His merry ripples gay ?

Lov'st thou the sad old sea ?

Lov'st thou his weary waves that never rest,  
His endless moan at midnight, morn, and noon,  
Like sighs from human breast ?

Dost love the changing sea ?

Then hie thee on the white wings of the breeze,  
To where a lovely island decks the wave,  
The bride of ocean,—Manisses.

## COMPENSATION.

Comes there an hour of heavenly joy,  
The next is full of sorrow :  
After every wedding bell  
Tolls a dreary funeral knell ;  
To-day is bright,—it rains to-morrow.

And yet, cheer up, O stricken heart,  
And bear thy heavy grief till morning ;  
Often through the tear-dimmed eyes,  
Gleam the hues of Paradise,  
And though it rains the day is dawning.

---

## MORNING GLORIES.

The hand that flung the corn  
Held not the seed from which thy tendrils sprung,  
The cruel harrow pruned thee, thou didst live  
In spite of depth of earth upon thee flung.

The farmer cursed thy form  
When as a tiny shoot it broke the ground ;  
He cursed thee as a weed, a cumberer,  
Nor spared in rage to pluck and tear and wound.



Yet now among the corn  
I see on every hand thy little bell,  
Of spotless white, or pink, or paly blue,  
Like tints upon a dainty tropic shell.

A single bell of thine  
To me is more than all the paltry grain,  
For I am cursed as but a cumberer,  
And might despair did I not know thy pain.

---

RIZPAH.

II Samuel, 21 : 10.

The night was falling, drear and black with clouds,  
From out the Gibeon desert sighed the wind,  
While from the oaks upon the barren hill  
It sobbed and wept as if it knew the woe  
And anguish that they hid ; for by the rock  
Where fell the blackest shade, seven ghastly oaks  
Were bearing on their arms the forms of men.

The wind sobbed on, now clanking with dull sound  
The deadly chains ; now swaying to and fro

The fleshless limbs, the bare and grinning skulls,  
And bearing ghastly odors down the glen.  
Hark! from the wild, the eager, yelping cry  
Of jackals speeding to their prey; and now  
The demon whine of foul hyenas, and  
The croak of ravens nesting in the oaks!  
But ere they reached their banquet 'mid the trees,  
From out the shadows came a woman's form,  
With wild, dishevelled hair, and garments torn.  
"Begone!" she cried, and all the night was still.

"Alone, O God! Is there no hand but mine  
To guard your precious ashes, O my sons?  
Is there no pity in the hearts of men,  
That here upon the mountain's brow alone,  
From early harvest even unto now,  
My hand must shield your cold forms, O my own?"

"Was it for this I bore thee, O my sons?  
Was it for this my mother-love was spent,  
That in your blooming manhood you should die,  
All innocent of crime, a death of shame,  
And rot, uncared for and unwept? O God!  
Why take my all to sate thine awful wrath?  
Why should they die when but their father sinned?"

“And I have dreamed, and fairest dreams were mine :  
You were my all, my sons, and I had thought  
That wealth and glory would be yours, and you  
Would cheer my failing years. But woe is me !  
Are these still forms my sons, my noble sons ?

“ O God ! my heart is withered, and my soul  
Is like a tomb, and creeping through my brain  
Are slimy things that make of life a hell.  
Is there no end unto this ghastly watch ?  
Is there no pity in the hearts of men ? ”

She bowed her head again upon the rock :  
And all was still, save where the desert wind  
Sobbed weirdly in the trees, and far away  
On Hebron’s lonely height a prowling beast  
Amid the solitudes sent forth his cry ;  
And now and then there creaked the ghastly chains  
That bound the dead, while black clouds hid the moon.

## SONG OF THE VAQUERO.

Ah, there 's life on the Mexic plain  
Where the norther snorts amain ;  
    With my foaming steed  
        I scorn the wind  
    And the wild stampede  
        With terror blind,  
And the herd's fierce roar—Oh, the blood of Spain  
It leaps and surges and fires my brain,—  
    Hurrah, heigh ho !

Oh, I love the wild pampas free,  
As the swallow loves the lea.  
    O'er its bosom wide  
        The mad storms fly,  
    And the herder can ride  
        Till he fades in the sky ;  
In the sweep of the eye not a hillock or tree,  
And the surge of the grass like the billows at sea,—  
    Hurrah, heigh ho !

And there 's love on the Mexic plain  
Where the fierce, wild passions reign.  
    In the Mexic dance,  
        In the fandango,

One may catch a glance  
From eyes that glow.  
Oh, the flashing eyes ! Oh, the eyes of Spain,  
And the dainty hands one would die to gain,—  
To gain,—Ah me !

Then hurrah for the plains—ho ! ho !  
And their king, the Vaquero,  
For he leaps as the hind  
Leaps, wild and free,  
And he sweeps as the wind  
Sweeps over the sea,  
And dash and danger are his to know,  
And life and love in endless flow,—  
Hurrah, heigh ho !



SONGS OF THE MAINE WOODS.





## KING OF THE LAKES.

TO THE LOON OVER MY STUDY DOOR.

Hoarse warder of the northern lakes,  
And hearty trumpeter of heaven,  
Precursor of the storm ;  
How stark and still! My bosom aches,  
And I am plunged in reverie  
Before thy pulseless form.

Oft have I heard on high thy yell  
When night and blackness held the wood  
And drugged with damps the air ;  
A scream as if some soul for hell  
Had paused upon the wings of night  
To shriek in its despair.

Or yet, at dusk, by some wild lake,  
Amid the northern solitudes,  
I've heard thy were-wolf cry

When all was still ; and, half awake,  
Have fancied it the woodland's voice,—  
The solitude's wild sigh.

