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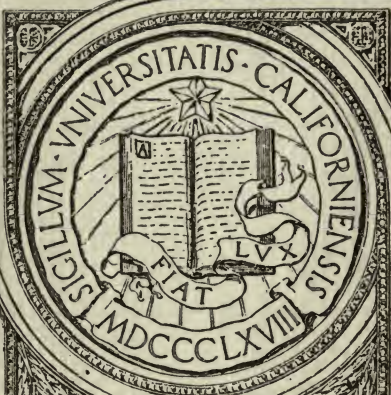


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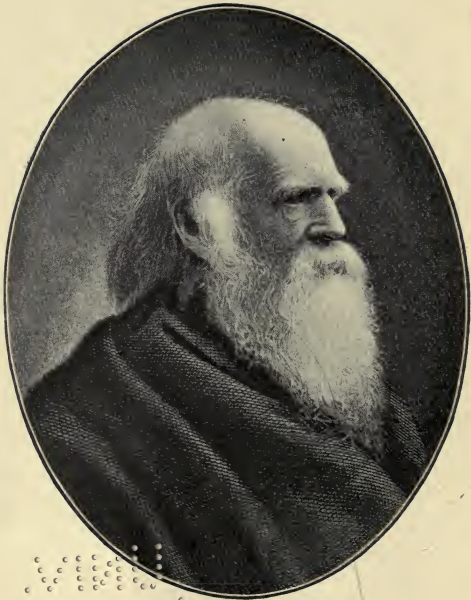
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WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THANATOPSIS, SELLA, AND OTHER POEMS

BY

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

J. H. CASTLEMAN, A.M. (INDIANA)

TEACHER OF ENGLISH AT THE MCKINLEY HIGH SCHOOL
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

New York

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Birth and Parents. — William Cullen Bryant was born at Cummington, western Massachusetts, on November 3, 1794. His ancestors were Puritans, both of his parents being descendants of *Mayflower* passengers, his father of Stephen Bryant and his mother of John Alden, of whom Longfellow was also a descendant. His father, Dr. Peter Bryant, was a village physician, highly respected by all who knew him for his integrity and intellectual keenness. He was a well-read man, versed in ancient and modern languages, and passionately fond of music and poetry. He also took an active interest in politics, representing Cummington in the state legislature for several years. His mother was a woman of practical sense and great force of character. She was a recognized leader in the community, always ready to help the unfortunate or to assist in the advancement of neighborhood interests. To them Bryant owed no small part of his success. Not only was he inspired by them with the deep love for justice and good reflected in both his writings and his life, but he was also encouraged in his literary efforts from childhood. No one else has brought out this fact so well as the poet himself. In his *Hymn to Death* he says of his father: —

“ It must cease,
 For he is in his grave who taught my youth
 The art of verse, and in the bud of life
 Offered me to the Muses. . . .

 This faltering verse which thou
 Shalt not, as wont o'erlook, is all I have
 To offer at thy grave — this — and the hope
 To copy thy example.”

Of his mother he wrote: —

“ Her prompt condemnation of injustice made a strong impression upon me in early life, and if in the discussion of public questions I have in my riper age endeavored to keep in view the great rule of right, it has been owing in a great degree to the force of her example, which taught me never to countenance a wrong because others did.”

Boyhood. — Bryant's boyhood was spent at or near Cummington, a village of but a few score of inhabitants. Here he attended school in company with his brothers and sisters, or wandered among the hills and forests to be met with on every hand. He was a precocious child. He knew his letters before he was a year and a half old, wrote a descriptive poem of considerable merit at nine, and made creditable translations from the Latin poets at ten. So promising was his future that his father early decided to send him to college. Accordingly he was prepared for Williams, where he matriculated in the fall of 1810. He remained there two terms, after which he withdrew with the expectation of entering Yale. But financial difficulties interfered, and he was forced to

abandon his collegiate course. He next turned his attention to the study of law. From his early youth he had taken a keen interest in the political affairs of the country, and so successful had he been from time to time in voicing the sentiments of the people in his verses, that he now resolved upon a public career. The profession of the law, although it did not strongly appeal to him, seemed the quickest way to recognition. In December, 1811, he entered the law office of Mr. Howe of WORTHINGTON, a village a few miles from his home, where he remained for about two years. He then went to BRIDGEWATER and studied under Mr. Baylies, a jurist of considerable note, until August, 1815, when he was admitted to the Massachusetts bar.

Lawyer and Journalist. — Bryant practised law for nine years. After receiving his license, he established himself at Plainsfield, a hamlet four or five miles from CUMMINGTON, where he remained but a short time, going from there to Great Barrington to become the partner of a young lawyer of that place. He soon purchased his partner's interest, and in a few months worked up a fairly lucrative practice. In the summer of 1819 he was made one of the tithing-men of the town, and soon afterwards town clerk. The Governor of the state also appointed him Justice of the Peace.

But as already intimated, he was not in sympathy with his profession. Literature had early won his heart, and he longed to give it his undivided attention. His shy, sensitive nature, too, shrank from the wrangling of the court room, and as his rising reputation brought him

increased practice, he grew more and more dissatisfied. Finally, in 1825, prompted by his preference for things literary and urged by influential friends, he abandoned law to take up literature.

His first experience in his new profession was with the *New York Review* and *Athenæum Magazine*. He had gone to New York at the suggestion of Mr. Sedgwick, an intimate friend who was much interested in his literary ability, and been appointed assistant editor of that periodical. The publication proved to be short-lived, however, for although well edited, it did not attract subscribers enough to maintain it. After having been consolidated with several other magazines in rapid succession, it was given up. But he was not long without employment. He was made assistant editor of the *Evening Post*, and on the death of the editor-in-chief a few months later was advanced to that position. Here he remained throughout the remainder of his life, a period of more than a half century. As a journalist he was broad-minded, conscientious, and fearless. He never permitted personal motives to determine his attitude toward public questions, nor compromised with what he believed to be wrong.

Poet. — Bryant's chief ambition from childhood was to be a poet. He began to write rhymes at a very early age, and by the time he was ten produced a poem that was published in the county paper. At the age of thirteen he wrote *The Embargo*, a political satire, which was published in Boston, and which attracted a considerable comment throughout the New England states. Then

came *Thanatopsis*, upon which much of his fame as a poet rests, written in 1811. Other poems, including *The Yellow Violet*, *Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood*, *To a Waterfowl*, and *Green River* followed at short intervals. In 1821 he read *The Ages* before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Harvard, and that same year published his first volume of verse. The next four years were busy ones, for in that time he wrote thirty poems of which *Monument Mountain* and *June* are the best known. From 1825 to 1832 he produced some forty poems, among them *The Death of the Flowers*, *The Prairies*, and *The Evening Wind*; and in the last year of that period published a collected edition of his works both in America and in England. Then followed a period of comparative inactivity, his attention being largely absorbed in his journalistic work. In 1842, however, he published a volume of new verse, and two years later added another. New editions of his poems appeared in 1847 and 1854, and another volume of new verse in 1864. His final edition of his poetry came out in 1876.

Bryant was not a prolific writer. In his literary career, extending over seventy years, he gave to the world only one hundred and sixty poems, the average length of which is but seventy-five lines. He never attempted to write a long poem, although frequently urged to do so by his closest friends, for, with Poe, he believed it impossible to sustain the highest degree of poetic excellence for any considerable time. Obscurity, too, is apt to find its way into such a production, and there was no other mistake that he sought more to avoid.

He felt that no poem was fit to leave his hand, if a single word or line required study to be understood.

As a poet, Bryant ranks with Lowell, Longfellow, Whittier, and Holmes. He has the distinction of being America's first great writer of verse, and, with Irving and Cooper, of bringing his country into recognition in the literary world. He is distinctively a poet of nature, although mankind plays a large part in his productions. Like Wordsworth, he turned to nature for solace in times of discouragement, and with him found there a balm for all sorrows. In *Littell's Living Age* for February, 1864, occurs this estimate of him. "It has been the singular felicity of Mr. Bryant that he has done whatever he has done with consummate finish and completeness. If he has not, as the critics often tell us, the comprehensiveness or philosophic insight of Wordsworth, the weird fancy of Coleridge, the gorgeous diction of Keats, the exquisite subtlety of Tennyson, he is, nevertheless, the one among all our contemporaries who has written the fewest things carelessly and the most things well. . . . As a poet of nature he stands without a rival. No one has celebrated her as he has in all her changeful aspects of beauty and grandeur. Her skies, her seas, her woods, her winds, her rains, her rivers, her snows, her flowers, have been his perpetual inspiration. He has made this fine dwelling place of ours infinitely lovelier to all of us by the charms with which he has vested its forms, and by the gentle lessons which he has taught us to read in all its fair vicissitudes."

Translator and Orator. — Bryant's broad knowledge of

languages, both classical and modern, led him to translate selections from many literatures. Short poems from Greek, Spanish, German, French, and Portuguese authors found their way into his works. But his crowning act in this field was the rendering into English of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. In the fall of 1863 he published a translation of the fifth book of the *Odyssey*, with extracts from the *Iliad*, which met with so much commendation that he decided to translate the poems in full. He turned his attention first to the *Iliad*, which he finished in 1870, then at once to the *Odyssey*, which he completed the next year. In speaking of this work, he said that he had endeavored to be strictly faithful in his rendering, to add nothing of his own, and to give the reader, so far as our language would allow, all that he found in the original. No other translation of these great classics, with the exception of that of Pope, has been more widely read.

Bryant was also a public speaker of no mean ability. He was especially effective in delivering orations upon the lives and writings of eminent men. In 1848 he delivered an address before the National Academy of Design in commemoration of Thomas Cole, the artist, and after that was called upon to give the funeral orations of several of his prominent contemporaries. His ablest discourses were brought out by the death of Cooper (1851), Irving (1859), Halleck (1868), and Verplanck (1870). He was also the chief orator at the dedication of monuments erected in Central Park to the memory of Shakespeare, Morse, Scott, and Mazzini.

Traveller.—Bryant travelled extensively, visiting many

countries in the course of his busy life in whose literature and history he was especially interested. In June, 1834, he crossed the Atlantic, and spent a year and a half in travel and study in France, Italy, and Germany, returning to New York in January, 1836. Early in the autumn of 1845 he again went to Europe, going first to Great Britain and thence to the continent. While in Great Britain he met many men of prominence, and saw many places of interest, much attention being shown him. He remained abroad but a few months. In the spring of 1849 he visited Cuba, and in the summer of the same year crossed to Europe for the third time, travelling through Great Britain and the islands off its coasts, then through France, Switzerland, and Germany, arriving at home late in December. Three years later he again sailed for Europe, going from there to Egypt and the Holy Land, and reaching New York in the summer of 1853. In 1857 he crossed the Atlantic for the fifth time, accompanied by his wife, this time in the interest of Mrs. Bryant's health, which was slowly failing. His hopes for her recovery, however, were not realized, and he returned with her the next year. Eight years later he visited the continent for the last time, remaining but a few weeks. His last journey of any note was made in 1872, when he travelled through Mexico. While abroad, he wrote many letters for his journal, which were eagerly read by the public, his wide acquaintance with historic places and his keen observation making them of special value. In 1850 he collected and published a number of them in a volume, under the title of *Letters of a Traveller*,

and again in 1869 under the title of *Letters from the East*.

Death. — Bryant's death — the result of a fall — occurred in June, 1878. He was entering the home of his friend, General James Wilson, on May 29, after delivering an address at the unveiling of the statue to Mazzini, when, overcome by the heat, he fell upon the stone steps, striking heavily upon his head. He recovered consciousness at intervals, but gradually grew worse. He died on the twelfth of his favorite month, June.

APPRECIATIONS

The voices of the hills did his obey ;

The torrents flashed and tumbled in his song ;

He brought our native hills from far away,

Or set us 'mid the innumerable throng

Of dateless woods, or where we heard the calm

Old homestead's evening psalm.

— JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, *On Board the '76*.

Bryant's writings transport us into the depths of the solemn primeval forest, to the shores of the lonely lakes, the banks of the wild nameless stream or the brow of the rocky upland, rising like a promontory from amidst a wide ocean of foliage, while they shed around us the glory of a climate, fierce in its extremes, but splendid in its vicissitudes. — WASHINGTON IRVING, *Letter to Samuel Rogers, 1832*.

Bryant, during a long career of authorship, has written but comparatively little; but that little is of untold

price. What exquisite taste, what a delicate ear for the music of poetical language, what a fine and piercing sense of the beauties of nature, down to the minutest and most evanescent things! He walks forth into the fields and forests, and not a green or rosy tint, not a flower, or herb, or tree, not a tiny leaf or gossamer tissue, not a strange or familiar plant, escapes his vigilant glance. The naturalist is not keener in searching out the science of nature than he in detecting all its poetical aspects, effects, analogies, and contrasts. To him the landscape is a speaking and teaching page. He sees its pregnant meaning, and all its hidden relations to the life of man. For him the shadow and sunshine, that chase each other in swift rivalry over the plain, are suggestive of deep meaning and touching comparisons. For him the breath of evening and of morning have an articulate voice. To him the song of birds is a symbol of that deeper song of joy and thankfulness that ascends forever from the heart of man to the Giver of every good. To him the ocean utters its solemn hymns, and he can well interpret them to others. What a beautiful gift is this! — G. S. HILLARD, *North American Review for October, 1842.*

The influence of Bryant's poetry is of a pure and ennobling character; never ministering to false or unhealthy sensibility, it refreshes the better feelings of our nature, inspiring a tranquil confidence in the on-goings of the universe, with whose most beautiful manifestations we are brought into such intimate communion.

Its most pensive tones, which murmur such sweet, sad music, never lull the soul in the repose of despair, but inspire it with a cheerful hope in the issues of the future. — *Harper's New Monthly Magazine for April, 1851.*

The many and high excellencies of Mr. Bryant have been almost universally recognized. With men of every variety of tastes he is a favorite. His works abound with passages of profound reflection which the philosopher meditates in his closet, and with others of such simple beauty and obvious intention as please the most illiterate. In his pages are illustrated all the common definitions of poetry, yet they are pervaded by a single purpose and spirit. Of the essential but inferior characteristics of poetry, which make it an art, he has a perfect mastery. Very few equal him in grace and power of expression. Every line has compactness, precision, and elegance, and flows with its fellows in exquisite harmony. His manner is on all occasions fitly chosen for his subject. His verse is solemn and impressive, or airy and playful, as suits his purpose. His beautiful imagery is appropriate, and has that air of freshness which distinguishes the productions of an author writing from his own observations of life and nature rather than from books.

Mr. Bryant is a translator to the world of the silent language of the universe. He "conforms his life to the beautiful order of God's works." In the meditation of nature he has learned high lessons of philosophy and religion. With no other poet does the subject spring so

naturally from the object; the moral, the sentiment, from the contemplation of the things about him. There is nothing forced in his inductions. By a genuine earnestness he wins the sympathy of his reader, and prepares him to anticipate his thought. By an imperceptible influence he carries him from the beginning to the end of a poem, and leaves him infused with the very spirit in which it is conceived.

In his descriptions of nature there is a remarkable fidelity. They convey in an extraordinary degree the actual impression of what is grand and beautiful and peculiar in our scenery. The old and shadowy forests stand as they grew up from the seeds God planted, the sealike prairies stretching in airy undulations beyond the eye's extremest vision; our lakes and mountains and rivers he brings before us in pictures warmly colored with the hues of the imagination, and as truthful as those which Cole puts on the canvas. — RUFUS WILMOT GRISWOLD, *The Poets and Poetry of America*.

Mr. Bryant has written nothing in these poems that can have an impure or hurtful tendency. Not a syllable is here of which virtue herself could complain, and nothing that tends to make us laugh at or undervalue our fellow-men; but much that tends to make the soul strong in opposing error, in bravely battling for truth, and in patiently waiting the revelation of a brighter and a better day for our afflicted race. His thoughts are chaste, generally noble, never low or commonplace, always tending to improve those who read. They lead you to the

pure air and grand scenery of the mountain top, not so much that you may look down upon the glorious sight of the earth beneath, as that you may be strengthened by the healthful exercise, and may get a broader view of the illimitable heaven and numberless stars above your head. His metaphors and similes are easily suggested, and actually illustrate his subject and deepen the impression on the mind, as well as add beauty to the language. The verses and stanzas are so harmoniously constructed that all their hinges seem to be golden, and even the blank verse often moves with as liquid a flow as some of Whittier's fiery rhymes. There is a polish about these poems that but few Englishmen have been willing to wait for. . . . The words are most admirably chosen to express sweetness, grace, and elegance or energy, patience and hopefulness, — qualities for which the poems are especially distinguished. They are easy to be understood, definite in sense, and used with great precision; in sound they are musical, and admirably harmonize with the idea.—ROBERT ALLYN, *Methodist Quarterly Review for January, 1859.*

As a poet Bryant stands first in American literature. His characteristics are great strength and sweetness, a noble simplicity and rare melody of versification, luminous clearness of expression, tenderness without affectation, a deep religious sympathy with nature joined to a rare gift of insight and masterly felicity in interpreting its spirit, a profound sensibility to all affecting phases

of human experience, exquisite taste, a powerful imagination, and a manly and genuine sincerity. He excels as an artist in portraying features that are most intensely suggestive, and in so preserving the natural relations of things described that their vitality strikes us where we are most susceptible and receptive. From all literary trickery of every sort he is utterly free. With his fervor and energy, he has a calm and majestic repose. In some of his more serious poems he shows a Miltonic grandeur, yet with no signs of effort. The accusation of poetic frigidity that was once in fashion against him was long ago abandoned as unjust. Those who feel deepest, and see down where flow the undercurrents of life, know full well that there is a divine heat in the poet's soul. But it does not produce bubbles, or fog, or roil, or sputter, or even glittering pyrotechnics. His has a solemn and sweet dignity which is never betrayed into rant or declamation. Every line is a jewel. The range of his topics is wide, and, though his original poems are not voluminous, yet he has treated just those themes that have the deepest significance to us, — life and death, home and country, liberty and religion, — while no poet has ever given more perfect delineations of nature in her varying moods.

His ethics are pure and elevating. In his narratives of life, his prophecies of liberty, his pictures of human disenthralment and progress and aspiration, he shows a philosophic insight and comprehensiveness, a devout spirit, and a temper of genuine philanthropy. The inspirations of his poetry are, therefore, of the highest and

finest quality. In all he has written there is no line appealing to a base passion, not a suggestion that is indelicate, not a sentiment that can be used in the support of any evil or injustice. As pure as the snowflake, yet as warm as the tropic wind, is the spirit out of which is born his glorious song. Those who wish clearest visions, walk most reverently with nature, and who, in the sympathies of a tender and strong humanity, aspire most sincerely for virtue and freedom and brotherhood, never cease to find strength and refreshment in his noble strains. They come with an invigorating vitality, moving, consoling, and replenishing life in its soundless depths. We feel in "the great miracle that goes on around us" that infinite love is ever working and benignant. And so the earth and its companionships are more sacred, and our existence becomes a more expressive note in the high harmony of the universe.

As a man, Bryant presents whatever is cultivated, useful, and admirable in human character and life. To his splendid genius he joins the noblest virtues. Whatever the temptation, he has never abused his powers and opportunities for unworthy ends. No one can point out in his career an act of injustice, the betrayal of a trust, the advocacy of a doctrine or support of a candidate that his own selfish interests might be secured. He has devoted his long and laborious life to the highest culture, and to a beneficent service that has never swerved from its high aim. What is never to be ignored in the estimate of the man is the truth, honor, justice, philanthropy — the high Christian conscience — that he has carried into every field

of his endeavor, and which consecrates his renown. He has lived constant to his ideal. As Holmes says of him:—

How shall we thank him that in evil days
 He faltered never, — nor for blame nor praise,
 Nor hire, nor party, shamed his earlier lays ?
 But as his boyhood was of manliest hue,
 So to his youth, his manly years were true,
 All dyed in rough purple through and through.

One might say that such a life has been singularly fortunate, but the word does not convey the correct idea of it. It is the result of the obedience to divine law, and is, therefore, a splendid example of manhood. Filling, as this life does, such a space in the affections of men, so grand in its simplicity, so rich in its fruitage, so manifold in its utilities, so harmonious in its symmetry, “like perfect music set to noble words,” Bryant may well have to-day the reverent homage of a grateful generation.

—HORATIO N. POWERS, *Lecture, November, 1874.*

LIST OF EDITIONS OF BRYANT'S POEMS

The Embargo, or Sketches of the Times, 1808.

The Embargo, the Spanish Revolution and Other Poems, 1809.

Poems, 1821.

Poems, 1832. (Also published in England.)

Poems, 1834.

Poems, 1836.

Poems, 1839.

The Fountain and Other Poems, 1842.

The White-Footed Deer and Other Poems, 1844.

Poems, 1847.

Poems, 1854. (Two volumes. Also published in England.)

Thirty Poems, 1864.

Poems. 1871.

Poetical Works of William Cullen Bryant, 1876.

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Homer's Iliad, 1870. (Translation.)

Homer's Odyssey, 1871. (Translation.)

LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES AND CRITICISMS

William Cullen Bryant (Biographies), Parke Godwin; A. J. Symington; Ray Palmer; John Bigelow, in the *American Men of Letters Series*; D. J. Hill in the *American Authors Series*.

William Cullen Bryant (Criticisms), Bayard Taylor, *Critical Essays and Literary Notes*; Edwin P. Whipple, *Literature and Life, and Essays and Reviews*; James Grant Wilson, *Essays: Critical and Imaginative*; George William Curtis, *Literary and Social Essays*; James Russell Lowell, *Fable for Critics*.



EARLIER POEMS

°THANATOPSIS

“Thanatopsis,” both in conception and execution, is a noble example of true poetical enthusiasm. It alone would establish the author’s claim to the honours of genius. — CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

“Thanatopsis” owes the extent of its celebrity to its nearly absolute freedom from defect, in the ordinary understanding of the term. I mean to say that its negative merit recommends it to the public attention. It is a thoughtful, well-constructed, well-versified poem. The concluding thought is exceedingly noble. — EDGAR ALLAN POE.

To him who in the love of Nature holds
°Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A °various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides 5
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and °sad images 10
Of the °stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the °narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart; —
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature’s teachings, while from all around — 15
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air —
Comes a still voice — Yet a few days, and thee

The all-beholding sun shall see no more
 In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
 Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears, 20
 Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
 Thy °image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
 Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
 And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
 Thine individual being, shalt thou go 25
 To mix for ever with the elements,
 To be a brother to the insensible rock
 And to the sluggish clod, which the rude °swain
 Turns with his °share, and treads upon. The oak
 Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould. 30

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
 Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
 Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
 With °patriarchs of the °infant world — with kings,
 The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good, 35
 Fair forms, and hoary °seers of ages past,
 All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
 Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun, — the vales
 Stretching in pensive quietness between;
 The °venerable woods — rivers that move 40
 In majesty, and the complaining brooks
 That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
 Old Ocean's gray and °melancholy waste, —
 Are but the solemn decorations all
 Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun, 45
 The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,

Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
 Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
 The globe are but a handful to the tribes
 That slumber in its bosom. — Take the wings 50
 Of morning, pierce the °Barcan wilderness,
 Or lose thyself in the °continuous woods
 Where rolls the °Oregon, and hears no sound,
 Save his own dashings — yet the dead are there:
 And millions in those solitudes, since first 55
 The flight of years began, have laid them down
 In their last sleep — the dead reign there alone.
 So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
 In silence from the living, and no friend
 Take note of thy departure? All that breathe 60
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
 When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
 Plod on, and each one as before will chase
 His favorite °phantom; yet all these shall leave
 Their mirth and their employments, and shall come 65
 And make their bed with thee. As the long train
 Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
 The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
 In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
 The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man — 70
 Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
 By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy °summons comes to join
 The °innumerable caravan, which moves
 To that mysterious realm, where each shall take 75

His chamber in the silent halls of death,
 Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
 Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
 By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
 About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams. ✓

80

THE YELLOW VIOLET

WHEN beechen buds begin to swell,
 And woods the blue-bird's warble know,
 The yellow violet's modest bell
 Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

Ere °russet fields their green resume,
 Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare,
 To meet thee, when thy faint perfume
 Alone is in the °virgin air.

5

Of all her train, the hands of Spring
 First plant thee in the watery mould,
 And I have seen thee blossoming
 Beside the snow-bank's edges cold.

10

Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
 Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
 Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,
 And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

15

°Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,
 And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
 Unapt the passing view to meet,
 When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh. 20

Oft, in the sunless April day,
 Thy early smile has stayed my walk,
 But 'midst the gorgeous blooms of May,
 I passed thee on thy humble stalk.

So they, who climb to wealth, forget 25
 The friends in darker fortunes tried.
 I copied them — but I regret
 That I should ape the ways of pride.

And when again the genial hour
 Awakes the painted tribes of light, 30
 I'll not o'erlook the modest flower
 That made the woods of April bright.

°INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE TO A
 WOOD

STRANGER, if thou hast learned a truth which needs
 No school of long experience, that the world
 Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen
 Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,
 To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood 5
 And view the haunts of Nature. The calm shade

Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet breeze
 That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft a balm
 To thy sick heart. Thou wilt find nothing here
 Of all that pained thee in the haunts of men 10
 And made thee loathe thy life. The °primal curse
 Fell, it is true, upon the unsinning earth,
 But not in vengeance. God hath yoked to Guilt
 Her pale tormentor, Misery. Hence, these shades
 Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick roof 15
 Of green and stirring branches is alive
 And musical with birds, that sing and sport
 In °wantonness of spirit; while below
 The squirrel, with raised paws and form erect,
 Chirps merrily. Throngs of insects in the shade 20
 Try their thin wings and dance in the warm beam
 That waked them into life. Even the green trees
 Partake the deep contentment; as they bend
 To the soft winds, the sun from the blue sky
 Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene. 25
 Scarce less the cleft-born wild-flower seems to enjoy
 Existence, than the winged plunderer
 That sucks its sweets. The massy rocks themselves,
 And the old and ponderous trunks of prostrate trees
 That lead from knoll to knoll a °causey rude 30
 Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark roots,
 With all their earth upon them, twisting high,
 Breathe °fixed tranquillity. The rivulet
 Sends forth glad sounds, and °tripping o'er its bed
 Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks, 35
 Seems, with continuous laughter, to rejoice

In its own being. Softly tread the marge,
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the wren
That dips her bill in water. The cool wind,
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to thee, 40
Like one that loves thee nor will let thee pass
Ungreeted, and shall give it slight embrace.

SONG

SOON as the glazed and gleaming snow
Reflects the day-dawn cold and clear,
The hunter of the west must go
In depth of woods to seek the deer.

His rifle on his shoulder placed, 5
His stores of death arranged with skill,
His moccasins and snow-shoes laced, —
Why lingers he beside the hill?

Far, in the dim and doubtful light,
Where woody slopes a valley leave, 10
He sees what none but lover might,
The dwelling of his Genevieve.

And oft he turns his truant eye,
And pauses oft, and lingers near;
But when he marks the reddening sky, 15
He bounds away to hunt the deer.

°TO A WATERFOWL

The soft and exquisite beauty of the lines entitled " To a Waterfowl " is appreciated by every reader of taste. They belong to that rare class of poems which, once read, haunt the imagination with a perpetual charm. — Harper's New Monthly Magazine for April, 1851.

WHITHER, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the °last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
°As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the °plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or °marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast, —
The desert and °illimitable air, —
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

5

10

15

20

And soon that toil shall end;
 Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
 And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
 Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the °abyss of heaven 25
 Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
 Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
 And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
 Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight, 30
 In the long way that I must tread alone,
 Will lead my steps aright.

GREEN RIVER

WHEN breezes are soft and skies are fair,
 I steal an hour from study and care,
 And °hie me away to the woodland scene,
 Where wanders the stream with waters of green;
 As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink, 5
 Had given their stain to the wave they drink;
 And they, whose meadows it murmurs through,
 Have named the stream from its own fair hue.

Yet pure its waters — its shallows are bright
 With colored pebbles and sparkles of light, 10

And clear the depths where its eddies play,
 And dimples deepen and whirl away,
 And the °plane-tree's speckled arms o'ershoot
 The swifter current that mines its root,
 Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk the hill, 15
 The quivering glimmer of sun and rill,
 With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,
 Like the ray that streams from the diamond stone.
 Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,
 With blossoms, and birds, and wild bees' hum; 20
 The flowers of summer are fairest there,
 And freshest the breath of the summer air;
 And sweetest the golden autumn day
 In silence and sunshine glides away.

Yet fair as thou art, thou shun'st to glide, 25
 Beautiful stream! by the village side;
 But windest away from haunts of men,
 To quiet valley and shaded glen;
 And forest, and meadow, and slope of hill,
 Around thee, are lonely, lovely, and still. 30
 Lonely — save when, by thy rippling tides,
 From thicket to thicket the angler glides;
 Or the °simpler comes with basket and book,
 For herbs of power on thy banks to look;
 Or haply, some idle dreamer, like me, 35
 To wander, and muse, and gaze on thee.
 Still — save the chirp of birds that feed
 On the °river-cherry and seedy reed,
 And thy own wild music gushing out

With mellow murmur and fairy shout, 40
From dawn to the blush of another day,
Like traveller singing along his way.

That fairy music I never hear,
Nor gaze on those waters so green and clear,
And mark them winding away from sight, 45
Darkened with shade or flashing with light,
While o'er them the vine to its thicket clings,
And the zephyr stoops to freshen his wings,
But I wish that fate had left me free
To wander these quiet haunts with thee, 50
Till the eating cares of earth should depart,
And the peace of the scene pass into my heart;
But I envy thy stream, as it glides along,
Through its beautiful banks in a trance of song.

°Though forced to drudge for the dregs of men, 55
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous pen,
And mingle among the jostling crowd,
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud —
I often come to this quiet place,
To breathe the airs that ruffle thy face, 60
And gaze upon thee in silent dream,
For in thy lonely and lovely stream,
An image of that calm life appears,
That won my heart in my greener years.

°A WINTER PIECE

THE time has been that these wild solitudes,
 Yet beautiful as wild, were trod by me
 Oftener than now; and when the ills of life
 Had chafed my spirit — when the unsteady pulse
 Beat with strange flutterings — I would wander forth 5
 And seek the woods. The sunshine on my path
 Was to me as a friend. The swelling hills,
 The quiet dells retiring far between,
 With gentle invitation to explore
 Their windings, were a calm society 10
 That talked with me and soothed me. Then the chant
 Of birds, and chime of brooks, and soft caress
 Of the fresh sylvan air, made me forget
 The thoughts that broke my peace, and I began
 To gather °simples by the fountain's brink, 15
 And lose myself in day-dreams. While I stood
 In nature's loneliness, I was with one
 With whom I early grew familiar, one
 Who never had a frown for me, whose voice
 Never rebuked me for the hours I stole 20
 From cares I loved not, but of which the world
 Deems highest, to converse with her. When shrieked
 The bleak November winds, and smote the woods,

And the brown fields were herbless, and the shades,
That met above the merry rivulet, 25
Were spoiled, I sought, I loved them still, — they
seemed
Like old companions in adversity.
Still there was beauty in my walks; the brook,
Bordered with sparkling frost-work, was as gay
As with its fringe of summer flowers. Afar, 30
The village with its spires, the path of streams,
And dim receding valleys, hid before
By °interposing trees, lay visible
Through the bare grove, and my familiar haunts
Seemed new to me. Nor was I slow to come 35
Among them, when the clouds, from their still skirts,
Had shaken down on earth the feathery snow,
And all was white. The pure keen air abroad,
Albeit it breathed no scent of herb, nor heard
Love-call of bird nor merry hum of bee, 40
Was not the air of death. Bright mosses crept
Over the spotted trunks, and the close buds,
That lay along the boughs, instinct with life,
Patient, and waiting the soft breath of Spring,
Feared not the piercing spirit of the North. 45
The snow-bird twittered on the beechen bough,
And 'neath the hemlock, whose thick branches bent
Beneath its bright cold burden, and kept dry.
A circle, on the earth, of withered leaves,
The partridge found a shelter. Through the snow 50
The rabbit sprang away. The lighter track
Of fox, and the raccoon's broad path, were there,

Crossing each other. From his hollow tree,
 The squirrel was abroad, gathering the nuts
 Just fallen, that asked the winter cold and sway 55
 Of winter blast, to shake them from their hold.

But Winter has yet brighter scenes, — he boasts
 Splendors beyond what gorgeous Summer knows:
 Or Autumn with his many fruits, and woods
 All flushed with many hues. Come when the rains 60
 Have glazed the snow, and clothed the trees with ice;
 While the slant sun of February pours
 Into the bowers a flood of light. Approach!
 The incrusted surface shall upbear thy steps,
 And the broad arching portals of the grove 65
 Welcome thy entering. Look! the massy trunks
 Are cased in the pure crystal; each light spray,
 Nodding and tinkling in the breath of heaven,
 Is studded with its trembling water-drops,
 That stream with rainbow radiance as they move. 70
 But round the parent stem the long low boughs
 Bend, in a glittering ring, and arbors hide
 The glassy floor. Oh! you might deem the spot
 The spacious cavern of some °virgin mine,
 Deep in the womb of earth — where the gems grow, 75
 And diamonds put forth radiant rods and bud
 With amethyst and topaz — and the place
 Lit up, most royally, with the pure beam
 That dwells in them. Or haply the vast hall
 Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night, 80
 And fades not in the glory of the sun; —

Where crystal columns send forth slender shafts
And crossing arches; and fantastic aisles
Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost
Among the crowded pillars. Raise thine eyes, — 85
Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault;
There the blue sky and the white drifting cloud
Look in. Again the °wilderer fancy dreams
Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,
And fixed, with all their branching jets, in air, 90
And all their °sluices sealed. All, all is light;
Light without shade. But all shall pass away
With the next sun. From numberless vast trunks,
Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound
Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve 95
Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was wont.

And it is pleasant, when the noisy streams
Are just set free, and milder suns melt off
The plashy snow, save only the firm drift
In the deep glen or the close shade of pines, — 100
'Tis pleasant to behold the wreaths of smoke
Roll up among the maples of the hill,
Where the shrill sound of youthful voices wakes
The shriller echo, as the clear pure °lymph,
That from the wounded trees, in twinkling drops, 105
Falls, mid the golden brightness of the morn,
Is gathered in with brimming pails, and oft,
Wielded by sturdy hands, the stroke of axe
Makes the woods ring. Along the quiet air,
Come and float calmly off the soft light clouds, 110

Such as you see in summer, and the winds
 Scarce stir the branches. Lodged in sunny cleft,
 Where the cold breezes come not, blooms alone
 The little °wind-flower, whose just opened eye
 Is blue as the spring heaven it gazes at — 115
 Startling the loiterer in the naked groves
 With unexpected beauty, for the time
 Of blossoms and green leaves is yet afar.
 And ere it comes, the encountering winds shall oft
 Muster their wrath again, and rapid clouds 120
 Shade heaven, and bounding on the frozen earth
 Shall fall their volleyed stores rounded like hail,
 And white like snow, and the loud North again
 Shall buffet the vexed forest in his rage.

°“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN”

OH, °deem not they are blest alone
 Whose lives a peaceful °tenor keep;
 The Power who pities man, has shown
 A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again 5
 The lids that overflow with tears;
 And weary hours of woe and pain
 Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest

For every dark and troubled night;
And grief may bide, an evening guest,
But joy shall come with early light.

10

And thou, who, o'er thy friend's low °bier
Sheddest the bitter drops like rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere,
Will give him to thy arms again.

15

Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny,
Though with a pierced and broken heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

20

For God has marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear,
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here.

“NO MAN KNOWETH HIS SEPULCHRE”

WHEN he, who, from the scourge of wrong,
Aroused the Hebrew tribes to fly,
Saw the fair region, promised long,
And bowed him on the hills to die;

God made his grave, to men unknown, 5
Where °Moab's rocks a vale infold,
And laid the aged seer alone
To slumber while the world grows old.

Thus still, whene'er the good and just 10
Close the dim eye on life and pain,
Heaven watches o'er their sleeping dust,
Till the pure spirit comes again.

Though nameless, trampled, and forgot,
His servant's humble ashes lie,
Yet God has marked and sealed the spot, 15
To call its inmate to the sky.

HYMN TO DEATH

OH! could I hope the wise and pure in heart
Might hear my song without a frown, nor deem
My voice unworthy of the theme it tries, —
I would take up the hymn to Death, and say
To the grim power, The world hath slandered thee 5
And mocked thee. On thy dim and shadowy brow
They place an iron crown, and call thee king
Of terrors, and the spoiler of the world,
Deadly assassin, that strik'st down the fair,
The loved, the good — that breathest on the lights 10
Of virtue set along the vale of life,
And they go out in darkness. I am come,
Not with reproaches, not with cries and prayers,
Such as have stormed thy stern, insensible ear
From the beginning. I am come to speak 15
Thy praises. °True it is, that I have wept
Thy conquests, and may weep them yet again:
And thou from some I love wilt take a life
Dear to me as my own. Yet while the spell
Is on my spirit, and I talk with thee 20
In sight of all thy trophies, face to face,
Meet is it that my voice should utter forth
Thy nobler triumph; I will teach the world

To thank thee. — Who are thine accusers? — Who?
 The living! — they who never felt thy power, 25
 And know thee not. The curses of the wretch
 Whose crimes are °ripe, his sufferings when thy hand
 Is on him, and the hour he dreads is come,
 Are writ among thy praises. But the good —
 Does he whom thy kind hand dismissed to peace, 30
 Upbraid the gentle violence that took off
 His fetters, and unbarred his prison cell?

Raise then the hymn to Death. Deliverer!
 God hath anointed thee to free the oppressed
 And crush the oppressor. When the armed chief, 35
 The conqueror of nations, walks the world,
 And it is changed beneath his feet, and all
 Its kingdoms melt into one mighty realm —
 Thou, while his head is loftiest and his heart
 Blasphemes, imagining his own right hand 40
 Almighty, thou dost set thy sudden grasp
 Upon him, and the links of that strong chain
 That bound mankind are crumbled; thou dost break
 Sceptre and crown, and beat his throne to dust.
 Then the earth shouts with gladness, and her tribes 45
 Gather within their ancient bounds again.
 Else had the mighty of the olden time,
 °Nimrod, °Sesostris, or °the youth who feigned
 His birth from Libyan Ammon, smitten yet
 The nations with a rod of iron, and driven 50
 Their chariot o'er our necks. Thou dost avenge,
 In thy good time, the wrongs of those who know

No other friend. Nor dost thou interpose
 Only to lay the sufferer asleep,
 Where he who made him wretched troubles not 55
 His rest — thou dost strike down his tyrant too.
 Oh, there is joy when hands that held the scourge
 Drop lifeless, and the pitiless heart is cold.
 Thou too dost purge from earth its horrible
 And old idolatries; — from the proud °fanés 60
 Each to his grave their priests go out, till none
 Is left to teach their worship; then the fires
 Of sacrifice are chilled, and the green moss
 O'ercreeps their altars; the fallen images
 Cumber the weedy courts, and for loud hymns, 65
 Chanted by kneeling multitudes, the wind
 Shrieks in the solitary aisles. When he
 Who gives his life to guilt, and laughs at all
 The laws that God or man has made, and round
 Hedges his seat with power, and shines in wealth, — 70
 Lifts up his atheist front to scoff at Heaven,
 And celebrates his shame in open day,
 Thou, in the pride of all his crimes, cutt'st off
 The horrible example. Touched by thine,
 The °extortioner's hard hand foregoes the gold 75
 Wrung from the o'er-worn poor. The °perjurer,
 Whose tongue was °lithe, e'en now, and °voluble
 Against his neighbor's life, and he who laughed
 And leaped for joy to see a spotless fame
 Blasted before his own foul °calumnies, 80
 Are smit with deadly silence. He, who sold
 His conscience to preserve a worthless life,

Even while he hugs himself on his escape,
 Trembles, as, doubly terrible, at length;
 Thy steps o'ertake him, and there is no time 85
 For parley — nor will bribes unclench thy grasp.
 Oft, too, dost thou reform thy victim, long
 Ere his last hour. And when the reveller,
 Mad in the chase of pleasure, stretches on,
 And strains each nerve, and clears the path of life 90
 Like wind, thou point'st him to the dreadful goal,
 And shak'st thy hour-glass in his reeling eye,
 And check'st him in mid course. Thy skeleton hand
 Shows to the faint of spirit the right path,
 And he is warned, and fears to step aside. 95
 Thou sett'st between the ruffian and his crime
 Thy ghastly countenance, and his slack hand
 Drops the drawn knife. But, oh, most fearfully
 Dost thou show forth Heaven's justice, when thy shafts
 Drink up the ebbing spirit — then the hard 100
 Of heart and violent of hand restores
 The treasure to the friendless wretch he wronged.
 Then from the writhing bosom thou dost pluck
 The guilty secret; lips, for ages sealed,
 Are faithless to the dreadful trust at length, 105
 And give it up; the °felon's latest breath
 Absolves the innocent man who bears his crime;
 The slanderer, horror-smitten, and in tears,
 Recalls the deadly °obloquy he forged
 To work his brother's ruin. Thou dost make 110
 Thy penitent victim utter to the air
 The dark conspiracy that strikes at life,

And aims to °whelm the laws; ere yet the hour
Is come, and the dread sign of murder given.

Thus, from the first of time, hast thou been found 115
On virtue's side; the wicked, but for thee,
Had been too strong for the good; the great of earth
Had crushed the weak for ever. Schooled in guile
For ages, while each passing year had brought
Its baneful lesson, they had filled the world 120
With their abominations; while its tribes,
Trodden to earth, imbruted, and despoiled,
Had knelt to them in worship; sacrifice
Had smoked on many an altar, temple roofs
Had echoed with the blasphemous prayer and hymn: 125
But thou, the great reformer of the world,
Tak'st off the sons of violence and fraud
In their °green pupilage, their lore half learned —
Ere guilt had quite o'errun the simple heart
God gave them at their birth, and blotted out 130
His image. Thou dost mark them flushed with hope,
As on the threshold of their vast designs
Doubtful and loose they stand, and strik'st them down.