A quavering laugh that hangs in air,  
Till, fading into echoes low,  
It sighs itself away ;  
The voice of ages of despair,—  
The pent-up cry of solitude,  
And desolation's sway.

Now art thou mute, as if by Fate,  
Like Niobe, congealed to stone.  
Speak ! Why that stony gaze,  
Whose terror time cannot abate ?  
What thing of horror fixed thine eyes  
And froze thee with amaze ?

Speak, spirit of the pathless wild,  
Whose silence breaks but to thy voice !  
Let me thy secrets win,  
Of some lone lake, some sylvan child  
That nestles in the forest's lap  
Where man has never been.

My life is cramped,—it longs for flight,  
Bold sailor of the lake and sky,  
To-day I fain would be  
Wild as the spirit of the night,  
And seek, unfettered, unconfined,  
The northern lakes with thee.

---

THE HEMLOCK FOREST.

Deep in Katahdin's lands,  
Where roll the wild head waters of the Allequash,  
And nothing breaks the silence save the splash  
Of wading herons and the loon's weird cry,  
O'er lonely lakes that wild and nameless lie;  
Black, shaggy, vast, and still as Barca's sands,  
A hemlock forest stands.

So dense its mantle black,  
'Tis dark at mid-day, and at night there shines no star;  
And, save the owl heard weirdly from afar,  
Within its depths no voice of beast or bird,  
And on its velvet floors no step is heard,  
Save when, at dead of night, the hungry pack  
Fling fearful echoes back.

O forest like a pall!

O hemlock of the wild! O brother to my soul!

I love thy mantle black, thy shaggy bole,

Thy form grotesque, thy spreading arms of steel;

For when the storm sifts down its snow like meal,

Thy matted branches bend and take it all

Nor let their burdens fall.

And when I think of thee,

I see the wild head waters of the Allequash,

The streams that in the Caucogomoc dash,

And Athabasca with its nameless lakes;

For where the moose the pathless forest breaks,

There is thy home, O rugged hemlock tree,

Child of the forest free.

---

#### THE WATCH ON SUNCOOK.

Amid the darkness, floating like a dream,

The water does not whisper at the bow,

The boatman, with his paddle strong and low,

Without a ripple drives us down the stream

Out into Suncook's waters, and across

Where lie the narrow bays and muddy coves,

Weed-filled and choked with lily pads, half lost

Amid the shadows of the hemlock groves.

Like forest ghosts our lonely watch we keep,  
    Around us league on league the wild Maine land,  
    Vast, shaggy, pathless, fresh from Nature's hand,  
And silence,—blank, profound, the waters sleep.  
Yet, ah! a splash borne sharply through the night,  
    That sends the heart abeating in the throat,  
A lonely beaver diving in his fright,  
    Then hours of silence, save a heron's note.

Alert and still till all the senses ache,  
    The moon peers large and red above the pines  
    With weird, mysterious light, that dimly shines  
Amid the trees and gilds the sleeping lake.  
An owl's lone voice comes from the mountain side,  
    A bear's shrill cry rings wildly o'er the coves,  
The silent stars above us coldly ride,  
    And Venus sinks below the black fir groves.

Beneath the trees the ghostly shadows float,  
    A voice far-borne comes from the wilderness,  
    A cry long drawn, from whence no ear can guess;—  
Hark! yet again a quavering note.  
Hour after hour upon the sleeping lake,  
    We know the woodland teems with bird and beast,  
And yet upon our ears no footsteps break,—  
    In vain, to camp, there's morning in the east.

## TO C. A. STEPHENS.

I build not castles fair in misty Spain,  
I dream not, when I dream, of sunny lands,  
Of spicy isles, of mystic Araby,  
The softened azure of the Cyclades,  
Or where the Arno hastens to the sea ;  
But oft, when golden autumn dyes the leaf,  
I sit and muse on that enchanted land  
Far up the Allequash by Chamberlain,  
Amid the hemlocks and the sighing pines.  
And oft I long to breathe its balsamed air,  
To walk amid its pathless solitudes,  
To float all day upon its nameless lakes,  
And camp beside its beaver-haunted streams.

And yet I do not go. I know this land  
Would lose its charm if other than a dream ;  
So, when the hunter's moon hangs in the trees,  
And when the solemn cricket pipes his lay,  
When every impulse calls me to the woods  
And all my soul is tugging to be free,  
I do not sigh that Fate has chained me down,  
I rather seek companionship with thee,

And wander in a golden-tinted dream,  
With thee as guide, throughout a wide domain  
Unvexed by man,—a happy hunting ground.

Thus by the winter fire I oft have roamed  
With careless feet by Parmachenee's streams,  
Or yet have paddled up the wild St. John,  
Through Suncook, Churchill, and the Heron lakes,  
Upon whose broad expanse there moves no life,  
Save where the wood duck leads her timid fleet,  
Or where a monster trout or maniac loon  
Breaks from the lake and shakes the crystal drops ;  
Through groves of hemlock, fir, and spruce and pine,  
As silent as a vast cathedral's aisles  
But for the owl at night and prowling bear,  
Or where at dusk the deer and moose steal down  
To wade and feed within the padded coves.  
We've stood at midnight on Katahdin's dome,  
Or, by the glimmer of the dying fire,  
Have watched the ghostly shadows dance and play  
Upon the hemlocks and the sable pines.

Thou art a poet with a master pen,  
Thy soul has been attuned to catch the song  
That whispers from the pathless wilderness.

Within thy hand is all the mystic lore,  
The mossy breath and spirit of the woods.  
And who has read thee has a purer heart,  
A greater love for life and fellow-man,  
For Mother Nature and her solitudes.

*November 25, 1892.*

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MORNING ON THE DEAD RIVER.

JANUARY.

Steel-blue and cold as primal adamant  
The cloudless sky. The air is tempered steel,  
And rings and trembles with metallic peal  
With every sound. The sunbeams shoot aslant ;  
The frost wreaths glitter like a magic band,  
And like a marble frieze the hemlocks stand.

The slowly moving sleds now creak in every seam,  
The toiling oxen blow out clouds of steam.



IN THE SUGAR CAMP.

MARCH.

The sun is pouring from a cloudless sky ;  
The glittering snow o'er stream and field and hill  
Will bear our weight ; there's summer in the air ;  
But ah ! how bare the leafless wood and still !

There's scarce a breath to stir the maple trees ;  
There's not a wildwood voice or bird afloat  
Save the low alto of the chickadee,—  
But hark ! hurrah ! the bluebird's joyous note !

And oh, the sun, the flooding, golden sun !  
The roof-trees pour their floods beneath its beams,  
And from the maples comes the gay drip-drop  
Of sap on every hand in limpid streams.

The sun rolls high. The snow no longer bears.  
The roads are swimming o'er with bubbling streams.  
The tubs are filling in the sugar bush,  
Drip-drop, and every drop like crystal gleams.

And now the steers. Leap on the hogshead, boys,  
'T is now high time the gathering was begun ;  
The snow is deep, but every maple tree  
Must yield its pail of sweet ere set of sun.

And next the boiling. Through the whole long night  
The foaming pans pour out their clouds of steam,  
And when the darkness falls among the trees,  
The fires send o'er the snow their ruddy gleam.

Far up the mountain moans a lonely owl ;  
The river's murmur comes from far away ;  
The air is damp : the breath of mossy woods ;  
But all about the fires is bright and gay.

For there are stories, apples juicy red,  
And maple honey that the snow might stain.  
O vision of my boyhood, perfect day,  
I would I might come back to thee again.

THE ROUND YEAR.



### THREE NIGHTS.

I love a night in May,  
Or early June when cherries are in bloom,  
When all the air is heavy with delight,  
When stars are dim and shed a hazy light ;  
I love the night-jar's boom,  
The hermit thrush, the whippoorwill,  
The vesper bird, and that mysterious thrill  
That floats from out the marshes far away ;  
I love a night in May.

I love the autumn night,  
In rich October when the year is full,  
When katydid sobs out her quavering lay,  
And when the owlet calls from far away ;  
I love the thistle-wool,  
Pale summer's ghost, the crickets out of tune,  
The silent wood, the full-orbed hunter's moon,  
That in the tree-tops floods the earth with light ;  
I love the autumn night.

But best I love the spring,  
The night of March that ends a cloudless day,  
When all the forest whispers, "Spring is here,"  
And when the river whispers faint but clear  
From miles and miles away ;  
I love the odors from the mossy woods,  
Distilled by Nature in her solitudes,  
The dreamy mists that to the marshes cling ;  
Ah, best I love the spring.

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## MARSH SONG.

MAY.

O'er the marsh the night is creeping,  
From their chinks the bats are peeping,  
In the rose the bee is sleeping,—  
Come, while vocal are the reeds,  
Let us wander o'er the meads.

Now like swarms of downy millers,  
Or like droves of caterpillars,  
Stand the yellow-coated willows,  
Which, by every zephyr shook,  
Strew with catkins all the brook.

While the day his carol hushes,  
O'er the chorus in the rushes  
Swell the vespers of the thrushes.  
Far away a deep bell rings,  
And the night-jar twangs his wings.

Ah, dear love, the fair is flying,  
All these voices are but sighing,  
Brightest things how soon are dying,—  
Can there ever come a day  
When our love will fade away?

---

THE DEAD ROBIN.

With May-time carols bubbling in his breast,  
By gladness led,  
He flew to Winter's land,—O impious hand,  
To lay him dead!

Was it for this he braved the April blasts,  
Glad news to bring?  
Was it for this he bore to our cold clime  
The songs of spring?

Accursed the wretch that stopped the voice that sang  
Of brighter days !  
May summer bring no joy to his cold heart,  
His hope to raise.

---

## THE HERMIT THRUSH.

## RONDEL.

Far, far away in evening's hush  
We caught a plaintive, liquid lay,  
The lonely, love-lorn hermit thrush  
Who sang the vesper hymn of day.

The fragrant air was drunk with May,  
While from the marsh's tangled brush,  
Far, far away in evening's hush,  
We caught a plaintive, liquid lay.

The mist stole from the meadows lush,  
The day's glad chorus died away,  
Save, half unheard, the river's rush,  
And where, like murmurs from its spray,  
Far, far away in evening's hush,  
We caught a plaintive liquid lay.



SWEET VIBURNUM.

Sweet viburnum, loved of bees,  
Woody by Maytime's softest breeze,  
By the fragrant riverside,  
Robed in whiteness like a bride,

Decked with knots of dainty flowers,  
Bathed in Springtime's sweetest showers,  
Not for thee the withering heat  
And the dust of Summer's street.

Often of an idle hour  
Have I sought thy snowy bower,  
In a sweet, sequestered nook,  
Cooled by odors from a brook,

And have envied thee thy lot:  
For my life is pressed and hot,  
Spotted o'er with earthly dust,  
Cankered deep with earthly rust.

Though I lived but one spring day,  
Fading with the night away,  
I have wished my life might be  
Sweet and stainless, flower, like thee.

## THE FADING SPRING.

I wonder why the bobolinks  
    Grow sad when fade the flowers of Spring ;  
I wonder why when Summer comes  
    The bluebirds all forget to sing.