* * * * *

Alas! I little thought that the stern power
Whose fearful praise I sung, would try me thus 135
Before the strain was ended. It must cease —
For °he is in his grave who taught my youth
The art of verse, and in the bud of life
Offered me to the muses. Oh, cut off

°Untimely! when thy reason in its strength, 140
 Ripened by years of toil and studious search,
 And watch of Nature's silent lessons, taught
 Thy hand to practise best the lenient art
 To which thou gavest thy laborious days,
 And, last, thy life. And, therefore, when the earth 145
 Received thee, tears were in unyielding eyes
 And on hard cheeks, and they who °deemed °thy skill
 Delayed their death-hour, shuddered and turned pale
 When thou wert gone. This faltering verse, which thou
 Shalt not, as wont, o'erlook, is all I have 150
 To offer at thy grave — this — and the hope
 To copy thy example, and to leave
 A name of which the wretched shall not think
 As of an enemy's, whom they forgive
 As all forgive the dead. Rest, therefore, thou 155
 Whose early guidance trained my infant steps —
 Rest, in the bosom of God, till the brief sleep
 Of death is over, and a happier life
 Shall dawn to waken thine insensible dust.

Now thou art not — and yet the men whose guilt 160
 Has wearied Heaven for vengeance — he who bears
 False witness — he who takes the orphan's bread,
 And robs the widow — he who spreads abroad
 Polluted hands of mockery of prayer,
 Are left to cumber earth. Shuddering I look 165
 On what is written, yet I blot not out
 The °desultory numbers — let them stand,
 The record of an idle revery.

°THE AGES

In this poem, written and first printed in the year 1821, the author has endeavored, from a survey of the past ages of the world, and of the successive advances of mankind in knowledge, virtue, and happiness, to justify and confirm the hopes of the philanthropist for the future destinies of the human race. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

I

WHEN to the common rest that crowns our days,
 Called in the noon of life, the good man goes,
 Or full of years, and ripe in wisdom, lays
 His silver temples in their last repose;
 When, o'er the buds of youth, the death-wind blows, 5
 And blights the fairest; when our bitter tears
 Stream, as the eyes of those that love us close,
 We think on what they were, with many fears
 Lest goodness die with them, and leave the coming years.

II

And therefore, to our hearts, the days gone by, — 10
 When lived the honored sage whose death we wept,
 And the soft virtues beamed from many an eye,
 And beat in many a heart that long has slept, —
 Like spots of earth where angel-feet have stepped —
 Are holy; and high-dreaming bards have told 15

Of times when worth was crowned, and faith was
 kept,
 Ere friendship grew a snare, or love waxed cold —
 Those pure and happy times — the golden days of old.

III

Peace to the just man's memory, — let it grow
 Greener with years, and blossom through the flight 20
 Of ages; let the °mimic canvas show
 His calm benevolent features; let the light
 Stream on his deeds of love, that shunned the sight
 Of all but heaven, and in the book of fame,
 The glorious record of his virtues write, 25
 And hold it up to men, and bid them claim
 °A palm like his, and catch from him the hallowed flame.

IV

But oh, despair not of their fate who rise
 To dwell upon the earth when we withdraw!
 Lo! the same shaft by which the righteous dies, 30
 Strikes through the wretch that scoffed at mercy's law,
 And trode his brethren down, and felt no awe
 Of Him who will avenge them. Stainless worth,
 Such as the sternest age of virtue saw,
 Ripens, meanwhile, till time shall call it forth 35
 From the low modest shade, to light and bless the earth.

V

Has Nature, in her calm, majestic march
 Faltered with age at last? does the bright sun
 Grow dim in heaven? or, in their far blue arch,
 Sparkle the crowd of stars, when day is done, 40
 Less brightly? when the dew-lipped Spring comes on,
 Breathes she with airs less soft, or scents the sky
 With flowers less fair than when her reign begun?
 Does °prodigal Autumn, to our age, deny
 The plenty that once swelled beneath his sober eye? 45

VI

Look on this beautiful world, and read the truth
 In her fair page; see, every season brings
 New change, to her, of everlasting youth;
 Still the green soil, with joyous living things,
 Swarms, the wide air is full of joyous wings, 50
 And myriads, still, are happy in the sleep
 Of ocean's azure gulfs, and where he flings
 The restless surge. Eternal Love doth keep
 In his complacent arms, the earth, the air, the deep.

VII

Will then the merciful One, who stamped our race 55
 With his own image, and who gave them sway
 O'er earth, and the glad dwellers on her face,
 Now that our swarming nations far away

Are spread, where'er the moist earth drinks the day,
 Forget the ancient care that taught and nursed 60
 His latest offspring? will he quench the ray
 Infused by his own forming smile at first,
 And leave a work so fair all blighted and accursed?

VIII

Oh, no! a thousand cheerful omens give
 Hope of yet happier days, whose dawn is nigh. 65
 He who has tamed the elements, shall not live
 The slave of his own passions; he whose eye
 °Unwinds the eternal dances of the sky,
 And in the abyss of brightness dares to span
 The sun's broad circle, rising yet more high, 70
 In God's magnificent works his will shall scan —
 And love and peace shall make their paradise with man.

IX

Sit at the feet of history — through the night
 Of years the steps of virtue she shall trace,
 And show the earlier ages, where her sight 75
 Can pierce the eternal shadows o'er their face; —
 When, from the genial cradle of our race,
 Went forth the tribes of men, their pleasant lot
 To choose, where palm-groves cooled their dwelling-
 place,
 Or freshening rivers ran; and there forgot 80
 The truth of heaven, and kneeled to gods that heard
 them not.

X

Then waited not the murderer for the night,
 But smote his brother down in the bright day,
 And he who felt the wrong, and had the might,
 His own avenger, girt himself to slay; 85
 Beside the path the unburied carcass lay;
 The shepherd, by the fountains of the glen,
 Fled, while the robber swept his flock away,
 And slew his babes. The sick, untended then,
 Languished in the damp shade, and died afar from
 men. 90

XI

But misery brought in love — in passion's strife
 Man gave his heart to mercy, pleading long,
 And sought out gentle deeds to gladden life;
 The weak, against the sons of spoil and wrong,
 Banded, and watched their hamlets, and grew strong. 95
 States rose, and, in the shadow of their might,
 The timid rested. To the °reverent throng,
 Grave and time-wrinkled men, with locks all white,
 Gave laws, and judged their strifes, and taught the way
 of right;

XII

Till bolder spirits seized the rule, and nailed 100
 On men the yoke that man should never bear,
 And drove them forth to battle. Lo! unveiled
 The scene of those stern ages! What is there!
 A boundless sea of blood, and the wild air

Moans with the crimson surges that entomb 105
 Cities and bannered armies; forms that wear
 The kingly circlet rise, amid the gloom,
 O'er the dark wave, and straight are swallowed in its
 womb.

XIII

°Those ages have no memory — but they left
 A record in the desert — columns strown 110
 On the waste sands, and statues fallen and cleft,
 Heaped like a host in battle overthrown;
 Vast ruins, where the mountain's ribs of stone
 Were hewn into a city; streets that spread
 In the dark earth, where never breath has blown 115
 Of heaven's sweet air, nor foot of man dares tread
 The long and perilous ways — the Cities of the Dead:

XIV

°And tombs of monarchs to the clouds up-piled —
 They perished — but the eternal tombs remain —
 And the black precipice, abrupt and wild, 120
 Pierced by long toil and hollowed to a °fane; —
 Huge piers and frowning forms of gods sustain
 The everlasting arches, dark and wide,
 Like the night-heaven, when clouds are black with
 rain.

But idly skill was tasked, and strength was plied, 125
 All was the work of slaves to swell a despot's pride.

XV

And Virtue cannot dwell with slaves, nor reign
 O'er those who cower to take a tyrant's yoke;
 She left the down-trod nations in disdain,
 And flew to Greece, when Liberty awoke, 130
 New-born, amid those glorious vales, and broke
 Sceptre and chain with her fair youthful hands:
 As rocks are shivered in the thunder-stroke.
 And lo! in full-grown strength, an empire stands
 Of leagued and rival states, the wonder of the lands. 135

XVI

°Oh, Greece! thy flourishing cities were a spoil
 Unto each other; thy hard hand oppressed
 And crushed the helpless; thou didst make thy soil
 Drunk with the blood of those that loved thee best;
 And thou didst drive, from thy unnatural breast, 140
 Thy just and brave to die in distant climes;
 Earth shuddered at thy deeds, and sighed for rest
 From thine abominations; after times,
 That yet shall read thy tale, will tremble at thy crimes.

XVII

Yet there was that within thee which has saved 145
 Thy glory, and redeemed thy blotted name;
 The story of thy better deeds, engraved
 On fame's unmouldering pillar, puts to shame
 Our chiller virtue; the high art to tame

The whirlwind of the passions was thine own ; 150
 And the pure ray, that from thy bosom came,
 Far over many a land and age has shone,
 And mingles with the light that beams from God's own
 throne.

XVIII

And Rome — thy sterner, younger sister, she
 Who awed the world with her imperial frown — 155
 Rome drew the spirit of her race from thee, —
 The rival of thy shame and thy renown.
 Yet her degenerate children sold the crown
 Of earth's wide kingdoms to a line of slaves ;
 Guilt reigned, and woe with guilt, and plagues came
 down, 160
 °Till the north broke its floodgates, and the waves
 Whelmed the degraded race, and °weltered o'er their
 graves.

XIX

°Vainly that ray of brightness from above,
 That shone around the Galilean lake,
 The light of hope, the leading star of love, 165
 Struggled, the darkness of that day to break ;
 Even its own faithless guardians strove to slake,
 In fogs of earth, the pure immortal flame ;
 And priestly hands, for Jesus' blessed sake,
 Were red with blood, and charity became, 170
 In that stern war of forms, a mockery and a name.

XX

They triumphed, and less bloody rites were kept
 Within the quiet of the convent cell;
 The well-fed inmates °pattered prayer, and slept,
 And sinned, and liked their easy penance well. 175
 Where pleasant was the spot for men to dwell,
 Amid its fair broad lands the abbey lay,
 Sheltering dark °orgies that were shame to tell,
 And cowed and barefoot beggars swarmed the way,
 All in their convent weeds, of black, and white, and
 gray. 180

XXI

Oh, sweetly the returning muses' strain
 Swelled over that famed stream, whose gentle tide
 In their bright lap the °Etrurian vales detain,
 Sweet, as when winter storms have ceased to chide,
 And all the new-leaved woods, resounding wide, 185
 Send out wild hymns upon the scented air.
 Lo! to the smiling °Arno's classic side
 The °emulous nations of the west repair,
 And kindle their quenched urns, and drink fresh spirit
 there.

XXII

Still, Heaven deferred the hour ordained to rend 190
 From saintly rottenness the sacred °stole;
 And cowl and worshipped shrine could still defend
 The wretch with felon stains upon his soul;

And crimes were set to sale, and hard his °dole
 Who could not bribe a passage to the skies; 195
 And vice, beneath the °mitre's kind control,
 Sinned gayly on, and drew to giant size,
 Shielded by priestly power, and watched by priestly
 eyes.

XXIII

°At last the earthquake came — the shock, that hurled
 To dust, in many fragments dashed and strown, 200
 The throne, whose roots were in another world,
 And whose far-stretching shadow awed our own.
 From many a proud monastic pile, o'erthrown,
 Fear-struck, the hooded inmates rushed and fled;
 The web, that for a thousand years had grown 205
 O'er prostrate Europe, in that day of dread
 Crumbled and fell, as fire dissolves the flaxen thread.

XXIV

The spirit of that day is still awake,
 And spreads himself, and shall not sleep again;
 But through the idle mesh of power shall break 210
 Like billows o'er the °Asian monarch's chain;
 Till men are filled with him, and feel how vain,
 Instead of the pure heart and innocent hands,
 Are all the proud and pompous modes to gain
 The smile of heaven; — till a new age expands 215
 Its white and holy wings above the peaceful lands.

XXV

For look again on the past years; — behold,
 How like the nightmare's dreams have flown away
 Horrible forms of worship, that, of old,
 Held, o'er the shuddering realms, unquestioned sway : 220
 See crimes, that feared not once the eye of day,
 Rooted from men, without a name or place :
 See nations blotted out from earth, to pay
 The forfeit of deep guilt; — with glad embrace
 The fair disburdened lands welcome a nobler race. 225

XXVI

Thus error's monstrous shapes from earth are driven;
 They fade, they fly — but truth survives their flight;
 Earth has no shades to quench that beam of heaven;
 Each ray that shone, in early time, to light
 The faltering footsteps in the path of right, 230
 Each gleam of clearer brightness shed to aid
 In man's maturer day his bolder sight,
 All blended, like the rainbow's radiant braid,
 Pour yet, and still shall pour, the blaze that cannot fade.

XXVII

Late, from this western shore, that morning chased 235
 The deep and °ancient night, that threw its shroud
 O'er the green land of groves, the beautiful waste,
 Nurse of full streams, and lifter-up of proud
 Sky-mingling mountains that o'erlook the cloud.

Erewhile, where yon gay spires their brightness rear, ²⁴⁰
 Trees waved, and the brown hunter's shouts were loud
 Amid the forest; and the bounding deer
 Fled at the glancing plume, and the gaunt wolf yelled
 near.

XXVIII

And where his willing waves °yon bright blue bay
 Sends up, to kiss his decorated brim, ²⁴⁵
 And cradles, in his soft embrace, the gay
 Young group of grassy islands born of him,
 And crowding nigh, or in the distance dim,
 Lift the white throng of sails, that bear or bring
 The commerce of the world; — with °tawny limb, ²⁵⁰
 And belt and beads in sunlight glistening,
 The savage urged his skiff like wild bird on the wing.

XXIX

Then all this youthful paradise around,
 And all the broad and boundless mainland, lay
 Cooled by the °interminable wood, that frowned ²⁵⁵
 O'er mount and vale, where never summer ray
 Glanced, till the strong tornado broke his way
 Through the gray giants of the sylvan wild;
 Yet many a sheltered glade, with blossoms gay,
 Beneath the showery sky and sunshine mild, ²⁶⁰
 Within the shaggy arms of that dark forest smiled.

XXX

There stood the Indian hamlet, there the lake
 Spread its blue sheet that flashed with many an oar,
 Where the brown otter plunged him from the brake,
 And the deer drank: as the light gale flew o'er, 265
 The twinkling maize-field rustled on the shore;
 And while that spot, so wild, and lone, and fair,
 A look of glad and guiltless beauty wore,
 And peace was on the earth and in the air,
 The warrior lit the pile, and bound his captive there: 270

XXXI

Not unavenged — the foeman, from the wood,
 Beheld the deed, and when the midnight shade
 Was stillest, gorged his battle-axe with blood;
 All die — the wailing babe — the shrieking maid —
 And in the flood of fire that scathed the glade, 275
 The roofs went down; but deep the silence grew,
 When on the dewy woods the day-beam played;
 No more the cabin smokes rose wreathed and blue,
 And ever, by their lake, lay moored the light canoe.

XXXII

Look now abroad — another race has filled 280
 These populous borders — wide the wood recedes,
 And towns shoot up, and fertile realms are tilled:
 The land is full of harvests and green meads;
 Streams numberless, that many a fountain feeds,

Shine, °disembowered, and give to sun and breeze 285
 Their virgin waters; the full region leads
 New colonies forth, that toward the western seas
 Spread, like a rapid flame among the autumnal trees.

XXXIII

Here the free spirit of mankind, at length,
 Throws its last fetters off; and who shall place 290
 A limit to the giant's unchained strength,
 Or curb his swiftness in the forward race!
 Far, like the comet's way through infinite space,
 Stretches the long untravelled path of light,
 Into the depths of ages: we may trace, 295
 Distant, the brightening glory of its flight,
 Till the receding rays are lost to human sight.

XXXIV

Europe is given a prey to sterner fates,
 And writhes in shackles; strong the arms that chain
 To earth her struggling multitude of states; 300
 She too is strong, and might not chafe in vain
 Against them, but might cast to earth the train
 That trample her, and break their iron net.
 Yes, she shall look on brighter days and gain
 The meed of worthier deeds; the moment set 305
 To rescue and raise up, draws near — but is not yet.

XXXV

But thou, my country, thou shalt never fall,
 Save with thy children — thy maternal care,
 Thy lavish love, thy blessings showered on all —
 These are thy fetters — seas and stormy air 310
 Are the wide barrier of thy borders, where,
 Among thy gallant sons that guard thee well,
 Thou laugh'st at enemies: who shall then declare
 The date of thy deep-founded strength, or tell
 How happy, in thy lap, the sons of men shall dwell? 315

ODE FOR AN AGRICULTURAL CELEBRATION

FAR back in the ages,
 The plough with wreaths was crowned;
 The hands of kings and °sages
 Entwined the chaplet round;
 Till men of spoil disdained the toil 5
 By which the world was nourished,
 And dews of blood enriched the soil
 Where green their °laurels flourished.
 — Now the world her fault repairs —
 The guilt that stains her story; 10
 And weeps her crimes amid the cares
 That formed her earliest glory.

The proud throne shall crumble,
 The °diadem shall wane,

The tribes of earth shall humble
The pride of those who reign;
And War shall lay his pomp away; —
The fame that heroes cherish,
The glory earned in deadly fray
Shall fade, decay, and perish.
Honor waits, o'er all the earth,
Through endless generations,
The art that calls her harvest forth,
And feeds the expectant nations.

15

20

°THE RIVULET

There is a charming tenderness and simplicity in the little piece called "The Rivulet,"—that every reader, at all conversant with rural sights and associations, sympathizes with instantly. — American Quarterly Review for December, 1836.

THIS little rill, that from the springs
 Of yonder grove its current brings,
 Plays on the slope a while, and then
 Goes prattling into groves again,
 Oft to its warbling waters drew 5
 My little feet, when life was new.
 When woods in early green were dressed,
 And from the chambers of the west
 The warmer breezes, travelling out,
 Breathed the new scent of flowers about, 10
 My truant steps from home would stray,
 Upon its grassy side to play,
 List the brown thrasher's °vernal hymn,
 And crop the violet on its brim,
 With blooming cheek and open brow, 15
 As young and gay, sweet rill, as thou.

And when the days of boyhood came,
 And I had grown in love with fame,
 °Duly I sought thy banks, and tried

My first rude numbers by thy side. 20
 Words cannot tell how bright and gay
 The scenes of life before me lay.
 Then glorious hopes, that now to speak
 Would bring the blood into my cheek,
 Passed o'er me; and I wrote, on high, 25
 A name I deemed should never die.

Years change thee not. Upon yon hill
 The tall old maples, verdant still,
 Yet tell, in grandeur of decay,
 How swift the years have passed away. 30
 Since first, a child, and half afraid,
 I wandered in the forest shade.
 Thou ever joyous rivulet,
 Dost dimple, leap, and prattle yet;
 And sporting with the sands that pave 35
 The windings of thy silver wave,
 And dancing to thy own wild chime,
 Thou laughest at the lapse of time.
 The same sweet sounds are in my ear
 My early childhood loved to hear; 40
 As pure thy limpid waters run,
 As bright they sparkle to the sun;
 As fresh and thick the bending ranks
 Of herbs that line thy oozy banks;
 The violet there, in soft May dew, 45
 Comes up, as modest and as blue,
 As green amid thy current's stress,
 Floats the scarce-rooted watercress:

And the brown °ground-bird, in thy glen,
Still chirps as merrily as then. 50

Thou' changest not — but I am changed,
Since first thy pleasant banks I ranged;
And the grave stranger, come to see
The play-place of his infancy,
Has scarce a single trace of him 55
Who sported once upon thy brim.
The visions of my youth are past —
Too bright, too beautiful to last.
I've tried the world — it wears no more
The coloring of romance it wore. 60
Yet well has Nature kept the truth
She promised to my earliest youth.
The radiant beauty shed abroad
On all the glorious works of God,
Shows freshly, to my sobered eye, 65
Each charm it wore in days gone by.

A few brief years shall pass away,
And I, all trembling, weak, and gray,
Bowed to the earth, which waits to fold
My ashes in the embracing mould, 70
(If haply the dark will of fate
Indulge my life so long a date,
May come for the last time to look
Upon my childhood's favorite brook.
Then dimly on my eye shall gleam 75
The sparkle of thy dancing stream;

And faintly on my ear shall fall
 Thy prattling current's merry call;
 Yet shalt thou flow as glad and bright
 As when thou met'st my infant sight.

80

And I shall sleep — and on thy side,
 As ages after ages glide,
 Children their early sports shall try,
 And pass to hoary age and die.
 But thou, unchanged from year to year,
 Gayly shalt play and glitter here;
 Amid young flowers and tender grass
 Thy endless infancy shalt pass;
 And, singing down thy narrow glen,
 Shalt mock the fading race of men.

85

90

MARCH

THE stormy March is come at last,
 With wind, and cloud, and changing skies.
 I hear the rushing of the blast,
 That through the snowy valley flies.

Ah, °passing few are they who speak,
 Wild stormy month! in praise of thee;
 Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,
 Thou art a welcome month to me.

5

°For thou, to northern lands, again
The glad and glorious sun dost bring, 10
And thou hast joined the gentle train
And wear'st the gentle name of Spring.

And, in thy reign of blast and storm,
Smiles many a long, bright, sunny day,
When the changed winds are soft and warm, 15
And heaven puts on the blue of May.

Then sing aloud the gushing rills
And the full springs, from frost set free,
That, brightly leaping down the hills,
Are just set out to meet the sea. 20

The year's departing beauty hides
Of wintry storms the sullen threat;
But in thy sternest frown abides
A look of kindly promise yet.

Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies, 25
And that soft time of sunny showers,
When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,
Seems of a brighter world than ours.

SUMMER WIND

It is a sultry day; the sun has drunk
The dew that lay upon the morning grass;
There is no rustling in the lofty elm

That canopies my dwelling, and its shade
 Scarce cools me. All is silent, save the faint 5
 And interrupted murmur of the bee,
 Settling on the sick flowers, and then again
 Instantly on the wing. The plants around
 Feel the too °potent fervors: the tall maize
 Rolls up its long green leaves; the clover droops 10
 Its tender foliage, and °declines its blooms.
 But far in the fierce sunshine tower the hills,
 With all their growth of woods, silent and stern,
 As if the scorching heat and dazzling light
 Were but an element they loved. Bright clouds, 15
 Motionless pillars of the °brazen heaven —
 Their bases on the mountains — their white tops
 Shining in the far ether — fire the air
 With a reflected radiance, and make turn
 The gazer's eye away. For me, I lie 20
 Languidly in the shade, where the thick turf,
 Yet °virgin from the kisses of the sun,
 Retains some freshness, and I woo the wind
 That still delays its coming. Why so slow,
 Gentle and °voluble spirit of the air? 25
 Oh, come and breathe upon the fainting earth
 Coolness and life. °Is it that in his caves
 He hears me? See, on yonder woody ridge,
 The pine is bending his proud top, and now
 Among the nearer groves, chestnut and oak 30
 Are tossing their green boughs about. He comes;
 Lo, where the grassy meadow runs in waves!
 The deep distressful silence of the scene

Breaks up with mingling of unnumbered sounds
And universal motion. He is come, 35
Shaking a shower of blossoms from the shrubs,
And bearing on their fragrance; and he brings
Music of birds, and rustling of young boughs,
And sound of swaying branches, and the voice
Of distant waterfalls. All the green herbs 40
Are stirring in his breath; a thousand flowers,
By the road-side and the borders of the brook,
Nod gayly to each other; glossy leaves
Are twinkling in the sun, as if the dew
Were on them yet, and silver waters break 45
Into small waves and sparkle as he comes.

"I BROKE THE SPELL THAT HELD ME LONG"

I BROKE the spell that held me long,
The dear, dear °witchery of song.
I said, the poet's idle °lore
Shall waste my prime of years no more,
For Poetry, though heavenly born, 5
°Consorts with poverty and scorn.

I broke the spell — nor °deemed its power
Could fetter me another hour.
Ah, thoughtless! how could I forget
Its causes were around me yet? 10
For wheresoe'er I looked, the while,
Was nature's everlasting smile.

Still came and lingered on my sight
Of flowers and streams the bloom and light,
And glory of the stars and sun; —
And these and poetry are one.
They, ere the world had held me long,
Recalled me to the love of song.

°MONUMENT MOUNTAIN

The mountain, called by this name, is a remarkable precipice in Great Barrington, overlooking the rich and picturesque valley of the Housatonic, in the western part of Massachusetts. At the southern extremity is, or was a few years since, a conical pile of small stones, erected, according to the tradition of the surrounding country, by the Indians, in memory of a woman of the Stockbridge tribe, who killed herself by leaping from the edge of the precipice. Until within a few years past, small parties of that tribe used to arrive from their settlement in the western part of the state of New York, on visits to Stockbridge, the place of their nativity and former residence. A young woman belonging to one of these parties related, to a friend of the author, the story on which the poem of "Monument Mountain" is founded. An Indian girl had formed an attachment for her cousin, which, according to the customs of the tribe, was unlawful. She was, in consequence, seized with a deep melancholy, and resolved to destroy herself. In company with a female friend, she repaired to the mountain, decked out for the occasion in all her ornaments, and, after passing the day on the summit in singing with her companion the traditional songs of her nation, she threw herself headlong from the rock, and was killed. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THOU who wouldst see the lovely and the wild
 Mingled in harmony on Nature's face,
 Ascend our rocky mountains. Let thy foot
 Fail not with weariness, for on their tops
 The beauty and the majesty of earth, 5
 Spread wide beneath, shall make thee to forget
 The steep and toilsome way. There, as thou stand'st,

The haunts of men below thee, and around
The mountain summits, thy expanding heart
Shall feel a kindred with that loftier world 10
To which thou art translated, and partake
The enlargement of thy vision. Thou shalt look
Upon the green and rolling forest tops,
And down into the secrets of the glens,
And streams, that with their bordering thickets strive 15
To hide their windings. Thou shalt gaze, at once,
Here on white villages, and °tilth, and herds,
And swarming roads, and there on solitudes
That only hear the torrent, and the wind,
And eagle's shriek. There is a precipice 20
That seems a fragment of some mighty wall,
Built by the hand that fashioned the old world,
To separate its nations, and thrown down
When the flood drowned them. To the north, a path
Conducts you up the narrow battlement. 25
Steep is the western side, shaggy and wild
With mossy trees, and °pinnacles of flint,
And many a hanging crag. But, to the east,
Sheer to the vale go down the bare old cliffs, —
Huge pillars, that in °middle heaven upbear 30
Their weather-beaten °capitals, here dark
With the thick moss of centuries, and there
Of chalky whiteness where the thunderbolt
Has splintered them. It is a fearful thing
To stand upon the °beetling verge, and see 35
Where storm and lightning, from that huge gray wall,
Have tumbled down vast blocks, and at the base

Dashed them in fragments, and to lay thine ear
Over the dizzy depth, and hear the sound
Of winds, that struggle with the woods below, 40
Come up like ocean murmurs. But the scene
Is lovely round; a beautiful river there
Wanders amid the fresh and fertile meads,
The paradise he made unto himself,
Mining the soil for ages. On each side 45
The fields swell upward to the hills; beyond,
Above the hills, in the blue distance, rise
The mighty columns with which earth props heaven.

There is a tale about these °reverend rocks,
A sad tradition of unhappy love, 50
And sorrows borne and ended, long ago,
When over these fair vales the savage sought
His game in the thick woods. There was a maid,
The fairest of the Indian maids, bright-eyed,
With wealth of raven tresses, a light form, 55
And a gay heart. About her cabin-door
The wide old woods resounded with her song
And fairy laughter all the summer day.
She loved her cousin; such a love was deemed,
By the morality of those stern tribes, 60
Incestuous, and she struggled hard and long
Against her love, and reasoned with her heart,
As simple Indian maiden might. In vain.
Then her eye lost its lustre, and her step
Its lightness, and the gray-haired men that passed 65
Her dwelling, wondered that they heard no more

The accustomed song and laugh of her, whose looks
 Were like the cheerful smile of Spring, they said,
 Upon the Winter of their age. She went
 To weep where no eye saw, and was not found 70
 When all the merry girls were met to dance,
 And all the hunters of the tribe were out;
 Nor when they gathered from the rustling husk
 The shining ear; nor when, by the river's side,
 They pulled the grape and startled the wild shades 75
 With sounds of mirth. The keen-eyed Indian dames
 Would whisper to each other, as they saw
 Her wasting form, and say *the girl will die.*

One day into the bosom of a friend,
 A playmate of her young and innocent years, 80
 She poured her griefs. "Thou know'st, and thou
 alone,"

She said, "for I have told thee, all my love,
 And guilt, and sorrow. I am sick of life.
 All night I weep in darkness, and the morn
 Glares on me, as upon a thing accursed, 85
 That has no business on the earth. I hate
 The pastimes and the pleasant toils that, once
 I loved; the cheerful voices of my friends
 Have an unnatural horror in mine ear.
 In dreams my mother, from the land of souls, 90
 Calls me and chides me. All that look on me
 Do seem to know my shame; I cannot bear
 Their eyes; I cannot from my heart root out
 The love that wrings it so, and I must die."

It was a summer morning, and they went 95
To this old precipice. About the cliffs
Lay garlands, ears of maize, and shaggy skins
Of wolf and bear, the offerings of the tribe
Here made to the Great Spirit, for they °deemed,
°Like worshippers of the elder time, that God 100
Doth walk on the high places and °affect
The earth-o'erlooking mountains. She had on
The ornaments with which her father loved
To deck the beauty of his bright-eyed girl,
And bade her wear when stranger warriors came 105
To be his guests. Here the friends sat them down,
And sang, all day, old songs of love and death,
And decked the poor wan victim's hair with flowers,
And prayed that safe and swift might be her way
To the calm world of sunshine, where no grief 110
Makes the heart heavy and the eyelids red.
Beautiful lay the region of her tribe
Below her — waters resting in the embrace
Of the wide forest, and maize-planted glades
Opening amid the leafy wilderness. 115
She gazed upon it long, and at the sight
Of her own village peeping through the trees,
And her own dwelling, and the cabin roof
Of him she loved with an unlawful love,
And came to die for, a warm gush of tears 120
Ran from her eyes. But when the sun grew low
And the hill shadows long, she threw herself
From the steep rock and perished. There was scooped
Upon the mountain's southern slope, a grave;

And there they laid her, in the very garb 125
 With which the maiden decked herself for death,
 With the same withering wild flowers in her hair.
 And o'er the mould that covered her, the tribe
 Built up a simple monument, a cone
 Of small loose stones. Thenceforward all who passed, 130
 Hunter, and dame, and virgin, laid a stone
 In silence on the pile. It stands there yet.
 And Indians from the distant West, who come
 To visit where their fathers' bones are laid,
 Yet tell the sorrowful tale, and to this day 135
 The mountain where the °hapless maiden died
 Is called the Mountain of the Monument.

°SONG OF THE GREEK AMAZON

I BUCKLE to my slender side
 The pistol and the °scimitar,
 And in my maiden °flower and pride
 Am come to share the tasks of war.
 And yonder stands my fiery steed, 5
 That paws the ground and neighs to go,
 My charger of the Arab breed —
 I took him from the routed foe.

My mirror is the mountain-spring,
 At which I dress my ruffled hair; 10
 My dimmed and dusty arms I bring,
 And wash away the blood-stain there.

Why should I guard from wind and sun
 This cheek, whose °virgin rose is fled?
 It was for one — oh, only one — 15
 I kept its bloom, and he is dead.

But they who slew him — unaware
 Of coward murderers lurking nigh —
 And left him to the fowls of air,
 Are yet alive — and they must die! 20
 They slew him — and my °virgin years
 Are vowed to Greece and vengeance now,
 And many an °Othman dame, in tears,
 Shall rue the Grecian maiden's vow.

I touched the °lute in better days, 25
 I led in dance the joyous band;
 Ah! they may move to mirthful lays
 Whose hands can touch a lover's hand.
 The march of hosts that haste to meet
 Seems gayer than the dance to me; 30
 The lute's sweet tones are not so sweet
 As the fierce shout of victory.

°TO A CLOUD

BEAUTIFUL cloud! with folds so soft and fair,
 Swimming in the pure quiet air!
 Thy fleeces bathed in sunlight, while below
 Thy shadow o'er the vale moves slow;
 Where, midst their labor, pause the reaper train 5
 As cool it comes along the grain.

Beautiful cloud! I would I were with thee
 In thy calm way o'er land and sea:
 To rest on thy unrolling skirts, and look
 On Earth as on an open book; 10
 On streams that tie her realms with silver bands,
 And the long ways that seam her lands;
 And hear her humming cities, and the sound
 Of the great ocean breaking round.
 Ay — I would sail upon thy air-borne car 15
 To blooming regions distant far,
 To where the sun of °Andalusia shines
 On his own olive-groves and vines,
 Or the soft lights of Italy's bright sky
 In smiles upon her ruins lie. 20
 But I would woo the winds to let us rest
 °O'er Greece long fettered and oppressed,
 Whose sons at length have heard the call that
 comes
 From the old battle-fields and tombs,
 And risen, and drawn the sword, and on the foe 25
 Have dealt the swift and desperate blow,
 And the °Othman power is cloven, and the stroke
 Has touched its chains, and they are broke.
 Ay, we would linger till the sunset there
 Should come, to purple all the air, 30
 And thou reflect upon the sacred ground
 The ruddy radiance streaming round.

Bright °meteor! for the summer noontide made!
 Thy peerless beauty yet shall fade.

The sun, that fills with light each glistening fold, 35
 Shall set, and leave thee dark and cold:
 The blast shall rend thy skirts, or thou mayst frown
 In the dark heaven when storms come down;
 And weep in rain, till man's inquiring eye
 Miss thee, for ever, from the sky. 40

HYMN TO THE NORTH STAR

THE sad and solemn night
 Hath yet her multitude of cheerful fires;
 The glorious host of light
 Walk the dark hemisphere till she retires;
 All through her silent watches, gliding slow, 5
 Her °constellations come, and climb the heavens, and go.

Day, too, hath many a star
 To grace his gorgeous reign, as bright as they:
 Through the blue fields afar,
 Unseen, they follow in his flaming way: 10
 Many a bright lingerer, as the eve grows dim,
 Tells what a radiant troop arose and set with him.

And thou dost see them rise,
 Star of the Pole! and thou dost see them set.
 Alone, in thy cold skies, 15
 Thou keep'st thy old unmoving station yet,
 Nor join'st the dances of that glittering train,
 Nor dipp'st thy °virgin orb in the blue western °main.

There, at morn's rosy birth,
 Thou lookest meekly through the °kindling air, 20
 And eve, that round the earth
 Chases the day, beholds thee watching there;
 There noontide finds thee, and the hour that calls
 The °shapes of polar flame to scale heaven's azure walls.

Alike, beneath thine eye, 25
 The deeds of darkness and of light are done;
 High towards the starlit sky
 Towns blaze, — the smoke of battle blots the sun, —
 The night-storm on a thousand hills is loud,
 And the strong wind of day doth mingle sea and cloud. 30

On thy unaltering blaze
 The half-wrecked mariner, his compass lost,
 Fixes his steady gaze,
 And steers, undoubting, to the friendly coast;
 And they who stray in perilous wastes, by night, 35
 Are glad when thou dost shine to guide their footsteps
 right.

And, therefore, °bards of old,
 °Sages and hermits of the solemn wood,
 Did in thy beams behold
 A beauteous type of that unchanging good, 40
 That bright eternal beacon, by whose ray
 The voyager of time should shape his heedful way.

A FOREST HYMN

The Hymn is a rich offering of the fancy and heart. — North American Review for April, 1826.

“A Forest Hymn” has a depth of grandeur in thought and a finish in diction truly admirable. Such a hymn could have been conceived by no one not familiar from infancy with the thick foliage and tall trunks of our primeval forests. — Methodist Quarterly Review for January, 1859.

THE groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned
 To hew the °shaft, and lay the °architrave,
 And spread the roof above them, — ere he framed
 The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
 The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood, 5
 Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down,
 And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
 And supplication. For his simple heart
 Might not resist the sacred influences
 Which, from the stilly twilight of the place, 10
 And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
 Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
 Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
 All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
 His spirit with the thought of boundless power 15
 And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
 Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore

Only among the crowd, and under roofs
 That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least, 20
 Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
 Offer one hymn — thrice happy, if it find
 Acceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand

Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
 Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down 25
 Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
 All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
 Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
 And shot towards heaven. The °century-living crow,
 Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died 30
 Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
 As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
 Fit shrine for humble worshipper to hold
 Communion with his Maker. °These dim vaults,
 These winding aisles, of human pomp or pride 35
 Report not. No fantastic carvings show
 The boast of our vain race to change the form
 Of thy fair works. But thou art here — thou fill'st
 The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
 That run along the summit of these trees 40
 In music; — thou art in the cooler breath
 That from the inmost darkness of the place
 Comes, scarcely felt; the barky trunks, the ground,
 The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with thee.
 Here is continual worship; — nature, here, 45
 In the tranquillity that thou dost love,

Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
 From perch to perch, the solitary bird
 Passes; and yon clear spring, that, midst its herbs,
 Wells softly forth and visits the strong roots 50
 Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
 Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
 Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
 Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and grace
 Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak — 55
 By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
 Almost °annihilated — °not a prince,
 In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
 Ere wore his crown as loftily as he
 Wears the green coronal of leaves with which 60
 Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
 Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
 Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower
 With scented breath, and look so like a smile,
 Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould, 65
 An °emanation of the indwelling Life,
 A visible token of the upholding Love,
 That are the soul of this wide universe.

My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on, 70
In silence, round me — the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
For ever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.
Lo! all grow old and die — but see again, 75

How on the faltering footsteps of decay
 Youth presses — ever gay and beautiful youth
 In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
 Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
 Moulder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost 80
 One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
 After the flight of untold centuries,
 The freshness of her far beginning lies
 And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
 Of his arch enemy Death — yea, seats himself 85
 °Upon the tyrant's throne — the sepulchre,
 And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
 Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
 From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves 90
 Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
 Their lives to thought and prayer, till they outlived
 The generation born with them, nor seemed
 Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
 Around them; — and there have been holy men 95
 Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
 But let me often to these solitudes
 Retire, and in thy presence reassure
 My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
 The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink 100
 And tremble and are still. Oh, God! when thou
 Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
 The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
 With all the waters of the firmament,

The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods 105
 And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
 Uprises the great deep and throws himself
 Upon the continent, and overwhelms
 Its cities — who forgets not, at the sight
 Of these tremendous tokens of thy power, 110
 His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
 Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
 Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
 Of the mad unchained elements to teach
 Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate 115
In these calm shades thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works
Learn to conform the order of our lives.

“OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS”

“*Oh Fairest of the Rural Maids*” will strike every poet as the truest poem written by Bryant. It is richly ideal. — EDGAR ALLAN POE.

OH fairest of the rural maids!
 Thy birth was in the forest shades;
 Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
 Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child, 5
 Were ever in the sylvan wild;
 And all the beauty of the place
 Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
 Is in the light shade of thy locks; 10
 Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
 Its playful way among the leaves.

Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene
 And silent waters heaven is seen;
 Their lashes are the herbs that look 15
 On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
 Are not more sinless than thy breast;
 The holy peace, that fills the air
 Of those calm solitudes, is there. 20

JUNE

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles "June." The rhythmical flow here is even voluptuous — nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul — while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of pleasurable sadness. This certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. —
 EDGAR ALLAN POE.

I GAZED upon the glorious sky
 And the green mountains round,
 And thought that when I came to lie
 Within the silent ground,

'Twere pleasant, °that in flowery June, 5
 When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
 And groves a joyous sound,
 The sexton's hand, my grave to make,
 The rich, green mountain turf should break.

A cell within the frozen mould, 10
 A coffin borne through sleet,
 And icy clods above it rolled,
 While fierce the tempests beat —
 Away! — I will not think of these —
 Blue be the sky and soft the breeze, 15
 Earth green beneath the feet,
 And be the damp mould gently pressed
 Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours,
 The golden light should lie, 20
 And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
 Stand in their beauty by.
 The oriole should build and tell
 His love-tale close beside my cell;
 The idle butterfly 25
 Should rest him there, and there be heard
 The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
 Come, from the village sent,
 Or songs of maids, beneath the moon 30
 With fairy laughter blent?

And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothed lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?

I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound. 35

I know, I know I should not see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow; 40

But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom,
Should keep them lingering by my tomb. 45

These to their softened hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
The °circuit of the summer hills, 50
Is — that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of the
year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown
and °sere.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves
lie dead;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's
tread;
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs
the jay, 5
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the
gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately
sprang and stood
In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of
flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of
ours. 10
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November
rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones
again.

The °wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer
glow;

But on the hills the golden-rod, and the aster in the
wood, 15

And the yellow sun-flower by the brook in autumn
beauty stood,

Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the
plague on men,

And the brightness of their smile was gone, from °up-
land, °glade, and °glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such
days will come,

To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter
home; 20

When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all
the trees are still,

And twinkle in the °smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance
late he bore,

And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream
no more.

°And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty
died, 25

The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my
side.

In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forests
cast the leaf,

And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so
 brief:
 Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend
 of ours,
 So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the
 flowers.

30

THE AFRICAN CHIEF

The story of the African chief, related in this ballad, may be found in the African Repository for April, 1825. The subject of it was a warrior of majestic stature, the brother of Yarrudee, king of the Solima nation. He had been taken in battle, and brought in chains for sale to the Rio Pongas, where he was exhibited in the market-place, his ankles still adorned with massy rings of gold which he wore when captured. The refusal of his captors to listen to his offers of ransom drove him mad, and he died a maniac. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

CHAINED in the market-place he stood,
 A man of giant frame,
 Amid the gathering multitude
 That shrunk to hear his name —
 All stern of look and strong of limb, 5
 His dark eye on the ground: —
 And silently they gazed on him,
 As on a lion bound.

Vainly, but well that chief had fought,
 He was a captive now, 10
 Yet pride, that fortune humbles not,
 Was written on his brow.

The scars his dark broad bosom wore
 Showed warrior true and brave;
A prince among his tribe before,
 He could not be a slave. 15

Then to his conqueror he spake:
 “My brother is a king;
Undo this necklace from my neck,
 And take this bracelet ring, 20
And send me where my brother reigns,
 And I will fill thy hands
With store of ivory from the plains,
 And gold-dust from the sands.”