I wonder why the buttercups  
    All fade at Springtime's close away ;  
And why the brightest butterflies  
    Flit o'er the dreamy fields of May.

I wonder if my Spring is dead,  
    For oft of late I sadly sigh ;  
I cannot sing the songs I sang ;  
    I cannot laugh,—I wonder why !

## JULY.

The quivering air is filled with heat ;  
All is silent as a dream,  
Save the murmur of a stream,  
Save the locust's far-off scream,  
And drowsy crickets at my feet.

Oh, lead me to some leafy glen  
Where the morning dew yet clings,  
Where the matin bird yet sings,  
And each cooling zephyr brings  
The odors of the mossy fen !

What fitter task, then, could there be,  
On this drowsy summer day,  
From all trouble far away,  
Than to list the wood-bird's lay,  
And dream, my love, and dream of thee ?

## AT THE WAUMBEEK.

## AUGUST.

We thought of clover-haunted June  
That merry August afternoon,  
For all the fields were fresh and new,  
And never June had air more clear;  
But, ah! the early goldenrod  
Was whispering of the fading year.

We tried to think 't was merry June;  
But all the birds were out of tune,  
And all day long the woods were still,  
Save for the dreamy harvest fly,  
Or where some little mountain stream  
With merry murmurs hastened by.

And yet we thought of gorgeous June,  
And all that live-long afternoon  
We watched the shades upon the peaks,  
The dreamy clouds that floated by,  
And asked, "Is autumn really here,  
For when had June a brighter sky?"

JUNE AND NOVEMBER.

TRIOLETS.

O summer days steal by like happy dreams,  
    And summer hours are minutes, love, with thee;  
When ripples softly murmur on the streams,  
O summer days steal by like happy dreams.  
Half drunk with sweetness then the meadow seems,  
    And joyous voices chant in every tree,  
And summer days steal by like happy dreams,  
    And summer hours are minutes, love, with thee.

I 'm weary, love, I would I were with thee ;  
    I 'm all alone while blow the night-winds dreary ;  
Lonely and sad the creeping hours flee ;  
I 'm weary, love, I would I were with thee.  
The withered leaves flit o'er the barren lea ;  
    In sad November naught is gay or cheery.  
I 'm weary, love, I would I were with thee ;  
    I 'm all alone while blow the night winds dreary.

## INDIAN SUMMER.

## RONDEAU.

The Summer 's dead ; but yet again,  
Though faded leaves bestrew the plain,  
    The yellow floods of mist that gleam,  
    The mellow lights and shadows seem  
Like Summer's own in Summer's reign.

These smiles but cover o'er the pain,  
This hush the breath a moment ta'en  
    Before the plunge in Winter's stream,—  
    The Summer 's dead.

Sing, heart of mine, thy sad refrain,  
For in thy deeps the frost has lain.  
    Thy hopes are leaves upon the stream,  
    Thy love is Summer's blighted dream,  
And though to-day to smile may deign,  
    Thy Summer 's dead.

## SNOWFLAKES.

What think you the robin thinks,  
    Born amid the apple blossoms,  
And the meadow bobolinks,  
    With their happy little bosoms,  
Fledged and flown ere June is fled,  
When the blossoms all are dead?

And the burly bumble bees,  
    Launched ere spring's first sweets are over,  
And those sailors of the breeze,  
    Born full winged amid the clover,—  
What know they of early snows  
And of winter, do you s'pose?

In their happy little earth,  
    Can there be a place for sorrow?  
And with summer days from birth,  
    What but joy should fill to-morrow?  
Yet think they the summer rose  
Blooms forever, do you s'pose?

What think you our Robbie thinks,  
As the first white snowflakes gather?  
For his eyes he wisely blinks,  
He has seen but summer weather,—  
What knows he of winds that freeze,  
More than bobolinks or bees?

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## IN THE HEMLOCKS.

FEBRUARY.

There is no sound save where a chickadee  
With busy beak taps at the hemlock's bole.  
The sun sifts in a few cold, cheerless rays  
From out the south, between the sombre boughs  
Bent down with snow. The shadows creep along  
With noiseless step to eastward, and the night  
Comes quickly on,—the cold, still night.  
The moonbeams here and there have pierced the boughs,  
To fall in ghostly flecks amid the gloom.



SEVENTEEN SONNETS.



I.

AFTER READING MILTON.

As one who at his harpsichord doth pine  
    With aching head and faint and sick at heart,  
    With weary fingers stumbling in their part,  
Until the notes seem tangled line with line,  
And sudden hears, like thunders from the brine,  
    The organ roll of Handel or Mozart  
    Till rapture strikes him dumb and teardrops start,  
So on me burst thy lines, O bard divine !

And I had thought to sing. I oft had tried,  
    With many a jarring note and tangled chord,  
    To voice a melody that would not come.  
Yet had I not despaired : but I have cried,  
    “ Have hope, work on, and time will bring reward ; ”  
    But thy deep organ peal has made me dumb.

*December, 1889.*

## II.

## FOR A COPY OF BYRON.

Oft in the dead of winter and of night,  
In my lone cabin on the wild St. John,  
When from the blustering north a storm was on,  
With bated breath I've listened to the fight  
Made by a mighty hemlock on the height,  
With roars of torment sullen and long drawn ;  
And I have seen, when broke the angry dawn,  
Its writhing branches battling with their might.

And, mighty master, I have thought of thee,  
Assailed by Fate and bitter circumstance,  
The sport of envy, galled, misunderstood,  
Till all thy heavenly gift of melody  
Poured out itself beneath pain's bitter lance,  
And voiced with sullen roars thy solitude.

*August, 1892.*

III.

ON SEEING A SKULL.

This hollow shell was once with radiance crowned,  
This flimsy wall, for threescore years and ten,  
A restless thing caged in a prison pen ;  
A thing that knew no bounds, and yet was bound,  
About these mystic mazes coiled and wound ;  
A being from a world unknown to men,  
An angel sweet or monster of the fen,  
A moment caught in this enchanted ground.

Does not the deathless, disembodied mind,  
When once it bursts the fetters of the clay,  
Disport upon the air in ecstasy ?  
Does it not dally with the wanton wind,  
And loathe the filthy cell where late it lay  
A weary captive longing to be free ?

## IV.

## REMORSE.

O memory, and do you never die?  
Must I for aye thy babbling echoes hear?  
Is there no drug that will thy records sear?  
Is there no lotos land toward which to fly,  
Where, wrapped in sweet oblivion, I may lie,  
Nor hear thy hell-voice whispering in my ear?  
Or art thou king in even Pluto's sphere,  
With neither Death nor Time to loose thy tie?

Oh, could I blot thee, burn thee at a breath,  
As burn these records in the ashes cast,  
And start afresh life's weary tale to pen!  
If Death will sear, come ghastly visaged Death,  
And with thy bony hand erase the past.  
Do as thou wilt, and then,—ah, God, what then?

## V.

## FADED PANSIES.

Ah, faded pansies,—withered thoughts of thine,—  
When in their happy past they came to me  
In all their dewy freshness new from thee,  
Intoxicated, as with spiced wine,  
I pressed their message-laden lips to mine ;  
I breathed their faint perfume, that seemed to be  
A breath from thy sweet self, in ecstasy,  
And long I dreamed wild dreams,—O joy divine !

I might have known, had I but cared to know,  
That in a day my heaven-tinted dreams,  
These flowers, these thoughts of thine, would all be dead.  
I might have known that heaven lies not below,  
And that our eyes catch only transient gleams  
Of joy divine, in blissful moments shed.

## VI.

## THE NIGHT OF MAY.

O press me to thy bosom soft and white,  
Thy bare and pulsing bosom, night of May ;  
Thy maiden breath will thrill this pain away.  
O drown me with thy perfume, press me tight,  
For I am sick and weary of the fight,  
For dark unrest has claimed me for his prey,  
Ambition's hell has robbed me of my day.  
O breathe on me thy breath, mysterious Night.

Stay with me, holy one, forever nigh,  
O let me lie forever on thy breast :  
I feel a passionate thrill in every vein  
Beneath thy breath. Stay, stay, O do not fly!—  
The burning day will give me to unrest,  
And on thy beating heart I feel no pain.



VII.

TO A ROBIN.

Chief songster in the chorus of the morn,  
Oft hast thou roused me with thy roundelay,  
Ere yet a shape of night had slunk away,  
Or yet a blush within the east was born ;  
So eager thou, glad herald of the dawn,  
To wake thy feathered minstrels and essay  
To trill the rapturous welcome to the day  
With bubbling throats, and banish night forlorn.

O happy bird, I would thy faith were mine,  
That in the storm and darkness I could see  
A ray of hope, a hint of dawn, and sing.  
I would my heart could feel the light as thine,  
For every shade is doubly dark to me,  
And only in the sun my fears take wing.

## VIII.

## O SUMMER NIGHT!

The sun is setting o'er the meadow's brim,  
And from the river in the waning light  
There steals the hush and odor of the night,  
And I am dreaming. Yonder, by the dim  
Uncertain shore, a phantom boatman grim  
Is gathering driftwood in, while o'er the height,  
Across the south, come noiseless flashes bright,  
And from the marshes evening's vesper hymn.

O Summer night! I would that I might sit  
Forever in thy spell and list thy song!  
That in thy mystic light I might remain,  
And watch for aye the ghostly gleams that flit  
Across thy south, nor think again of wrong  
And fate that binds me to my bitter pain.

## IX.

## AUGUST.

## NOON.

The swooning meadows lie like summer seas ;  
The landscape reels ; a quivering, ghastly gleam  
Bedims the fields ; as in a spell they seem,  
Save where the redtop rolls with scarce a breeze,  
And mowers in the clover to their knees  
Seem threading out the mazes of a dream ;  
No sound save far away the locust's scream,  
Or dreamily a bird-voice in the trees.

The cricket's monotone amid the grass  
Is scarcely heard—a soothing lullaby—  
And steady drones the summer-sounding bee.  
The mingled notes to sleepy murmurs pass,  
Without a sound floats o'er a butterfly,  
And drowsiness and dreams steal over me.

## X.

## SEPTEMBER.

O mellow month, sweet month of dreamy days,  
O month without a thought of pain or wrong,  
The poet's month of beauty, wild and strong,  
Of early goldenrod, of ripening maize,  
Of mountains dimly outlined through the haze,  
Of silence, save at night the cricket's song  
So sad,—O heavenly goddess, tarry with us long,  
O let us live and dream with thee always.

And art thou gone? O stay, my heart, thy fears,  
Reflect and weigh; perchance this borderland,  
This month of gold is May's ecstatic stream,  
And joyous summer soon may dry thy tears,  
Perchance thy happiest days are yet at hand.  
Fear not, my heart, at least 't is thine to dream.

## XI.

## OCTOBER.

The cheerless fields of summer's glory shorn ;  
The wailing winds at night ; the ashy sky ;  
The sunny goldenrod about to die,  
And on the meads the wigwams of the corn.  
Hushed is the anthem that erst hailed the morn,  
Stilled, too, the dream-note of the harvest-fly,  
Yet now and then a thistle-bird floats by,  
And from the hills resounds the hunter's horn.