“Not for thy ivory nor thy gold 25
 Will I unbind thy chain;
That bloody hand shall never hold
 The battle-spear again.
A price thy nation never gave
 Shall yet be paid for thee; 30
For thou shalt be the Christian’s slave,
 In lands beyond the sea.”

Then wept the warrior chief, and bade
 To shred his locks away;
And one by one, each heavy braid 35
 Before the victor lay.
Thick were the platted locks, and long,
 And closely hidden there

Shone many a wedge of gold among
The dark and crispèd hair. 40

“Look, feast thy greedy eye with gold
Long kept for sorest need;
Take it — thou askest sums untold —
And say that I am freed.
Take it — my wife, the long, long day, 45
Weeps by the cocoa-tree,
And my young children leave their play,
And ask in vain for me.”

“I take thy gold, — but I have made
Thy fetters fast and strong, 50
And ween that by the cocoa-shade
Thy wife will wait thee long.”
Strong was the agony that shook
The captive’s frame to hear,
And the proud meaning of his look 55
Was changed to mortal fear.

His heart was broken — crazed his brain:
At once his eye grew wild;
He struggled fiercely with his chain,
Whispered, and wept, and smiled; 60
Yet wore not long those fatal bands,
And once, at shut of day,
They drew him forth upon the sands,
The foul hyena’s prey.

A MEDITATION ON RHODE-ISLAND COAL

*Decolor, obscuris, vilis, non ille repezam
 Cesariem regum, non candida virginis ornat
 Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu.
 Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
 Tunc superat pulchros cultus et quicquid Eois
 Indus litoribus rubrâ scrutatur in algâ.*

—CLAUDIAN.

I SAT beside the glowing grate, fresh heaped
 With Newport coal, and as the flame grew bright
 — The many-colored flame — and played and leaped,
 I thought of rainbows and the northern light,
 Moore's °Lalla Rookh, the Treasury Report, 5
 And other brilliant matters of the sort.

And last I thought of that fair isle which sent
 The mineral fuel; on a summer day
 I saw it once, with heat and travel spent,
 And scratched by dwarf-oaks in the hollow way; 10
 Now dragged through sand, now jolted over stone —
 A rugged road through rugged °Tiverton.

And hotter grew the air, and hollower grew
 The deep-worn path, and horror-struck, I thought,
 Where will this dreary passage lead me to? 15
 This long dull road, so narrow, deep, and hot?

I looked to see it dive in earth outright;
I looked — but saw a far more welcome sight.

Like a soft mist upon the evening shore,
At once a lovely isle before me lay, 20
Smooth and with tender verdure covered o'er,
As if just risen from its calm inland bay;
Sloped each way gently to the grassy edge,
And the small waves that dallied with the sedge.

The barley was just reaped — its heavy sheaves 25
Lay on the stubble field — the tall maize stood
Dark in its summer growth, and shook its leaves —
And bright the sunlight played on the young wood —
For fifty years ago, the old men say,
The Briton hewed their ancient groves away. 30

I saw where fountains freshened the green land,
And where the pleasant road, from door to door,
With rows of cherry-trees on either hand,
Went wandering all that fertile region o'er —
Rogue's Island once — but when the rogues were
dead, 35
Rhode Island was the name it took instead.

Beautiful island! then it only seemed
A lovely stranger — it has grown a friend.
I gazed on its smooth slopes, but never dreamed
How soon that bright magnificent isle would send 40

The treasures of its womb across the sea,
To warm a poet's room and boil his tea.

Dark anthracite! that reddenest on my hearth,
Thou in those island mines didst slumber long;
But now thou art come forth to move the earth, 45
And put to shame the men that mean thee wrong.
Thou shalt be coals of fire to those that hate thee,
And warm the shins of all that underrate thee.

Yea, they did wrong thee foully — they who mocked
Thy honest face, and said thou wouldst not burn; 50
Of hewing thee to chimney-pieces talked,
And grew profane — and swore, in bitter scorn,
That men might to thy inner caves retire,
And there, unsinged, abide the day of fire.

Yet is thy greatness nigh. I pause to state, 55
That I too have seen greatness — even I —
Shook hands with Adams — stared at La Fayette,
When, barehead, in the hot noon of July,
He would not let the umbrella be held o'er him,
For which three cheers burst from the mob before him. 60

And I have seen — not many months ago —
An eastern Governor in °chapeau bras
And military coat, a glorious show!
Ride forth to visit the reviews, and ah!
How oft he smiled and bowed to Jonathan! 65
How many hands were shook and votes were won!

'Twas a great Governor — thou too shalt be
Great in thy turn — and wide shall spread thy fame,
And swiftly; farthest Maine shall hear of thee,
And cold New Brunswick gladden at thy name, 70
And, faintly through its sleets, the weeping isle
That sends the Boston folks their cod shall smile.

For thou shalt forge vast railways, and shalt heat
The hissing rivers into steam, and drive
Huge masses from thy mines, on iron feet, 75
Walking their steady way, as if alive,
Northward, till everlasting ice besets thee,
And south as far as the grim Spaniard lets thee.

Thou shalt make mighty engines swim the sea,
Like its own monsters — boats that for a guinea 80
Will take a man to °Havre — and shalt be
The moving soul of many a °spinning-jenny,
And ply thy shuttles, till a bard can wear
As good a suit of broadcloth as the mayor.

Then we will laugh at winter when we hear 85
The grim old churl about our dwellings rave:
Thou, from that °“ruler of the inverted year,”
Shall pluck the knotty sceptre Cowper gave,
And pull him from his sledge, and drag him in,
And melt the icicles from off his chin. 90

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

BENEATH the waning moon I walk at night,
 And muse on human life — for all around
 Are dim uncertain shapes that cheat the sight,
 And pitfalls lurk in shade along the ground,
 And broken gleams of brightness, here and there, 5
 Glance through, and leave unwarmed the death-like air.

The trampled earth returns a sound of fear —
 A hollow sound, as if I walked on tombs;
 And lights, that tell of cheerful homes, appear
 Far off, and die like hope amid the glooms. 10
 A mournful wind across the landscape flies,
 And the wide atmosphere is full of sighs.

And I, with faltering footsteps, journey on,
 Watching the stars that roll the hours away,
 Till the faint light that guides me now is gone, 15
 And, like another life, the glorious day
 Shall open o'er me from the empyreal height,
 With warmth, and certainty, and boundless light.

THE GLADNESS OF NATURE

Is this a time to be cloudy and sad,
 When our mother Nature laughs around;
 When even the deep blue heavens look glad,
 And gladness breathes from the blossoming ground?

There are notes of joy from the °hang-bird and wren 5
And the gossip of swallows through all the sky,
The ground-squirrel gayly chirps by his den,
And the °wilding bee hums merrily by.

The clouds are at play in the °azure space,
And their shadows at play on the bright green vale, 10
And here they stretch to the frolic chase,
And there they roll on the easy gale.

There's a dance of leaves in that °aspen bower,
There's a titter of winds in that beechen tree,
There's a smile on the fruit, and a smile on the flower, 15
And a laugh from the brook that runs to the sea.

And look at the broad-faced sun, how he smiles
On the dewy earth that smiles in his ray,
On the leaping waters and gay young isles;
Ay, look, and he'll smile thy gloom away. 20

THE CONJUNCTION OF JUPITER AND VENUS

This conjunction was said in the common calendars to have taken place on the 2d of August, 1826. This, I believe, was an error, but the apparent approach of the planets was sufficiently near for poetical purposes. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

I WOULD not always reason. The straight path
 Wearies us with its never-varying lines,
 And we grow melancholy. I would make
 Reason my guide, but she should sometimes sit
 Patiently by the way-side, while I traced 5
 The mazes of the pleasant wilderness
 Around me. She should be my counsellor,
 But not my tyrant. For the spirit needs
 Impulses from a deeper source than hers,
 And there are motions, in the mind of man, 10
 That she must look upon with awe. I bow
 Reverently to her dictates, but not less
 Hold to the fair illusions of old time —
 Illusions that shed brightness over life,
 And glory over nature. Look, even now, 15
 Where two bright planets in the twilight meet,
 Upon the saffron heaven, — the imperial star
 Of Jove, and she that from her radiant urn
 Pours forth the light of love. Let me believe,
 Awhile, that they are met for ends of good, 20

Amid the evening glory, to confer
 Of men and their affairs, and to shed down
 Kind influence. Lo! they brighten as we gaze,
 And shake out softer fires! The great earth feels
 The gladness and the quiet of the time. 25
 Meekly the mighty river, that infolds
 This mighty city, smooths his front, and far
 Glitters and burns even to the rocky base
 Of the dark heights that bound him to the west;
 And a deep murmur, from the many streets, 30
 Rises like a thanksgiving. Put we hence
 Dark and sad thoughts awhile — there's time for them
 Hereafter — on the morrow we will meet,
 With melancholy looks, to tell our griefs,
 And make each other wretched; this calm hour, 35
 This balmy, blessed evening, we will give
 To cheerful hopes and dreams of happy days,
 Born of the meeting of those glorious stars.

Enough of drought has parched the year, and scared
 The land with dread of famine. Autumn, yet, 40
 Shall make men glad with unexpected fruits.
 The °dog-star shall shine harmless: genial days
 Shall softly glide away into the keen
 And wholesome cold of winter; he that fears
 The pestilence, shall gaze on those pure beams, 45
 And breathe, with confidence, the quiet air.

Emblems of power and beauty! well may they
 Shine brightest on our borders, and withdraw

Towards the great Pacific, marking out
 The path of empire. Thus, in our own land, 50
 Ere long, the better Genius of our race,
 Having encompassed earth, and tamed its tribes,
 Shall sit him down beneath the farthest west,
 By the shore of that calm ocean, and look back
 On realms made happy.

Light the nuptial torch, 55
 And say the glad, yet solemn rite, that knits
 The youth and maiden. Happy days to them
 That wed this evening! — a long life of love,
 And blooming sons and daughters! °Happy they
 Born at this hour, — for they shall see an age 60
 Whiter and holier than the past, and go
 Late to their graves. Men shall wear softer hearts,
 And shudder at the butcheries of war,
 As now at other murders.

°Hapless Greece!
 Enough of blood has wet thy rocks, and stained 65
 Thy rivers; deep enough thy chains have worn
 Their links into thy flesh; the sacrifice
 Of thy pure maidens, and thy innocent babes,
 And reverend priests, has expiated all
 Thy crimes of old. In yonder mingling lights 70
 There is an omen of good days for thee.
 Thou shalt arise from midst the dust and sit
 Again among the nations. Thine own arm
 Shall yet redeem thee. Not in wars like thine

The world takes part. Be it a strife of kings, — 75
 Despot with despot battling for a throne, —
 And Europe shall be stirred throughout her realms,
 Nations shall put on harness, and shall fall
 Upon each other, and in all their bounds
 The wailing of the childless shall not cease. 80
 Thine is a war for liberty, and thou
 Must fight it single-handed. The old world
 Looks coldly on the murderers of thy race,
 And leaves thee to the struggle; and the new, —
 I fear me thou couldst tell a shameful tale 85
 Of fraud and lust of gain; — thy treasury drained,
 And °Missolonghi fallen. Yet thy wrongs
 Shall put new strength into thy heart and hand,
 And God and thy good sword shall yet work out,
 For thee, a terrible deliverance. 90

A SUMMER RAMBLE

THE quiet August noon has come,
 A slumberous silence fills the sky,
 The fields are still, the woods are dumb,
 In glassy sleep the waters lie.

And mark yon soft white clouds that rest 5
 Above our vale, a moveless throng;
 The cattle on the mountain's breast
 Enjoy the grateful shadow long.

Oh, how unlike those merry hours
In early June when Earth laughs out, 10
When the fresh winds make love to flowers,
And woodlands sing and waters shout.

When in the grass sweet voices talk,
And strains of tiny music swell
From every moss-cup of the rock, 15
From every nameless blossom's bell.

But now a joy too deep for sound,
A peace no other season knows,
Hushes the heavens and wraps the ground,
The blessing of supreme repose. 20

Away! I will not be, to-day,
The only slave of toil and care.
Away from desk and dust! away!
I'll be as idle as the air.

Beneath the open sky abroad, 25
Among the plants and breathing things,
The sinless, peaceful works of God,
I'll share the calm the season brings.

°Come, thou, in whose soft eyes I see
The gentle meanings of thy heart, 30
One day amid the woods with me,
From men and all their cares apart.

And where, upon the meadow's breast,
The shadow of the thicket lies,
The blue wild flowers thou gatherest 35
Shall glow yet deeper near thine eyes.

Come, and when mid the calm profound,
I turn, those gentle eyes to seek,
They, like the lovely landscape round,
Of innocence and peace shall speak. 40

Rest here, beneath the unmoving shade,
And on the silent valleys gaze,
Winding and widening, till they fade
In yon soft ring of summer haze.

The village trees their summits rear . 45
Still as its spire, and yonder flock
At rest in those calm fields appear
As chiselled from the lifeless rock.

One tranquil mount the scene o'erlooks —
There the hushed winds their °sabbath keep 50
While a near hum from bees and brooks
Comes faintly like the breath of sleep.

Well may the gazer °deem that when,
Worn with the struggle and the strife,
And heart-sick at the wrongs of men, 55
The good forsakes the scene of life;

Like this deep quiet that, awhile,
 Lingers the lovely landscape o'er,
 Shall be the peace whose holy smile
 Welcomes him to a happier shore.

60

A SCENE ON THE BANKS OF THE HUDSON

COOL shades and dews are round my way,
 And silence of the early day;
 Mid the dark rocks that watch his bed,
 Glitters the mighty Hudson spread,
 Unrippled, save by drops that fall
 From shrubs that fringe his mountain wall;
 And o'er the clear still water swells
 The music of the sabbath bells.

5

All, save this little nook of land
 Circled with trees, on which I stand;
 All, save that line of hills which lie
 °Suspended in the mimic sky —
 Seems a blue °void, above, below,
 Through which the white clouds come and go,
 And from the green world's farthest steep
 I gaze into the airy deep.

10

15

Loveliest of lovely things are they,
 On earth, that soonest pass away.

The rose that lives its little hour
 Is prized beyond the sculptured flower. 20
 Even love, long tried and cherished long,
 Becomes more tender and more strong,
 At thought of that °insatiate grave
 From which its yearnings cannot save.

River ! in this still hour thou hast 25
 Too much of heaven on earth to last ;
 Nor long may thy still waters lie,
 An image of the glorious sky.
 Thy fate and mine are not repose,
 And ere another evening close, 30
 Thou to thy tides shalt turn again,
 And I to seek the crowd of men.

°WILLIAM TELL

CHAINS may subdue the feeble spirit, but thee,
 TELL, of the iron heart ! they could not tame !
 For thou wert of the mountains ; they proclaim
 The everlasting creed of liberty.
 That creed is written on the untrampled snow, 5
 Thundered by torrents which no power can hold,
 Save that of God, when He sends forth His cold,
 And breathed by winds that through the free heaven blow.
 Thou, while thy prison-walls were dark around,
 Didst meditate the lesson Nature taught, 10

And to thy brief captivity was brought
 A vision of thy Switzerland unbound.
 The bitter cup they mingled, strengthened thee
 For the great work to set thy country free.

THE PAST

THOU unrelenting Past !
 Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,
 And fetters, sure and fast,
 Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

Far in thy realm withdrawn
 Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
 And glorious ages gone
 Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

5

Childhood, with all its mirth,
 Youth, Manhood, Age, that draws us to the ground,
 And last, Man's Life on earth,
 Glide to thy dim dominions, and are bound.

10

°Thou hast my better years,
 Thou hast my earlier friends — the good — the kind,
 Yielded to thee with tears —
 The venerable form — the exalted mind.

15

My spirit yearns 'to bring
 The lost ones back — yearns with desire intense,
 And struggles hard to wring
 Thy bolts apart, and pluck thy captives thence. 20

In vain — thy gates deny
 All passage save to those who hence depart;
 Nor to the streaming eye
 Thou giv'st them back — nor to the broken heart.

In thy °abysses hide 25
 Beauty and excellence unknown — to thee
 Earth's wonder and her pride
 Are gathered, as the waters to the sea;

Labors of good to man,
 Unpublished charity, unbroken faith, — 30
 Love, that midst grief began,
 And grew with years, and faltered not in death.

Full many a mighty name
 Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered;
 With thee are silent fame, 35
 Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared.

Thine for a space are they —
 Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last;
 Thy gates shall yet give way,
 Thy bolts shall fall, °inexorable Past! 40

All that of good and fair
 Has gone into thy womb from earliest time,
 Shall then come forth to wear
 The glory and the beauty of its prime.

They have not perished — no ! 45
 Kind words, remembered voices once so sweet,
 Smiles, radiant long ago,
 And features, the great soul's apparent seat.

All shall come back, each tie
 Of pure affection shall be knit again; 50
 °Alone shall Evil die,
 And Sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

And then shall I behold
 °Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,
 And °her, who, still and cold, 55
 Fills the next grave — the beautiful and young.

THE HUNTER'S SERENADE

THY °bower is finished, fairest !
 Fit bower for hunter's bride —
 Where old woods overshadow
 The green °savanna's side.
 I've wandered long, and wandered far, 5
 And never have I met,

In all this lovely western land,
A spot so lovely yet.
But I shall think it fairer,
When thou art come to bless, 10
With thy sweet smile and silver voice,
Its silent loveliness.

For thee the wild grape glistens,
On sunny knoll and tree,
The slim °papaya ripens 15
Its yellow fruit for thee.
For thee the duck, on glassy stream,
The prairie-fowl shall die,
My rifle for thy feast shall bring
The wild swan from the sky. 20
The forest's leaping panther,
Fierce, beautiful, and fleet,
Shall yield his spotted hide to be
A carpet for thy feet.

I know, for thou hast told me, 25
Thy maiden love of flowers;
Ah, those that deck thy gardens
Are pale compared with ours.
When our wide woods and mighty lawns
Bloom to the April skies, 30
The earth has no more gorgeous sight
To show to human eyes.
In meadows red with blossoms,
All summer long, the bee

Murmurs, and loads his yellow thighs, 35
 For thee, my love, and me.

Or wouldst thou gaze at tokens
 Of ages long ago —
 Our old oaks stream with mosses,
 And sprout with mistletoe; 40
 And mighty vines, like serpents, climb
 The giant sycamore;
 And trunks, o'erthrown for centuries,
 Cumber the forest floor;
 And in the great savanna, 45
 °The solitary mound,
 Built by the elder world, o'erlooks
 The loneliness around.

Come, thou hast not forgotten
 Thy pledge and promise quite, 50
 With many blushes murmured,
 Beneath the evening light.
 Come, the young violets crowd my door,
 Thy earliest look to win,
 And at my silent window-sill 55
 The jessamine peeps in.
 All day the red-bird warbles,
 Upon the mulberry near,
 And the night-sparrow trills her song,
 All night, with none to hear, 60

TO THE EVENING WIND

If there be anything within the whole compass of literature more delicate, more pure, more exquisitely sweet than this, it has not fallen under our observation. — North American Review for April, 1832.

SPIRIT that breathest through my lattice, thou
 That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
 Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow:
 Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
 Riding all day the wild blue waves till now, 5
 Roughening their crests, and scattering high their spray
 And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
 To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea!

Nor I alone — a thousand bosoms round
 Inhale thee in the fulness of delight; 10
 And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
 Livelier, at coming of the wind of night;
 And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,
 Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the sight.
 Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth, 15
 God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth!

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,
 Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and rouse
 The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
 Summoning from the innumerable boughs 20
 The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his breast:
 Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows

The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep the grass.

The faint old man shall lean his silver head 25
 To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
 And dry the moistened curls that overspread
 His temples, while his breathing grows more deep :
 And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
 Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep, 30
 And softly part his curtains to allow
 Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

Go — but the circle of eternal change,
 Which is the life of nature, shall restore,
 With sounds and scents from all thy mighty range 35
 Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more ;
 Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,
 Shall tell the home-sick mariner of the shore ;
 And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
 He hears the rustling leaf and running stream. 40

“INNOCENT CHILD AND SNOW-WHITE FLOWER”

INNOCENT child and snow-white flower !
 Well are ye paired in your opening hour.
 Thus should the pure and the lovely meet,
 Stainless with stainless, and sweet with sweet.

White as those leaves, just blown apart, 5
Are the folds of thy own young heart;
Guilty passion and cankering care
Never have left their traces there.

Artless one! though thou gazest now
O'er the white blossom with earnest brow, 10
Soon will it tire thy childish eye,
Fair as it is, thou wilt throw it by.

Throw it aside in thy weary hour,
Throw to the ground the fair white flower,
Yet, as thy tender years depart, 15
Keep that white and innocent heart.

TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN

THOU blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.

Thou comest not when violets lean 5
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the °ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,
 When woods are bare and birds are flown, 10
 And frosts and shortening days °portend
 The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
 Look through its fringes to the sky,
 °Blue — blue — as if that sky let fall 15
 A flower from its °cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
 The hour of death draw near to me,
 Hope, blossoming within my heart,
 May look to heaven as I depart. 20

°THE TWENTY-SECOND OF DECEMBER

WILD was the day; the wintry sea
 Moaned sadly on New-England's strand,
 When first the thoughtful and the free,
 Our fathers, trod the desert land.

They little thought how pure a light, 5
 With years, should gather round that day;
 How love should keep their memories bright,
 How wide a realm their sons should sway.