O sad, still month, of all the months most rare !  
O mellow month of dreams and poesy !  
Whene'er I move in thine enchanted air  
I feel like one who walks in Arcady,  
Where sounds are hushed and hills are dimly seen,  
And all is buried in a golden sheen.

## XII.

## NOVEMBER.

Drear as the last night's banquet hall at morn,  
Its fairy trappings ruffled, soiled, and dead,  
The beauty vanished and the dancers fled,  
Now lies gay summer in a wreck forlorn.  
Forever is the dream of beauty gone—  
The mellow haze, the tints of gold and red—  
For all the trees their royal robes have shed,  
And sere the fields where waved the golden corn.

There is no voice in all the woods to sing,  
The trees are lifeless and the flowers are few,  
The world seems waiting for the snow to bring  
Its kindly robe to hide her shame from view ;  
And on each breeze we catch the mournful sigh,  
“ When wealth and beauty come, alas, we die.”

*November, 1888.*

XIII.

THE HOUSE ON THE MARSH.

DECEMBER.

O'er all the meadows, where in joyous June  
The birds and flowers had made a fairyland,  
Now spreads the flood with ruin on every hand,  
And naught is seen in bleak December's noon  
Save wreck and death, and summer's glory strewn  
Upon the stream, yet thy trim lodges stand,  
O naiads of the marsh, in autumn planned  
For days of flood and bitter cold a boon.

O soul of mine, I would that thy fair dream,  
To build secure a lodge 'mid fadeless bloom,  
Might come at last, for much I fear the flow  
And sullen murmur of that nearing stream,  
That soon may change my summer into gloom,  
And leave me drifting—where, I do not know.

## XIV.

FOR A COPY OF "SONGS ABOUT LIFE, LOVE,  
AND DEATH."

Life, Love, and Death, three fates with might immense !  
    To every soul that dons the feeble clay  
    They all must come, and which is greatest say :  
Frail Life, with mystic web of what and whence ;  
Or mighty Love, the wanton god of sense ;  
    Or Death, who sweeps Life's flimsy web away ?  
    Three powers supreme, and which is chiefest, pray ?  
For each must shake the soul with vehemence.

And lo ! a voice with passion all athrill  
    Of one who sang with fierce, exulting breath !  
    " Love is the king ! " it cried, " Love, strong and fair.  
Life yields to Death ; Love bends both to his will."  
    Then straight it prayed, with passion wild, for Death,  
    And listening heaven heard the reckless prayer.

*December 23, 1892.*



XV.

AT MIDNIGHT.

Sometimes a nameless joy thrills in my soul  
When on a moonless night I view the sky ;  
Sometimes I dream that all the gulfs that lie  
In nether space, the worlds 'twixt pole and pole,  
My feet shall know when tardy days shall roll ;  
Sometimes, again, the joys within me die,  
Ashamed, I cry with David, "What am I?"  
Oh, what an atom, when I view the whole !

Must I be blotted out? Shall I not soar  
Sometime, like thought, from void to farthest void ;  
Or, fettered, shall I perish here below ?  
O I have prayed, with face upon the floor,  
A fierce, wild prayer that I be not destroyed,  
That dying, I may live and soar and know.

*December, 1892.*

## XVI.

FOR A FLY-LEAF OF "THE WIND OF DESTINY."

TO A. S. HARDY.

And are we then borne headlong to our fate,  
Like thistledown or leaf upon the flow,  
A breath to toss to ecstasy or woe,  
And not the masters of our own estate?  
Oh, is it true that love is but a bait,  
A voice that whispers "Come," and we must go,  
Though bitter pain and tears and death we know  
Lurk in the call and jeer us when too late?

O penner of this wild, despairing cry,  
Is it a dream, a dismal fantasie,  
From which thou glad awoke; or does it tell  
The record of thy soul? Is it a sigh  
That burst thy lips to voice thy misery;  
Or is it life? If so, what need of Hell?

*January, 1887.*

XVII.

TO CHARLES HENRY LÜDERS.

This clay of ours is but a feeble thong,  
A flimsy web to bind a soul like thine.  
The dainty chalice could not hold the wine ;  
The trembling viol could not hold the song ;  
The lute string, 'neath a passion all too strong,  
Rang sweet, and snapped upon the opening line.  
And dazed we weep and curse, the fates malign,  
And vainly ask what might have been ere long.

And shall we mourn the voiceless, broken lyre,  
The shattered beaker, and the vanished joy ?  
And shall we weep ? Ah ! better to be glad,  
For we have caught a glimpse of heavenly fire ;  
A gift is ours which time cannot destroy :  
Heaven deemed us worthy ; why should we be sad ?



PASTELS.



## I.

### THE FORGOTTEN PICTURE.

As by magic came again all the scenes of a summer long ago by the sea. The old spell was on him again. As he looked into the eyes of the picture, he saw the dreams of other days.

He felt his heart beating as it beat when he pinned the wild rose to her bosom. He saw the mild beauties of the early autumn. Was the summer really over? Surely the golden-rod never opened so early before!

Oh, that summer by the sea! In a dream he lived it again. He saw now a plump, girlish figure in a tennis suit. With what art its folds clung to her figure! Now it was a snowy bosom in a ball dress; now an earnest, tearful face that looked up to his confidingly.

How his heart was beating!

Ah! she faded from him with the summer, but she left a mark in his life. Do you see the tears in his eyes? Do you see the sparkle and the joy? He is pinning again a wild rose to her bosom.

## II.

## THE NOON HOUR.

It is the time of the year when the shadows at noon are the longest. It is a cloudless day, but a snow-bank of clouds hangs in the south, telling of to-morrow.

Nature is as silent as death. The sun pours from the south a soft, yellow light which gleams on the snow.

The square of the little country village is full of life. Here and there are yokes of patient oxen busily eating the fodder which they have drawn since the early morning on their loads of wood.

Their masters, with bearded faces, rough, warm garments, and wool boots, are eating from the pails which they have brought with them. Their loud laugh comes over to me. By and by they light their pipes and tell of to-morrow's storm, the price of wood and hay, and the merits of their oxen.

There is the look of slavery about the oxen, and they murmur not when they must start again on the journey. The sleds creak on the frozen snow. Merry sleighs dash by with jingling bells. I hear the loud voices of the drivers as they urge on the slow oxen. Then the square is silent.



## III.

## AFTER THE STORM.

It had rained all night. Once or twice the very violence of the storm had awakened me, for the wind dashed the rain in sheets against the windows and howled dismally down the chimney. A look into the darkness had revealed a sky filled with blackness and the spectral forms of trees wrestling with the storm.

But morning dawned with a crystal sky. The haze which had haunted the horizon for weeks was all gone. The morning was like one in June.

Even before light a single sparrow, the lone remnant of summer's chorus, was trilling his welcome to the morn in the wet hedge.

Yesterday I heard him singing in the rain.

## IV.

## A NIGHT IN MAY.

Then night comes on, and the thrush is still. Along the meadows a wavy breath of mist, like spirits of the marsh, breathes up, and black shadows of noiseless night-jars sweep by.

The river murmurs with a far-borne monotone, and—hush!—away, oh, how far away, a lonely trill, borne from distance vague, a voice pulsing with a nameless longing, a wild unrest, which has caught the spirit of the spring and vibrates with the night in tune.

It strikes a chord in my soul, which trembles and pulses with a wild joy that I cannot understand.

## V.

## AFTER OUR SUMMER.

We knew that the summer was over, for the calendar told us that September was creeping by; but the days were so bright, and the summer had so quietly melted into autumn, that we could not realize that it was not summer still.

But the birds were silent now, and the crickets were beginning to chirp mournfully at eventide, and some of the trees by the roadside were getting yellow in their tops. The grapes were coloring, and down in the meadows the maize-fields were Indian villages.

Yes, we knew it was autumn, yet we tried to delude ourselves. The summer had been so bright for us, such a perfect summer in our lives, that it was almost as if we could not let it go.

## VI.

## THE SUMMER SHOWER.

It was dusty and hot. The air was like a furnace, and the clover drooped languidly at mid-day. A pall of smoke hid the horizon and smothered the day. The hills seemed like the landscape of a dream, and even the sounds of the summer day seemed vague and far away.

The west at evening had the brazen glow of a furnace. The sun was a disk of brass, and it was twilight before he sank below the horizon.

There steals from the smoke in the west a black, jagged form. Slowly as a serpent it creeps to the zenith. It covers the sun with a great gloom. It is twilight, but how different from that at nightfall! The landscape takes on a livid green tint. The uncovered eastern sky contrasts strangely with the west.

A distant grumble of thunder comes from the cloud. The swallows fill the air, darting and twittering. Then a shiver runs through the treetops, then a rushing wind. Leaves are whirled far up into the air, and some of them are green.

Large, scattered drops of rain begin to descend upon the parched earth. The haymaker, with hastily-loaded wain,

rushes with all speed to the barn. The thunder becomes a continuous roll, and the rain pours in torrents.

And now the violence of the storm abates; the thunder rolls away to the east. By and by the sun bursts from the west, and the landscape seems new from the hand of God. How green are the forests! How bright are the glistening raindrops! How the sun lights up the sullen clouds retreating in the east!

The robin's nest is full of water, but its master is in the treetop thanking the god of the rain.