Green are their °bays; but greener still
 Shall round their spreading fame be wreathed, 10
 And regions, now untrod, shall thrill
 With reverence when their names are breathed.

Till where the sun, with softer fires,
 Looks on the vast Pacific's sleep,
 The children of the pilgrim sires 15
 This hallowed day like us shall keep.

SONG OF MARION'S MEN

The "Song of Marion's Men" is a beautiful ballad with much the grace of Campbell and the vigor of Allen Cunningham. The exploits of General Francis Marion, the famous partisan warrior of South Carolina, forms an interesting chapter in the annals of the American Revolution. — CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

OUR band is few, but true and tried,
 Our leader frank and bold;
 °The British soldier trembles
 When Marion's name is told.
 Our fortress is the good greenwood, 5
 Our tent the cypress-tree;
 We know the forest round us,
 As seamen know the sea.
 We know its walls of thorny vines,
 Its glades of reedy grass, 10
 Its safe and silent islands
 Within the dark morass.

°Woe to the English soldiery
 That little dread us near!
 On them shall light at midnight 15
 A strange and sudden fear:
 When waking to their tents on fire
 They grasp their arms in vain,
 And they who stand to face us 20
 Are beat to earth again;
 And they who fly in terror deem
 A mighty host behind,
 And hear the tramp of thousands
 Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release 25
 From danger and from toil:
 We talk the battle over,
 And share the battle's spoil.
 The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
 As if a hunt were °up, 30
 And woodland flowers are gathered
 To crown the soldier's cup.
 With merry songs we mock the wind
 That in the pine-top grieves,
 And slumber long and sweetly 35
 On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
 The band that Marion leads —
 The glitter of their rifles,
 The scampering of their steeds. 40

THE PRAIRIES

THESE are the gardens of the °Desert, these
 The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
 For which the speech of England has no name —
 The Prairies. °I behold them for the first,
 And my heart swells, while the dilated sight 5
 Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch
 In airy °undulations far away,
 °As if the ocean, in his gentlest swell,
 Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
 And motionless for ever. — Motionless? — 10
 No — they are all unchained again. The clouds
 Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
 °The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
 Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
 The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South! 15
 Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
 And pass °the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,
 Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not — ye have played
 Among the palms of Mexico and vines
 Of Texas, and have °crisped the °limpid brooks 20
 That from the fountains of °Sonora glide
 Into the calm Pacific — have ye fanned
 A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
 Man hath no part in all this glorious work:

The hand that built the firmament hath heaved 25
 And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown their
 slopes

With herbage, planted them with island groves,
 And hedged them round with forests. Fitting floor
 For this magnificent temple of the sky —
 With flowers whose glory and whose multitude 30
 Rival the °constellations! The great heavens
 Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love, —
 A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
 Than that which bends above the eastern hills.

As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed, 35
 Among the high rank grass that sweeps his sides
 The hollow beating of his footsteps seems
 A °sacrilegious sound. I think of those
 Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they here —
 The dead of other days? — and did the dust 40
 Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
 And burn with passion? Let the mighty mounds
 That overlook the rivers, or that rise
 In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
 Answer. °A race, that long has passed away, 45
 Built them; — a disciplined and populous race
 Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet the Greek
 Was hewing the °Pentelicus to forms
 Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
 The glittering °Parthenon. These ample fields 50
 Nourished their harvests, here their herds were fed,
 When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,

And bowed his maned shoulder to the yoke.
 All day this desert murmured with their toils,
 Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked, and wooed 55
 In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
 From instruments of unremembered form,
 Gave the soft winds a voice. The red man came —)
 The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and fierce,
 And the mound-builders vanished from the earth. 60
 The solitude of centuries untold
 Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie-wolf
 Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den
 Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the ground
 Where stood their swarming cities. All is gone — 65
 All — save the piles of earth that hold their bones —
 The platforms where they worshipped unknown gods —
 The barriers which they builded from the soil
 To keep the foe at bay — till o'er the walls
 The wild °beleaguers broke, and, one by one, 70
 The strongholds of the plain were °forced, and heaped
 With corpses. The brown vultures of the wood
 Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchres,
 And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast.
 Haply some solitary fugitive, 75
 Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
 Of desolation and of fear became
 Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
 Man's better nature triumphed then. Kind words
 Welcomed and soothed him; °the rude conquerors 80
 Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose
 A bride among their maidens, and at length

Seemed to forget, — yet ne'er forgot, — the wife
 Of his first love, and her sweet little ones,
 Butchered, amid their shrieks, with all his race. 85

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise
 Races of living things, glorious in strength,
 And perish, as the quickening breath of God
 Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red man, too,
 Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long, 90
 And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought
 A wilder hunting-ground. The beaver builds
 No longer by these streams, but far away,
 On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back
 The white man's face — among Missouri's springs, 95
 And pools whose issues swell the Oregon,
 He rears his little Venice. In these plains
 The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty leagues
 Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
 Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake 100
 The earth with thundering steps — yet here I meet
 His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
 Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
 They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds, 105
 And birds, that scarce have learned the fear of man,
 Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
 Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
 Bounds to the wood at my approach. The bee,
 A more adventurous colonist than man, 110

With whom he came across the eastern deep,
 Fills the °savannas with his murmurings,
 And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
 Within the hollow oak. I listen long
 To his domestic hum, and think I hear 115
 The sound of that advancing multitude
 Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the ground
 Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
 Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
 Of Sabbath worshippers. The low of herds 120
 Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
 Over the dark-brown furrows. All at once
 A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
 And I am in the wilderness alone.

THE HUNTER OF THE PRAIRIES

Bryant's song of "The Hunter of the Prairies" is one of those bold, free bursts that is sure to find its echo in the deep, green woods and on the ocean plains. — LITTELL'S Living Age for May, 1859.

AY, this is freedom! — these pure skies
 Were never stained with village smoke:
 The fragrant wind, that through them flies,
 Is breathed from wastes by plough unbroke.
 Here, with my rifle and my steed, 5
 And her who left the world for me,
 I plant me, where the red deer feed
 In the green desert — and am free.

For here the fair °savannas know
 No barriers in the bloomy grass; 10
 Wherever breeze of heaven may blow,
 Or beam of heaven may glance, I pass.
 In pastures, measureless as air,
 The bison is my noble game;
 The bounding elk, whose antlers tear 15
 The branches, falls before my aim.

Mine are the river-fowl that scream
 From the long stripe of waving sedge;
 The bear that marks my weapon's gleam,
 Hides vainly in the forest's edge; 20
 In vain the she-wolf stands at bay;
 The °brinded °catamount, that lies
 High in the boughs to watch his prey,
 Even in the act of springing, dies.

With what free growth the elm and °plane 25
 Fling their huge arms across my way,
 Gray, old, and °cumbered with a train
 Of vines, as huge, and old, and gray!
 Free stray the lucid streams, and find
 No taint in these fresh lawns and shades; 30
 Free spring the flowers that scent the wind
 Where never scythe has swept the glades.

Alone the °Fire, when frost-winds °sere
 The heavy herbage of the ground,
 Gathers his annual harvest here, 35
 With roaring like the battle's sound,

And hurrying flames that sweep the plain,
And smoke-streams gushing up the sky:
°I meet the flames with flames again,
And at my door they cower and die.

40

Here, from dim woods, the aged past
Speaks solemnly; and I behold
The boundless future in the vast
And lonely river, seaward rolled.
Who feeds its founts with rain and dew?
Who moves, I ask, its gliding mass,
And trains the bordering vines, whose blue
Bright clusters tempt me as I pass?

45

Broad are these streams — my steed obeys,
Plunges, and bears me through the tide.
Wide are these woods — I thread the °maze
Of giant stems, nor ask a guide.
I hunt till day's last glimmer dies
O'er woody vale and grassy height;
And kind the voice and glad the eyes
That welcome my return at night.

50

55

°SEVENTY-SIX

There is martial music in the very measure of the following verses, as there is a gallant indication in their title of "Seventy-six." — American Quarterly Review for December, 1836.

WHAT heroes from the woodland sprung,
 When, through the fresh-awakened land,
 The thrilling cry of freedom rung,
 And to the work of warfare strung
 The °yeoman's iron hand ! 5

Hills flung the cry to hills around.
 And °ocean-mart replied to mart,
 And streams, whose springs were yet unfound,
 Pealed far away the startling sound
 Into the forest's heart. 10

Then marched the brave from rocky sleep,
 From mountain river swift and cold;
 The borders of the stormy deep,
 The vales where gathered waters sleep,
 Sent up the strong and bold, — 15

As if the very earth again
 Grew quick with God's creating breath,
 And, from the sods of grave and glen,
 Rose ranks of lion-hearted men
 To battle to the death. 20

The wife whose babe first smiled that day,
 The fair fond bride of yestereve,
 And aged sire and matron gray,
 Saw the loved warriors haste away,
 And deemed it sin to grieve.

25

°Already had the strife begun;
 Already blood on °Concord's plain
 Along the springing grass had run,
 And blood had flowed at °Lexington,
 Like brooks of April rain.

30

That death-stain on the °vernal sward
 Hallowed to freedom all the shore;
 In fragments fell the yoke abhorred —
 The footstep of a foreign lord
 Profaned the soil no more.

35

°TO THE APENNINES

YOUR peaks are beautiful, ye Apennines!
 In the soft light of these serenest skies;
 From the broad highland region, black with pines,
 Fair as the hills of Paradise they rise,
 Bathed in the tint °Peruvian slaves behold
 In rosy flushes on the °virgin gold.

5

There, rooted to the °aërial shelves that wear
 The glory of a brighter world, might spring

Sweet flowers of heaven to scent the unbreathed air,
 And heaven's fleet messengers might rest the wing, 10
 To view the fair earth in its summer sleep,
 Silent, and cradled by the glimmering deep.

Below you lie men's sepulchres, the old
 °Etrurian tombs, the graves of yesterday;
 The herd's white bones lie mixed with human mould — 15
 Yet up the radiant steeps that I survey
 Death never climbed, nor life's soft breath, with pain,
 Was yielded to the elements again.

Ages of war have filled these plains with fear;
 How oft the °hind has started at the clash 20
 Of spears, and yell of meeting armies here,
 Or seen the lightning of the battle flash
 From clouds, that rising with the thunder's sound,
 Hung like an earth-born tempest o'er the ground!

Ah me! what armed nations — °Asian horde, 25
 And °Libyan host — the °Scythian and the °Gaul,
 Have swept your base and through your passes poured,
 Like ocean-tides uprising at the call
 Of tyrant winds — against your rocky side
 The bloody billows dashed, and howled, and died. 30

How crashed the towers before °beleaguering foes,
 Sacked cities smoked and realms were rent in twain;
 And commonwealths against their rivals rose,
 Trode out their lives and earned °the curse of Cain!

While in the noiseless air and light that flowed 35
 Round your far brows, eternal Peace abode.

Here pealed the impious hymn, and altar flames
 Rose to false gods, a dream-begotten throng,
 °Jove, °Bacchus, °Pan, and earlier, fouler names;
 While, as the unheeding ages passed along, 40
 Ye, from your station in the °middle skies,
 Proclaimed the essential Goodness, strong and wise.

In you the heart that sighs for freedom seeks
 Her image; there the winds no barrier know,
 Clouds come and rest and leave your fairy peaks; 45
 While even the immaterial Mind, below,
 And Thought, her winged offspring, chained by power,
 Pine silently for the redeeming hour.

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS

This song refers to the expedition of the Vermonters, commanded by Ethan Allen, by whom the British fort of Ticonderoga, on Lake Champlain, was surprised and taken, in May, 1775. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

I

HERE we halt our march, and pitch our tent,
 On the rugged forest ground,
 And light our fire with the branches rent,
 By winds from the beeches round.

Wild storms have torn this ancient wood, 5
 But a wilder is at hand,
With hail of iron and rain of blood,
 To sweep and scath(e) the land.

II

How the dark waste rings with voices shrill,
 That startle the sleeping bird, 10
To-morrow eve must the voice be still,
 And the step must fall unheard.
The Briton lies by the blue Champlain,
 In Ticonderoga's towers,
And ere the sun rise twice again, 15
 The towers and the lake are ours.

III

Fill up the bowl from the brook that glides,
 Where the fireflies light the brake;
A ruddier juice the Briton hides,
 In his fortress by the lake. 20
Build high the fire, till the panther leap
 From his lofty perch in fright,
And we'll strengthen our weary arms with sleep,
 For the deeds of to-morrow night.

°CATTERSKILL FALLS

MIDST greens and shades the Catterskill leaps,
From cliffs where the wood-flower clings;
All summer he moistens his verdant steeps
With the sweet light spray of the mountain springs;
And he shakes the woods on the mountain side, 5
When they drip with the rains of autumn-tide.

But when, in the forest bare and old,
The blast of December calls,
He builds, in the starlight clear and cold,
A palace of ice where his torrent falls, 10
With turret, and arch, and fretwork fair,
And pillars blue as the summer air.

For whom are those glorious chambers wrought,
In the cold and cloudless night?
Is there neither spirit nor motion of thought 15
In forms so lovely, and hues so bright?
Hear what the gray-haired woodmen tell
Of this wild stream and its rocky dell.

'Twas hither a youth of dreamy mood,
A hundred winters ago, 20
Had wandered over the mighty wood,
When the panther's track was fresh on the snow,

And keen were the winds that came to stir
The long dark boughs of the hemlock fir.

Too gentle of °mien he seemed and fair, 25
For a child of those rugged steeps;
His home lay low in the valley where
The kingly Hudson rolls to the deeps;
But he wore the hunter's frock that day,
And a slender gun on his shoulder lay. 30

And here he paused, and against the trunk
Of a tall gray °linden leant,
When the broad clear orb of the sun had sunk
From his path in the frosty firmament,
And over the round dark edge of the hill 35
A cold green light was quivering still.

And the °crescent moon, high over the green,
From a sky of crimson shone,
On that icy palace, whose towers were seen
To sparkle as if with stars of their own; 40
While the water fell with a hollow sound,
'Twixt the glistening pillars ranged around.

Is that a being of life, that moves
Where the crystal battlements rise?
A maiden watching the moon she loves, 45
At the twilight hour, with °pensive eyes?

Was that a garment which seemed to gleam
Betwixt the eye and the falling stream?

'Tis only the torrent tumbling o'er,
In the midst of those glassy walls, 50
Gushing, and plunging, and beating the floor
Of the rocky basin in which it falls.
'Tis only the torrent — but why that start?
Why gazes the youth with a throbbing heart?

He thinks no more of his home afar, 55
Where his sire and sister wait.
He heeds no longer how star after star
Looks forth on the night as the hour grows late.
He heeds not the snow-wreaths, lifted and cast
From a thousand boughs, by the rising blast. 60

His thoughts are alone of those who dwell
In the halls of frost and snow,
Who pass where the crystal domes upswell
From the °alabaster floors below,
Where the frost-trees shoot with leaf and spray, 65
And frost-gems scatter a silvery day.

“And oh that those glorious haunts were mine!”
He speaks, and throughout the glen
Thin shadows swim in the faint moonshine,
And take a ghastly likeness of men, 70
As if the slain by the wintry storms
Came forth to the air in their earthly forms.

There pass the chasers of seal and whale,
With their weapons °quaint and grim,
And bands of warriors in glittering °mail, 75
And herdsmen and hunters huge of limb.
There are naked arms, with bow and spear,
And furry gauntlets the °carbine rear.

There are mothers — and oh how sadly their eyes
On their children's white brows rest ! 80
There are youthful lovers — the maiden lies,
In a seeming sleep, on the chosen breast ;
There are fair wan women with moonstruck air,
The snow stars flecking their long loose hair.

They eye him not as they pass along, 85
But his hair stands up with dread,
When he feels that he moves with that °phantom throng,
Till those icy turrets are over his head,
And the torrent's roar as they enter seems
Like a drowsy murmur heard in dreams. 90

The glittering threshold is scarcely passed,
When there gathers and wraps him round
A thick white twilight, sullen and vast,
In which there is neither form nor sound ;
The °phantoms, the glory, vanish all, 95
With the dying voice of the waterfall.

Slow passes the darkness of that trance,
And the youth now faintly sees

Huge shadows and gushes of light that dance
On a rugged ceiling of unhewn trees, 100
And walls where the skins of beasts are hung,
And rifles glitter on antlers strung.

On a couch of shaggy skins he lies;
As he strives to raise his head,
Hard-featured woodmen, with kindly eyes, 105
Come round him and smooth his furry bed,
And bid him rest, for the evening star
Is scarcely set and the day is far.

They had found at eve the dreaming one
By the base of that icy steep, 110
When over his stiffening limbs begun
The deadly slumber of frost to creep,
And they cherished the pale and breathless form,
Till the °stagnant blood ran free and warm.

THE BATTLE-FIELD

How like a pæan after a glorious victory do the ideas and cadences of that noble song, "The Battle-field," strike on the ear and thrill the soul! It is the jubilate of joy and hope, accompanied by the spirit-stirring notes of a whole orchestra. How sweet its tones, how noble its sentiments, how grand its thoughts, so hopeful of right, so defiant of wrong, so uncompromisingly ready to live in misery and disgrace, in toil and suffering, if but the true and the good triumph. — Methodist Quarterly Review for January, 1859.

ONCE this soft turf, this rivulet's sands,
 Were trampled by a hurrying crowd,
 And fiery hearts and armèd hands
 Encountered in the °battle-cloud.

Ah! never shall the land forget 5
 How gushed the life-blood of her brave —
 Gushed, warm with hope and courage yet,
 Upon the soil they fought to save.

Now all is calm, and fresh, and still;
 Alone the chirp of flitting bird, 10
 And talk of children on the hill,
 And bell of wandering °kine, are heard.

No solemn host goes trailing by
 The black-mouthed gun and staggering °wain;
 Men start not at the battle-cry, 15
 Oh, be it never heard again!

Soon rested those who fought; but thou
Who minglest in the harder strife
For truths which men receive not now,
Thy warfare only ends with life.

20

A friendless warfare ! lingering long
Through weary day and weary year,
A wild and many-weaponed throng
Hang on thy front, and flank, and rear.

Yet nerve thy spirit to the °proof,
And blench not at thy chosen lot.
The timid good may stand aloof,
The °sage may frown — yet faint thou not.

25

Nor heed the shaft too surely cast,
The foul and hissing bolt of scorn;
For with thy side shall dwell, at last,
The victory of endurance born.

30

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.

35

Yea, though thou lie upon the dust,
When they who helped thee flee in fear,
Die full of hope and manly trust,
Like those who fell in battle here.

40

Another hand thy sword shall wield,
Another hand the standard wave,
Till from the trumpet's mouth is pealed
The blast of triumph o'er thy grave.

LATER POEMS

°SELLA

Sella is the name given by the Vulgate to one of the wives of Lamech, mentioned in the fourth chapter of the book of Genesis, and called Zillah in the common English version of the Bible. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

HEAR now a legend of the days of old —
 The days when there were goodly marvels yet,
 When man to man gave willing faith, and loved
 A tale the better that 'twas wild and strange.

°Beside a pleasant dwelling ran a brook 5
 Scudding along a narrow channel, paved
 With green and yellow pebbles; yet full clear
 Its waters were, and colorless and cool,
 As fresh from granite rocks. A maiden oft
 Stood at the open window, leaning out, 10
 And listening to the sound the water made,
 °A sweet, eternal murmur, still the same,
 And not the same; and oft, as spring came on,
 She gathered violets from its fresh moist bank,
 To place within her bower, and when the herbs 15
 Of summer drooped beneath the mid-day sun,
 She sat within the shade of a great rock,
 Dreamily listening to the streamlet's song.

Ripe were the maiden's years; her stature showed
Womanly beauty, and her clear, calm eye 20
Was bright with venturous spirit, yet her face
Was °passionless, like those by sculptor °graved
For °niches in a temple. Lovers oft
Had wooed her, but she only laughed at love,
And wondered at the silly things they said. 25
'Twas her delight to wander where wild vines
O'erhang the river's brim, to climb the path
Of woodland streamlet to its mountain springs,
To sit by gleaming °wells and mark below
The image of the rushes on its edge, 30
°And, deep beyond, the trailing clouds that slid
Across the fair blue space. No little fount
Stole forth from hanging rock, or in the side
Of hollow dell, or under roots of oak;
No rill came trickling, °with a stripe of green, 35
Down the bare hill, that to this maiden's eye
Was not familiar. Often did the banks
Of river or of °sylvan lakelet hear
The dip of oars with which the maiden rowed
Her °shallop, pushing ever from the prow 40
A crowd of long, light ripples toward the shore.
Two brothers had the maiden, and she thought,
Within herself: "I would I were like them;
For then I might go forth alone, to trace
The mighty rivers downward to the sea, 45
And upward to the brooks that, through the year,
Prattle to the cool valleys. I would know
What races drink their waters; how their chiefs

Bear rule, and how men worship there, and how
 They build, and to what quaint device they frame, 50
 Where sea and river meet, their stately ships;
 What flowers are in their gardens, and what trees
 Bear fruit within their orchards; in what garb
 Their bowmen meet on holidays, and how
 Their maidens bind the waist and braid the hair. 55
 Here, on these hills, my father's house o'erlooks
 Broad pastures grazed by flocks and herds, but there
 I hear they sprinkle the great plains with corn
 And watch its springing up, and when the green
 Is changed to gold, they cut the stems and bring 60
 The harvest in, and give the nations bread.
 And there they hew the °quarry into shafts,
 And pile up glorious temples from the rock,
 And chisel the rude stones to shapes of men.
 All this I pine to see, and would have seen, 65
 But that I am a woman, long ago."

Thus in her wanderings did the maiden dream,
 Until, at length, one morn in early spring,
 When all the glistening fields lay white with frost,
 She came half breathless where her mother sat: 70
 "See, mother dear," she said, "what I have found,
 Upon our rivulet's bank; two °slippers, white
 As the mid-winter snow, and spangled o'er
 With twinkling points, like stars, and on the edge
 My name is wrought in silver; read, I pray, 75
 Sella, the name thy mother, now in heaven,
 Gave at my birth; and sure, they fit my feet!"
 "A dainty pair," the prudent matron said,

"But thine they are not. We must lay them by
 For those whose careless hands have left them here; 80
 Or haply they were placed beside the brook
 To be a snare. °I cannot see thy name
 Upon the border — only characters
 Of mystic look and dim are there, like signs
 Of some strange art; nay, daughter, wear them not." 85

Then Sella hung the slippers in the porch
 Of that broad rustic lodge, and all who passed
 Admired their fair °contexture, but none knew
 Who left them by the brook. And now, at length,
 May, with her flowers and singing birds, had gone, 90
 And on bright streams and into deep wells shone
 The high midsummer sun. One day, at noon,
 Sella was missed from the accustomed meal.
 They sought her in her favorite haunts, they looked
 By the great rock and far along the stream, 95
 And shouted in the °sounding woods her name.
 Night came, and forth the sorrowing household went
 With torches over the wide pasture grounds,
 To pool and thicket, marsh and briery dell,
 And solitary valley far away. 100
 The morning came, and Sella was not found.
 The sun climbed high; they sought her still; the noon,
 The hot and silent noon, heard Sella's name,
 Uttered with a despairing cry, to wastes
 O'er which the éagle hovered. As the sun 105
 Stood toward the amber west to bring the close
 Of that sad second day, and, with red eyes,
 The mother sat within her home alone,

Sella was at her side. A shriek of joy
 Broke the sad silence; glad, warm tears were shed, 110
 And words of gladness uttered. "Oh, forgive,"
 The maiden said, "that I could e'er forget
 Thy wishes for a moment. I just tried
 The slippers on, amazed to see them shaped
 So fairly to my feet, when, all at once, 115
 I felt my steps upborne and hurried on
 Almost as if with wings. A strange delight,
 Blent with a thrill of fear, o'ermastered me,
 And, ere I knew, my splashing steps were set
 Within the rivulet's pebbly bed, and I 120
 Was rushing down the current. By my side
 °Tripped one as beautiful as ever looked
 From white clouds in a dream; and, as we ran,
 She talked with musical voice and sweetly laughed;
 Gayly we leaped the crag and swam the pool, 125
 And swept with dimpling eddies round the rock,
 And glided between shady meadow banks.
 The streamlet, broadening as we went, became
 A swelling river, and we shot along
 By stately towns, and under leaning masts 130
 Of gallant barks, nor lingered by the shore
 Of blooming gardens; onward, onward still,
 The same strong impulse bore me, till, at last,
 We entered the great deep, and passed below
 His billows, into boundless spaces, lit 135
 With a green sunshine. °Here were mighty groves
 Far down the ocean-valleys, and between
 Lay what might seem fair meadows, softly tinged

With orange and with crimson. Here arose
Tall stems, that, rooted in the depths below, 140
Swung idly with the motions of the sea;
And here were shrubberies in whose °mazy screen
The creatures of the deep made haunt. My friend
Named the strange growths, the pretty °coralline,
The °dulse with crimson leaves, and, streaming far, 145
°Sea-thong and °sea-lace. Here the tangle spread
Its broad, thick °fronds, with pleasant bowers beneath,
And oft we trod a waste of pearly sands,
Spotted with rosy shells, and thence looked in
At caverns of the sea whose rock-roofed halls 150
Lay in blue twilight. As we moved along,
The dwellers of the deep, in mighty herds,
Passed by us, reverently they passed us by,
Long trains of dolphins rolling through the brine,
Huge whales, that drew the waters after them, 155
A torrent-stream, and hideous hammer-sharks,
Chasing their prey; I shuddered as they came;
Gently they turned aside and gave us room."

Hereat broke in the mother: °"Sella dear,
This is a dream, the idlest, vainest dream." 160

"Nay, mother, nay; behold this sea-green scarf,
Woven of such threads as never human hand
Twined from the °distaff. She who led my way
Through the great waters bade me wear it home,
A token that my tale is true. 'And keep,' 165
She said, 'the slippers thou hast found, for thou,
When shod with them, shalt be like one of us,
With power to walk at will the ocean floor,

Among its monstrous creatures, unafraid,
 And feel no longing for the air of heaven 170
 To fill thy lungs, and send the warm, red blood
 Along thy veins. But thou shalt pass the hours
 In dances with the °sea-nymphs, or go forth,
 To look into the mysteries of the °abyss
 Where never °plummet reached. And thou shalt
 sleep 175

Thy weariness away on downy banks
 Of sea-moss, where the °pulses of the tide
 Shall gently lift thy hair, or thou shalt float
 On the soft currents that go forth and wind
 From isle to isle, and wander through the sea.' 180

“So spake my fellow-voyager, her words
 Sounding like wavelets on a summer shore,
 And then we stopped beside a hanging rock,
 With a smooth beach of white sands at its foot,
 Where three fair creatures like herself were set 185
 At their sea-banquet, crisp and juicy stalks,
 °Culled from the ocean's meadows, and the sweet
 °Midrib of pleasant leaves, and golden fruits,
 Dropped from the trees that edge the southern isles,
 And gathered on the waves. Kindly they prayed 190
 That I would share their meal, and I partook
 With eager appetite, for long had been
 My journey, and I left the spot refreshed.

“And then we wandered off amid the groves
 Of coral loftier than the growths of earth; 195
 The mightiest cedar lifts no trunk like theirs,
 So huge, so high toward heaven, nor overhangs

Alleys and bowers so dim. We moved between
°Pinnacles of black rock, which, from beneath,
°Molten by inner fires, so said my guide, 200
Gushed long ago into the hissing brine,
That quenched and hardened them, and now they stand
Motionless in the currents of the sea

That part and flow around them. As we went,
We looked into the hollows of the °abyss, 205
To which the never-resting waters sweep
The skeletons of sharks, the long white spines
Of narwhal and of dolphin, bones of men
Shipwrecked, and mighty ribs of foundered barks.
Down the blue pits we looked, and hastened on. 210

“But beautiful the fountains of the sea
Sprang upward from its bed: the silvery jets
Shot branching far into the °azure brine,
And where they mingled with it, the great deep
Quivered and shook, as shakes the glimmering air 215
Above a furnace. So we wandered through

The mighty world of waters, till at length
I wearied of its wonders, and my heart
Began to yearn for my dear mountain-home.
I prayed my gentle guide to lead me back 220
To the upper air. ‘A glorious realm,’ I said,
‘Is this thou openest to me; but I stray
Bewildered in its vastness; these strange sights
And this strange light oppress me.° I must see
The faces that I love, or I shall die.’ 225

“She took my hand, and, darting through the waves,
Brought me to where the stream, by which we came,

Rushed into the main ocean. Then began
 A slower journey upward. Wearily
 We breasted the strong current, climbing through 230
 The rapids, tossing high their foam. The night
 Came down, and in the clear depth of a pool,
 Edged with o'erhanging rock, we took our rest
 Till morning; and I slept, and dreamed of home
 And thee. A pleasant sight the morning showed; 235
 The green fields of this upper world, the herds
 That grazed the bank, the light on the red clouds,
 The trees, with all their host of trembling leaves,
 Lifting and lowering to the restless wind
 Their branches. As I woke, I saw them all 240
 From the clear stream; yet strangely was my heart
 Parted between the watery world and this,
 And as we journeyed upward, oft I thought
 Of marvels I had seen, and stopped and turned,
 And lingered, °till I thought of thee again; 245
 And then again I turned and clambered up
 The rivulet's murmuring path, until we came
 Beside the cottage door. There tenderly
 My fair conductor kissed me, and I saw
 Her face no more. I took the slippers off. 250
 Oh! with what deep delight my lungs drew in
 The air of heaven again, and with what joy
 I felt my blood bound with its former glow;
 And now I never leave thy side again!"

So spoke the maiden Sella, with large tears 255
 Standing in her mild eyes, and in the porch
 Replaced the slippers. Autumn came and went;

The winter passed; another summer warmed
 The quiet pools; another autumn tinged
 The grape with red, yet while it hung unplucked, 260
 The mother ere her time was carried forth
 To sleep among the solitary hills.

A long, still sadness settled on that home
 Among the mountains. The stern father there
 Wept with his children, and grew soft of heart, 265
 And Sella, and the brothers twain, and one
 Younger than they, a sister fair and shy,
 Strewed the new grave with flowers, and round it set
 Shrubs that all winter held their lively green.
 Time passed; the grief with which their hearts were
 wrung 270

°Waned to a gentle sorrow. Sella, now,
 Was often absent from the °patriarch's board;
 The slippers hung no longer in the porch;
 And sometimes after summer nights her couch
 Was found unpressed at dawn, and well they knew 275
 That she was wandering with the race who make
 Their dwelling in the waters. Oft her looks
 Fixed on blank space, and oft the ill-suited word
 Told that her thoughts were far away. In vain
 Her brothers reasoned with her tenderly: 280
 "Oh leave not thus thy kindred!" so they prayed;
 "Dear Sella, now that she who gave us birth
 Is in her grave, oh go not hence, to seek
 Companions in that strange cold realm below,
 For which God made not us nor thee, but stay 285
 To be the grace and glory of our home."

She looked at them with those mild eyes and wept,
 But said no word in answer, nor refrained
 From those mysterious wanderings that filled
 Their loving hearts with a perpetual pain. 290

°And now the younger sister, fair and shy,
 Had grown to early womanhood, and one
 Who loved her well had wooed her for his bride,
 And she had named the wedding day. The herd
 Had given its fatlings for the marriage feast; 295
 The roadside garden and the secret glen
 Were rifled of their sweetest flowers to twine
 The door-posts, and to lie among the locks
 Of maids, the wedding-guests, and from the bough
 Of mountain-orchards had the fairest fruit 300
 Been plucked to glisten in the °canisters.

Then, trooping over hill and valley, came
 Matron and maid, grave men and smiling youths,
 Like swallows gathering for their autumn flight,
 In costumes of that simpler age they came, 305
 That gave the limbs large play, and wrapped the form
 In easy folds, yet bright with glowing hues
 As suited holidays. All hastened on
 To that glad bridal. There already stood
 The priest prepared to say the °spousal rite, 310
 And there the harpers in due order sat,
 And there the singers. Sella, midst them all,
 Moved strangely and serenely beautiful,
 With clear blue eyes, fair locks, and brow and cheek
 Colorless as the lily of the lakes, 315
 Yet moulded to such shape as artists give

To beings of immortal youth. Her hands
 Had decked her sister for the bridal hour
 With chosen flowers, and lawn whose delicate threads
 Vied with the spider's spinning. °There she stood 320
 With a gentle pleasure in her looks
 As might beseem a river-nymph's soft eyes
 Gracing a bridal of the race whose flocks
 Were pastured on the borders of her stream.

She smiled, but from that calm sweet face the smile 325
 Was soon to pass away. That very morn
 The elder of the brothers, as he stood
 Upon the hillside, had beheld the maid,
 Emerging from the channel of the brook,
 With three fresh water lilies in her hand, 330
 Wring dry her dripping locks, and in a cleft
 Of hanging rock, beside a screen of boughs,
 Bestow the spangled slippers. None before
 Had known where Sella hid them. Then she laid
 The light-brown tresses smooth, and in them twined 335
 The lily-buds, and hastily drew forth
 And threw across her shoulders a light robe
 Wrought for the bridal, and with bounding steps
 Ran toward the lodge. The youth beheld and marked
 The spot and slowly followed from afar. 340

Now had the marriage rite been said; the bride
 Stood in the blush that from her burning cheek
 Glowed down the °alabaster neck, as morn
 Crimsons the pearly heaven half-way to the west.
 At once the harpers struck their chords; a gush 345
 Of music broke upon the air; the youths

All started to the dance. Among them moved
 The queenly Sella with a grace that seemed
 Caught from the swaying of the summer sea.
 The young drew forth the elders to the dance, 350
 Who joined it half abashed, but when they felt
 The joyous music tingling in their veins,
 They called for °quaint old measures, which they trod
 As gayly as in youth, and far abroad
 Came through the open windows cheerful shouts 355
 And bursts of laughter. They who heard the sound
 Upon the mountain footpaths paused and said,
 "A merry wedding." Lovers stole away
 That sunny afternoon to bowers that edged
 The garden walks, and what was whispered there 360
 The lovers of these later times can guess.

Meanwhile the brothers, when the merry din
 Was loudest, stole to where the slippers lay,
 And took them thence, and followed down the brook
 To where a little rapid rushed between 365
 Its borders of smooth rock, and dropped them in.
 The rivulet, as they touched its face, flung up
 Its small bright waves like hands, and seemed to take
 The prize with eagerness and draw it down.
 They, gleaming through the waters as they went, 370
 And striking with light sound the shining stones,
 Slid down the stream. The brothers looked and
 watched,
 And listened with full beating hearts, till now
 The sight and sound had passed, and silently
 And half repentant hastened to the lodge. 375

The sun was near his set; the music rang
Within the dwelling still, but the mirth waned;
For groups of guests were sauntering toward their homes
Across the fields, and far, on hillside paths,
Gleamed the white robes of maidens. Sella grew 380
Weary of the long merriment; she thought
Of her still haunts beneath the soundless sea,
And all unseen withdrew and sought the cleft
Where she had laid the slippers. They were gone!
She searched the brookside near, yet found them not. 385
Then her heart sank within her, and she ran
Wildly from place to place, and once again
She searched the secret cleft, and next she stooped
And with spread palms felt carefully beneath
The tufted herbs and bushes, and again, 390
And yet again, she searched the rocky cleft.
“Who could have taken them?” That question
cleared

The mystery. She remembered suddenly
That when the dance was in its gayest whirl,
Her brothers were not seen, and when, at length, 395
They reappeared, the elder joined the sports
With shouts of boisterous mirth, and from her eye
The younger shrank in silence. “Now, I know
The guilty ones,” she said, and left the spot,
And stood before the youths with such a look 400
Of anguish and reproach that well they knew
Her thought, and almost wished the deed undone.

Frankly they owned the charge: “And pardon us;
We did it all in love; we could not bear

That the cold world of waters and the strange 405
 Beings that dwell within it should beguile
 Our sister from us." Then they told her all;
 How they had seen her stealthily bestow
 The slippers in the cleft, and how by stealth
 They took them thence and bore them down the brook 410
 And dropped them in, and how the eager waves
 Gathered and drew them down; but at that word
 The maiden shrieked — a broken-hearted shriek —
 And all who heard it shuddered and turned pale
 At the despairing cry, and "They are gone," 415
 She said, "gone — gone for ever! Cruel ones!
 'Tis you who shut me out eternally
 From that serener world which I had learned
 To love so well. Why took ye not my life?
 Ye cannot know what ye have done!" She spake 420
 And hurried to her chamber, and the guests
 Who yet had lingered silently withdrew.

The brothers followed to the maiden's bower,
 But with a calm °demeanor, as they came,
 She met them at the door. "The wrong is great," 425
 She said, "that ye have done me, but no power
 Have ye to make it less, nor yet to soothe
 My sorrow; I shall bear it as I may,
 The better for the hours that I have passed
 In the calm region of the °middle sea. 430
 Go, then. I need you not." They, overawed,
 Withdrew from that grave presence. Then her tears
 Broke forth a flood, as when the August cloud,
 Darkening beside the mountain, suddenly

Melts into streams of rain. That weary night 435
 She paced her chamber, murmuring as she walked,
 "O peaceful region of the middle sea!
 O azure bowers and grotts, in which I loved
 To roam and rest! Am I to long for you,
 And think how strangely beautiful ye are, 440
 Yet never see you more? And dearer yet,
 Ye gentle ones in whose sweet company
 I trod the shelly pavements of the deep,
 And swam its currents, creatures with calm eyes
 Looking the tenderest love, and voices soft 445
 As ripple of light waves along the shore,
 Uttering the tenderest words! Oh! ne'er again
 Shall I, in your mild aspects, read the peace
 That dwells within, and vainly shall I pine
 To hear your sweet low voices. Haply now 450
 Ye miss me in your deep-sea home, and think
 Of me with pity, as of one condemned
 To haunt this upper world, with its harsh sounds
 And glaring lights, its withering heats, its frosts,
 Cruel and killing, its delirious strifes, 455
 And all its feverish passions, till I die."

So mourned she the long night, and when the morn
 Brightened the mountains, from her lattice looked
 The maiden on a world that was to her
 A desolate and dreary waste. That day 460
 She passed in wandering by the brook that oft
 Had been her pathway to the sea, and still
 Seemed, with its cheerful murmur, to invite
 Her footsteps thither. "Well mayst thou rejoice,

Fortunate stream!" she said, "and dance along 465
Thy bed, and make thy course one ceaseless strain
Of music, for thou journeyest toward the deep,
To which I shall return no more." The night
Brought her to her lone chamber, and she knelt
And prayed, with many tears, to Him whose hand 470
Touches the wounded heart and it is healed.

With prayer there came new thoughts and new desires.
She asked for patience and a deeper love
For those with whom her lot was henceforth cast,
And that in acts of mercy she might lose 475
The sense of her own sorrow. When she rose
A weight was lifted from her heart. She sought
Her couch, and slept a long and peaceful sleep.
At morn she woke to a new life. Her days
Henceforth were given to quiet tasks of good 480
In the great world. Men hearkened to her words,
And wondered at their wisdom and obeyed,
And saw how beautiful the law of love
Can make the cares and toils of daily life.

Still did she love to haunt the springs and brooks 485
As in her cheerful childhood, and she taught
The skill to pierce the soil and meet the veins
Of clear cold water winding underneath,
And call them forth to daylight. °From afar
She bade men bring the rivers on long rows 490
Of pillared arches to the sultry town,
And on the hot air of the summer fling
The spray of dashing fountains. To relieve
Their weary hands, she showed them how to tame

The rushing stream, and make him drive the wheel 495
 That whirls the humming millstone and that wields
 The ponderous sledge. The waters of the cloud,
 That drench the hillside in the time of rains,
 Were gathered, at her bidding, into pools,
 And in the months of drought led forth again, 500
 In glimmering rivulets, to refresh the vales,
 Till the sky darkened with returning showers.

So passed her life, a long and blameless life,
 And far and near her name was named with love
 And reverence. Still she kept, as age came on, 505
 Her stately presence; still her eyes looked forth
 From under their calm brows as brightly clear
 As the transparent wells by which she sat
 So oft in childhood. Still she kept her fair
 Unwrinkled features, though her locks were white. 510
 A hundred times had summer, since her birth,
 Opened the water-lily on the lakes,
 So old traditions tell, before she died.
 A hundred cities mourned her, and her death
 Saddened the °pastoral valleys. By the brook, 515
 That bickering ran beside the cottage door
 Where she was born, they reared her monument.
 Ere long the current parted and flowed round
 The marble base, forming a little isle,
 And there the flowers that love the running stream, 520
 Iris and orchis, and the cardinal-flower,
 Crowded and hung caressingly around
 The stone engraved with Sella's honored name,

°THE DEATH OF SCHILLER

Shortly before the death of Schiller, he was seized with a strong desire to travel in foreign countries, as if his spirit had a presentiment of its approaching enlargement, and already longed to expatiate in a wider and more varied sphere of existence.—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

'Tis said, when Schiller's death drew nigh,
 The wish possessed his mighty mind,
 To wander forth wherever lie
 The homes and haunts of humankind.

Then strayed the poet, in his dreams, 5
 By Rome and Egypt's ancient graves;
 Went up the New World's forest-streams,
 Stood in the °Hindoo's temple-caves;

Walked with the °Pawnee, fierce and °stark, 10
 The °sallow °Tartar, midst his herds,
 The peering Chinese, and the dark
 False °Malay, uttering gentle words.

How could he rest? even then he trod
 The threshold of the world unknown;
 Already, from the seat of God, 15
 A ray upon his garments shone;—

Shone and awoke the strong desire,
 For love and knowledge reached not here,
 Till, freed by death, his soul of fire
 Sprang to a fairer, ampler sphere.

20

Then — who shall tell how deep, how bright
 The abyss of glory opened round?
 How thought and feeling flowed like light
 Through ranks of being without bound?

°THE FUTURE LIFE

How shall I know thee in the sphere which keeps
 The °disembodied spirits of the dead,
 When all of thee that time could wither sleeps
 And perishes among the dust we tread?

For I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain
 If there I meet thy gentle presence not;
 Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
 In thy serenest eyes the tender thought.

5

Will not thy own meek heart demand me there?
 That heart whose fondest throbs to me were given? 10
 My name on earth was ever in thy prayer,
 Shall it be banished from thy tongue in heaven?