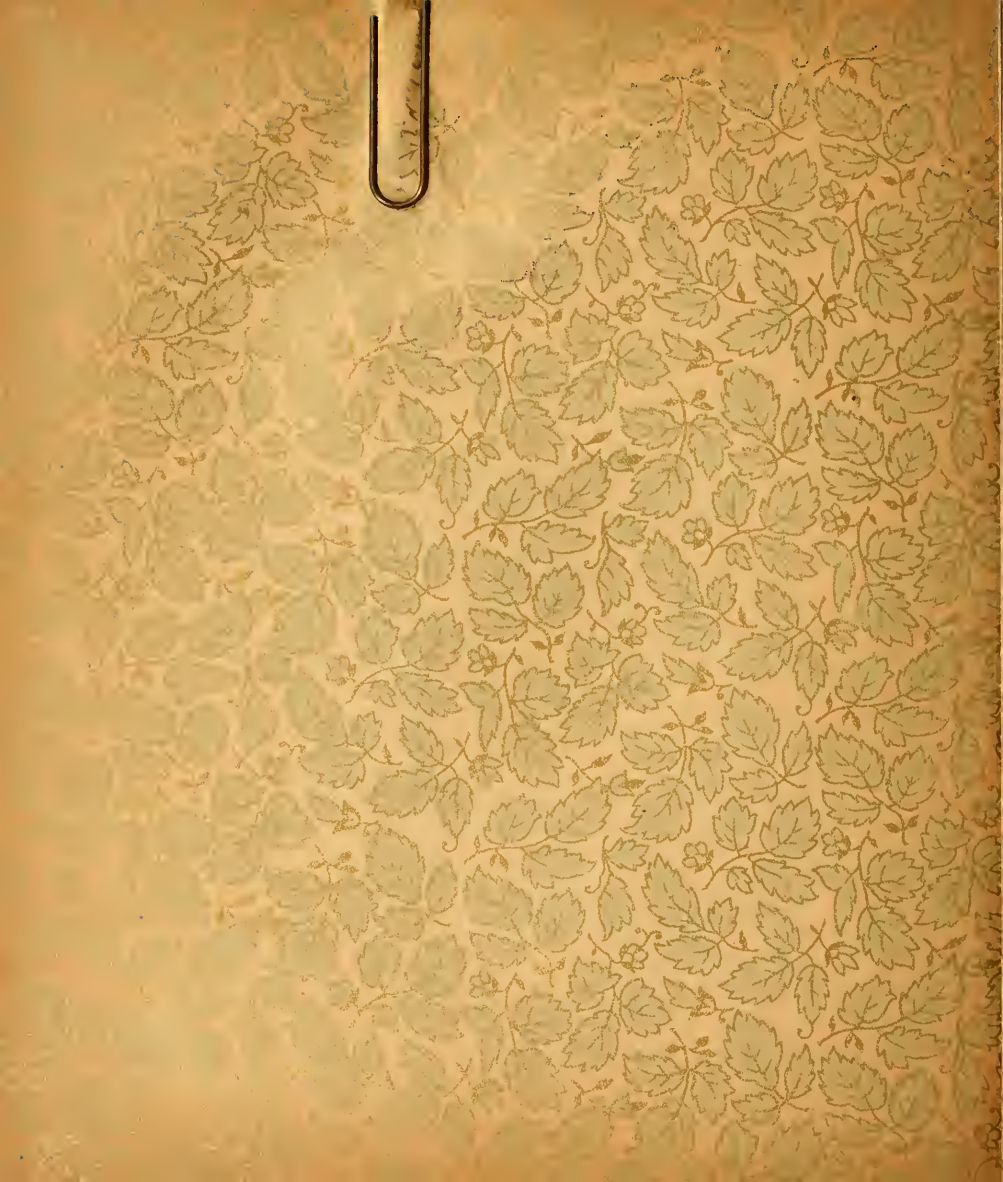


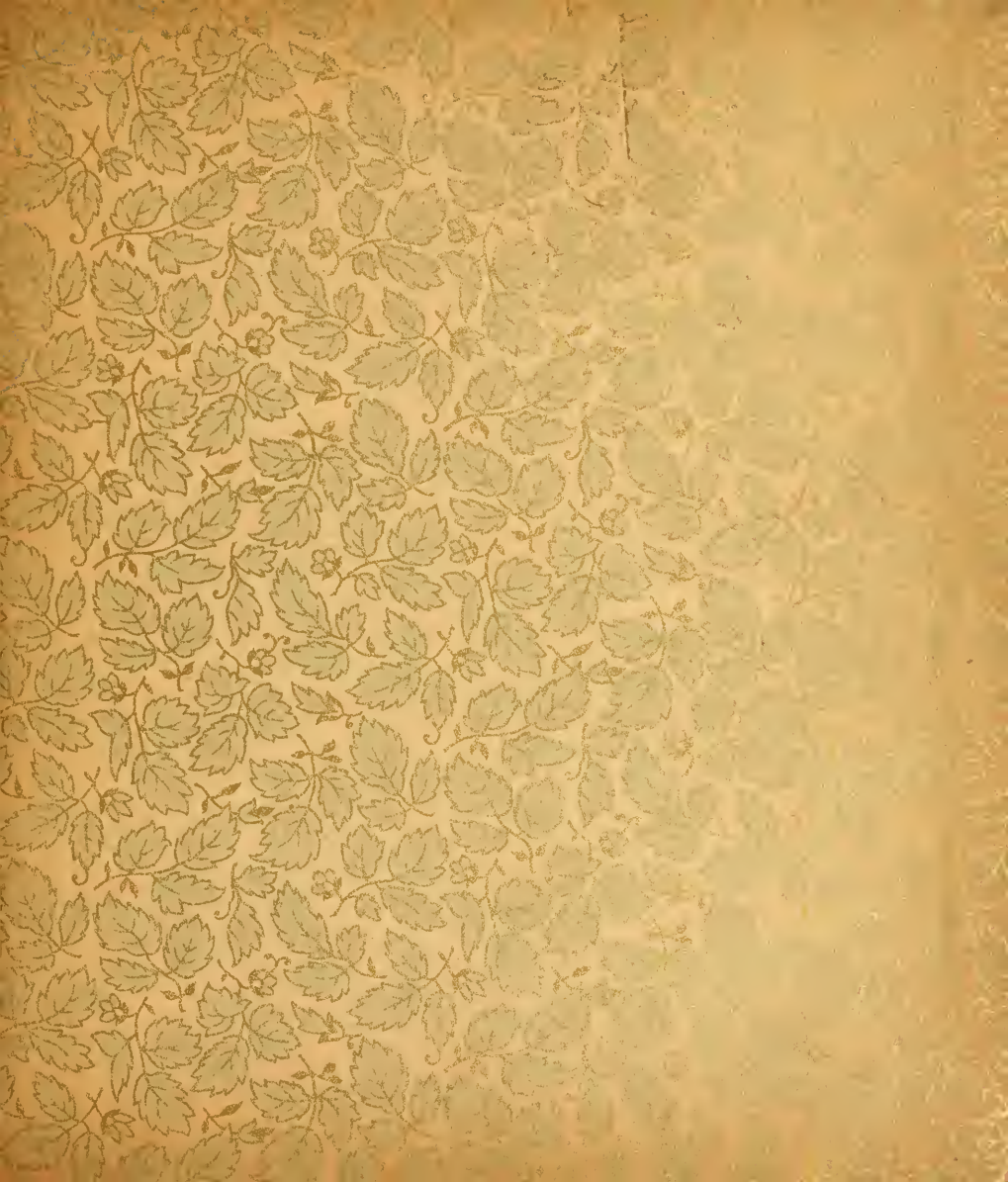












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