In meadows fanned by heaven's life-breathing wind,
 In the resplendence of that glorious sphere,
 And larger movements of the unfettered mind, 15
 Wilt thou forget the love that joined us here?

The love that lived through all the stormy past,
 And meekly with my harsher nature bore,
 And deeper grew, and tenderer to the last,
 Shall it expire with life, and be no more? 20

A happier lot than mine, and larger light,
 Await thee there; for thou hast bowed thy will
 In cheerful homage to the rule of right,
 And lovest all, and renderest good for ill.

For me, the °sordid cares in which I dwell 25
 Shrink and consume my heart, as heat the scroll;
 And wrath has left its scar — that fire of hell
 Has left its frightful scar upon my soul.

Yet though thou wear'st the glory of the sky,
 Wilt thou not keep the same beloved name, 30
 The same fair thoughtful brow, and gentle eye,
 Lovelier in heaven's sweet climate, yet the same?

Shalt thou not teach me, in that calmer home,
 The wisdom that I learned so ill in this —
 The wisdom which is love — till I become 35
 Thy fit companion in that land of bliss?

°THE FOUNTAIN

FOUNTAIN, that springest on this grassy slope,
 Thy quick cool murmur mingles pleasantly,
 With the cool sound of breezes in the beech,
 Above me in the noontide. Thou dost wear
 No stain of thy dark birthplace; gushing up 5
 From the red mould and slimy roots of earth,
 Thou flashest in the sun. The mountain air,
 In winter, is not clearer, nor the dew
 That shines on mountain blossom. Thus doth God
 Bring, from the dark and foul, the pure and bright. 10

This tangled thicket on the bank above
 Thy basin, how thy waters keep it green!
 For thou dost feed the roots of the wild vine
 That trails all over it, and to the twigs
 Ties fast her clusters. There the spice-bush lifts 15
 Her leafy lances; the °viburnum there,
 Paler of foliage, to the sun holds up
 Her circlet of green berries. In and out
 The °chipping sparrow, in her coat of brown,
 Steals silently, lest I should mark her nest. 20

Not such thou wert of yore, ere yet the axe
 Had smitten the old woods. Then hoary trunks
 Of oak, and °plane, and hickory, o'er thee held

A mighty canopy. When April winds
 Grew soft, the maple burst into a flush 25
 Of scarlet flowers. The °tulip-tree, high up,
 Opened, in airs of June, her multitude
 Of golden chalices to humming-birds
 And silken-winged insects of the sky.

Frail wood-plants clustered round thy edge in Spring. 30
 The °liverleaf put forth her sister blooms
 Of faintest blue. Here the quick-footed wolf,
 Passing to lap thy waters, crushed the flower
 Of °sanguinaria, from whose brittle stem
 The red drops fell like blood. The deer, too, left 35
 Her delicate foot-print in the soft moist mould,
 And on the fallen leaves. The slow-paced bear,
 In such a sultry summer noon as this,
 Stopped at thy stream, and drank, and leaped across.

But thou hast histories that stir the heart 40
 With deeper feeling; while I look on thee
 They rise before me. I behold the scene
 Hoary again with forests; I behold
 The Indian warrior, whom a hand unseen
 Has smitten with his death-wound in the woods, 45
 Creep slowly to thy well-known rivulet,
 And slake his death-thirst. °Hark, that quick fierce cry
 That rends the utter silence; 'tis the whoop
 Of battle, and a throng of savage men
 With naked arms and faces stained like blood, 50
 Fill the green wilderness; the long bare arms

Are heaved aloft, bows twang and arrows stream;
Each makes a tree his shield, and every tree
Sends forth its arrow. Fierce the fight and short,
As is the whirlwind. Soon the conquerors 55
And conquered vanish, and the dead remain
Mangled by tomahawks. The mighty woods
Are still again, the frightened bird comes back
And plumes her wings; but thy sweet waters run
Crimson with blood. Then, as the sun goes down, 60
Amid the deepening twilight I descry
Figures of men that crouch and creep unheard,
And bear away the dead. The next day's shower
Shall wash the tokens of the fight away.

I look again — a hunter's lodge is built, 65
With poles and boughs, beside thy crystal well,
While the meek autumn stains the woods with gold,
And sheds his golden sunshine. To the door
The red man slowly drags the enormous bear
Slain in the chestnut thicket, or flings down 70
The deer from his strong shoulders. Shaggy °fells
Of wolf and cougar hang upon the walls,
And loud the black-eyed Indian maidens laugh,
That gather, from the rustling heaps of leaves,
The hickory's white nuts and the dark fruit 75
That falls from the gray butternut's long boughs.

So centuries passed by, and still the woods
Blossomed in spring, and reddened when the year
Grew chill, and glistened in the frozen rains

Of winter, till the white man swung the axe 80
 Beside thee — signal of a mighty change.
 Then all around was heard the crash of trees,
 Trembling awhile and rushing to the ground,
 The low of ox, and shouts of men who fired
 The brushwood, or who tore the earth with ploughs. 85
 The grain sprang thick and tall, and hid in green
 The blackened hill-side; ranks of spiky maize
 Rose like a host embattled; the buckwheat
 Whitened broad acres, sweetening with its flowers
 The August wind. White cottages were seen 90
 With rose-trees at the windows; barns from which
 Came loud and shrill the crowing of the cock;
 Pastures where rolled and neighed the lordly horse.
 And white flocks browsed and bleated. A rich turf
 Of grasses brought from far o'ercrept thy bank, 95
 Spotted with the white clover. Blue-eyed girls
 Brought pails, and dipped them in thy crystal pool;
 And children, ruddy-cheeked and flaxen-haired,
 Gathered the glistening cowslip from thy edge.

Since then, what steps have trod thy border! Here 100
 On thy green bank, the woodman of the swamp
 Has laid his axe, the reaper of the hill
 His sickle, as they stooped to taste thy stream.
 The sportsman, tired with wandering in the still
 September noon, has bathed his heated brow 105
 In thy cool current. Shouting boys, let loose
 For a wild holiday, have °quaintly shaped
 Into a cup the folder °linden leaf,

And dipped thy sliding crystal. From the wars
 Returning, the plumed soldier by thy side 110
 Has sat, and mused how pleasant 'twere to dwell
 In such a spot, and be as free as thou,
 And move for no man's bidding more. At eve,
 When thou wert crimson with the crimson sky,
 Lovers have gazed upon thee, and have thought 115
 Their mingled lives should flow as peacefully
 And brightly as thy waters. Here the sage,
 Gazing into thy self-replenished depth,
 Has seen eternal order circumscribe
 And bind the motions of eternal change, 120
 And from the gushing of thy simple fount
 Has reasoned to the mighty universe.

Is there no other change for thee, that lurks
 Among the future ages? Will not man
 Seek out strange arts to wither and deform 125
 The pleasant landscape which thou makest green?
 Or shall the veins that feed thy constant stream
 Be choked in middle earth, and flow no more
 For ever, that the water-plants along
 Thy channel perish, and the bird in vain 130
 Alight to drink? Haply shall these green hills
 Sink, with the lapse of years, into the °gulf
 Of ocean waters, and thy source be lost
 Amidst the bitter brine? Or shall they rise,
 Upheaved in broken cliffs and airy peaks, 135
 Haunts of the eagle and the snake, and thou
 Gush midway from the bare and barren steep?

THE OLD MAN'S COUNSEL

I remember hearing an aged man, in the country, compare the slow movement of time in early life and its swift flight as it approaches old age, to the drumming of a partridge or ruffed grouse in the woods—the strokes falling slow and distinct at first, and following each other more and more rapidly, till they end at last in a whirring sound.—

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

AMONG our hills and valleys, I have known
 Wise and grave men, who, while their diligent hands
 Tended or gathered in the fruits of earth,
 Were reverent learners in the solemn school
 Of nature. Not in vain to them were sent 5
 Seed-time and harvest, or the °vernal shower
 That darkened the brown °tilth, or snow that beat
 On the white winter hills. Each brought, in turn,
 Some truth, some lesson on the life of man,
 Or recognition of the Eternal mind 10
 Who veils his glory with the elements.

One such I knew long since, a white-haired man,
 °Pithy of speech, and merry when he would;
 A genial °optimist, who daily drew
 From what he saw his quaint moralities. 15
 Kindly he held communion, though so old,
 With me a dreaming boy, and taught me much
 That books tell not, and I shall ne'er forget.

The sun of May was bright in °middle heaven,
 And steeped the sprouting forests, the green hills, 20
 And emerald wheat-field in his yellow light.
 Upon the apple-tree, where rosy buds
 Stood clustered, ready to burst forth in bloom,
 The robin warbled forth his full clear note
 For hours, and wearied not. Within the woods, 25
 Whose young and half-transparent leaves scarce cast
 A shade, gay circles of anemones
 Danced on their stalks; the °shadbush, white with
 flowers,
 Brightened the glens; the new-leaved butternut
 And quivering poplar to the roving breeze 30
 Gave a balsamic fragrance. In the fields
 I saw the °pulses of the gentle wind
 On the young grass. My heart was touched with joy
 At so much beauty, flushing every hour
 Into a fuller beauty; but my friend, 35
 The thoughtful °ancient, standing at my side,
 Gazed on it mildly sad. I asked him why.

“Well mayst thou join in gladness,” he replied,
 “With the glad earth, her springing plants and flowers,
 And this soft wind, the herald of the green 40
 Luxuriant summer. Thou art young like them,
 And well mayst thou rejoice. But while the flight
 Of seasons fills and knits thy spreading frame,
 It withers mine, and thins my hair, and dims
 These eyes, whose fading light shall soon be quenched 45
 In utter darkness. Hearest thou that bird?”

I listened, and from midst the depth of woods
 Heard the love-signal of the grouse, that wears
 A sable ruff around his mottled neck;
 Partridge they call him by our northern streams, 50
 And pheasant by the Delaware. He beat
 'Gainst his barred sides his speckled wings, and made
 A sound like distant thunder; slow the strokes
 At first, then fast and faster, till at length
 They passed into a murmur and were still. 55

“There hast thou,” said my friend, “a fitting type
 Of human life. 'Tis an old truth, I know,
 But images like these revive the power
 Of long familiar truths. Slow pass our days
 In childhood, and the hours of light are long 60
 Betwixt the morn and eve; with swifter lapse
 They glide in manhood, and in age they fly;
 Till days and seasons flit before the mind
 As flit the snow-flakes in a winter storm,
 Seen rather than distinguished. Ah! I seem 65
 As if I sat within a helpless bark
 By swiftly running waters hurried on
 To shoot some mighty cliff. Along the banks
 Grove after grove, rock after frowning rock,
 Bare sands and pleasant homes, and flowery nooks, 70
 And isles and whirlpools in the stream, appear
 Each after each, but the °devoted skiff
 Darts by so swiftly that their images
 Dwell not upon the mind, or only dwell

In dim confusion; faster yet I sweep 75
By other banks, and the great gulf is near.

“Wisely, my son, while yet thy days are long,
And this fair change of seasons passes slow,
Gather and treasure up the good they yield —
All that they teach of virtue, of pure thoughts 80
And kind affections, reverence for thy God
And for thy brethren; so when thou shalt come
Into these barren years, thou mayst not bring
A mind unfurnished and a withered heart.”

Long since that white-haired ancient slept — but still, 85
When the red flower-buds crowd the orchard bough,
And the ruffed grouse is drumming far within
The woods, his °venerable form again
Is at my side, his voice is in my ear.

AN EVENING REVERY

This poem and that entitled “The Fountain,” with one or two others in blank verse, were intended by the author as portions of a larger poem. — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THE summer day is closed — the sun is set:
Well they have done their °office, those bright hours,
The latest of whose train goes softly out
In the red West. The green blade of the ground
Has risen, and herds have cropped it; the young twig 5

Has spread its °plaited tissues to the sun;
 Flowers of the garden and the waste have blown
 And withered; seeds have fallen upon the soil,
 From bursting cells, and in their graves await
 Their resurrection. Insects from the pools 10
 Have filled the air awhile with humming wings,
 That now are still for ever; °painted moths
 Have wandered the blue sky, and died again;
 The mother-bird hath broken for her brood
 Their prison shell, or shoved them from the nest, 15
 Plumed for their earliest flight. In bright °alcoves,
 In woodland cottages with barky walls,
 In °noisome cells of the tumultuous town,
 Mothers have clasped with joy the new-born babe.
 Graves by the lonely forest, by the shore 20
 Of rivers and of ocean, by the ways
 Of the thronged city, have been hollowed out
 And filled, and closed. This day hath parted friends
 That ne'er before were parted; it hath knit
 New friendships; it hath seen the maiden plight 25
 Her faith, and trust her peace to him who long
 Had wooed; and it hath heard, from lips which late
 Were eloquent of love, the first harsh word,
 That told the wedded one her peace was flown.
 Farewell to the sweet sunshine! One glad day 30
 Is added now to Childhood's merry days,
 And one calm day to those of quiet Age.
 Still the fleet hours run on; and as I lean,
 Amid the thickening darkness, lamps are lit,
 By those who watch the dead, and those who twine 35

Flowers for the bride. The mother from the eyes
Of her sick infant shades the painful light,
And sadly listens to his quick-drawn breath.

Oh thou great Movement of the Universe,
Or Change, or Flight of Time — for ye are one! 40
That bearest, silently, this visible scene
Into night's shadow and the streaming rays
Of starlight, whither art thou bearing me?
I feel the mighty current sweep me on,
Yet know not whither. Man foretells afar 45
The courses of the stars; the very hour
He knows when they shall darken or grow bright;
Yet doth the eclipse of Sorrow and of Death
Come unforwarned. Who next, of those I love,
Shall pass from life, or, sadder yet, shall fall 50
From virtue? Strife with foes, or bitterer strife
With friends, or shame and general scorn of men —
Which who can bear? — or the fierce rack of pain,
Lie they within my path? Or shall the years
Push me, with soft and inoffensive pace, 55
Into the stilly twilight of my age?
Or do the portals of another life
Even now, °while I am glorying in my strength,
°Impend around me? Oh! beyond that °bourne,
In the vast cycle of being which begins 60
At that broad threshold, with what fairer forms
Shall the great law of change and progress clothe
Its workings? Gently — so have good men taught —
Gently, and without grief, the old shall glide

Into the new; the eternal flow of things, 65
 Like a bright river of the fields of heaven,
 Shall journey onward in perpetual peace.

THE ANTIQUITY OF FREEDOM

HERE are old trees, tall oaks and gnarled pines,
 That stream with gray-green mosses; here the ground
 Was never trenched by spade, and flowers spring up
 Unsown, and die ungathered. It is sweet
 To linger here, among the flitting birds 5
 And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks, and winds
 That shake the leaves, and scatter, as they pass,
 A fragrance from the cedars, thickly set
 With pale blue berries. In these peaceful shades —
 Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old — 10
 My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,
 Back to the earliest days of liberty.

Oh FREEDOM! thou art not, as poets dream,
 A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
 And wavy tresses gushing from the cap 15
 With which the Roman master crowned his slave
 When he took off the °gyves. † A bearded man,
 °Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailed hand
 Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy brow,
 Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred 20
 With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs

Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has launched
His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
They could not quench the life thou hast from heaven.
Merciless power has dug thy dungeon deep, 25
And his °swart armorers, by a thousand fires,
Have forged thy chain; yet, while he deems thee bound,
The links are shivered, and the prison walls
Fall outward; terribly thou springest forth,
As springs the flame above a burning pile, 30
And shoutest to the nations, who return
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies.

Thy birthright was not given by human hands:
Thou wert twin-born with man. In pleasant fields,
While yet our race was few, thou sat'st with him, 35
To tend the quiet flock and watch the stars,
And teach the reed to utter simple airs.
Thou by his side, amid the tangled wood,
Didst war upon the panther and the wolf,
His only foes; and thou with him didst draw 40
The earliest furrows on the mountain side,
Soft with the °deluge. Tyranny himself,
Thy enemy, although of reverend look,
Hoary with many years, and far obeyed,
Is later born than thou; and as he meets 45
The grave defiance of thine elder eye,
The usurper trembles in his fastnesses.

Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse of years,
But he shall fade into a feebler age;

Feebler, yet subtler. He shall weave his snares, 50
 And spring them on thy careless steps, and clap
 His withered hands, and from their ambush call
 His hordes to fall upon thee. He shall send
 °Quaint maskers, wearing fair and gallant forms,
 To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words 55
 To charm thy ear; while his sly imps, by stealth,
 Twine round thee threads of steel, light thread on thread
 That grow to fetters; or bind down thy arms
 With chains concealed in °chaplets. Oh! not yet
 Mayst thou °unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by 60
 Thy sword; nor yet, O Freedom! close thy lids
 In slumber; for thine enemy never sleeps,
 And thou must watch and combat till the day
 Of the new earth and heaven. But wouldst thou rest
 Awhile from tumult and the frauds of men, 65
 These old and friendly solitudes invite
 Thy visit. They, while yet the forest trees
 Were young upon the unviolated earth,
 And yet the moss-stains on the rock were new,
 Beheld thy glorious childhood, and rejoiced. 70

A HYMN OF THE SEA

THE sea is mighty, but a mightier sways
 His restless billows. Thou, whose hands have scooped
 His boundless gulfs and built his shore, thy breath,
 That moved in the beginning o'er his face,

Moves o'er it evermore. The obedient waves 5
To its strong motion roll, and rise and fall.
Still from that realm of rain thy cloud goes up,
As at the first, to water the great earth,
And keep her valleys green. A hundred realms
Watch its broad shadow °warping on the wind, 10
And in the dropping shower, with gladness hear
Thy promise of the harvest. I look forth
Over the boundless blue, where joyously
The bright crests of innumerable waves
Glance to the sun at once, as when the hands 15
Of a great multitude are upward flung
In acclamation. I beheld the ships
Gliding from cape to cape, from isle to isle,
Or °stemming toward far lands, or hastening home
From the old world. It is thy friendly breeze 20
That bears them, with the riches of the land,
And treasure of dear lives, till, in the port,
The shouting seaman climbs and furls the sail.

°But who shall bide thy tempest, who shall face
The blast that wakes the fury of the sea? 25
Oh God! thy justice makes the world turn pale,
When on the armed fleet, that royally
Bears down the surges, carrying war, to smite
Some city, or invade some °thoughtless realm,
Descends the fierce tornado. The vast hulks 30
Are whirled like chaff upon the waves; the sails
Fly, rent like webs of gossamer; the masts
Are snapped asunder; downward from the decks,

Downward are slung, into the fathomless gulf,
 Their cruel °engines; and their hosts, arrayed 35
 In trappings of the battle-field, are °whelmed
 By whirlpools, or dashed dead upon the rocks.
 Then stand the nations still with awe, and pause,
 A moment, from the bloody work of war.

These restless surges eat away the shores 40
 Of earth's old continents; the fertile plain
 °Welters in shallows, headlands crumble down,
 And the tide drifts the sea-sand in the streets
 Of the drowned city. Thou, meanwhile, afar
 In the green chambers of the °middle sea, 45
 Where broadest spread the waters and the °line
 Sinks deepest, while no eye beholds thy work,
 Creator! thou dost teach the coral worm
 To lay his mighty reefs. From age to age,
 He builds beneath the waters, till, at last, 50
 His bulwarks overtop the brine, and check
 The long wave rolling from the southern pole
 To break upon Japan. Thou bid'st the fires,
 That smoulder under ocean, heave on high
 The new-made mountains, and uplift their peaks, 55
 A place of refuge for the storm-driven bird.
 The birds and wafting billows plant the rifts
 With herb and tree; sweet fountains gush; sweet airs
 Ripple the °living lakes that, fringed with flowers,
 Are gathered in the hollows. Thou dost look 60
 On thy creation and pronounce it good.
 Its valleys, glorious with their summer green,

Praise thee in silent beauty, and its woods,
 Swept by the murmuring winds of ocean, join
 The murmuring shores in a perpetual hymn. 65

THE CROWDED STREET

LET me move slowly through the street,
 Filled with an ever-shifting train,
 Amid the sound of steps that beat
 The murmuring walks like autumn rain.

How fast the flitting figures come ! 5
 The mild, the fierce, the stony face;
 Some bright with thoughtless smiles, and some
 Where secret tears have left their trace.

They pass — to toil, to strife, to rest;
 To halls in which the feast is spread; 10
 To chambers where the funeral guest
 In silence sits beside the dead.

And some to happy homes repair,
 Where children, pressing cheek to cheek,
 With mute caresses shall declare 15
 The tenderness they cannot speak.

And some, who walk in calmness here,
 Shall shudder as they reach the door
 Where one who made their dwelling dear,
 Its flower, its light, is seen no more. 20

Youth, with pale cheek and slender frame,
And dreams of greatness in thine eye!
Goest thou to build an early name,
Or early in the task to die?

Keen son of trade, with eager brow! 25
Who is now fluttering in thy snare?
Thy golden fortunes, tower they now,
Or melt the glittering spires in air?

Who of this crowd to-night shall tread 30
The dance till daylight gleam again?
Who sorrow o'er the untimely dead?
Who writhe in throes of mortal pain?

Some, famine-struck, shall think how long
The cold dark hours, how slow the light,
And some, who flaunt amid the throng, 35
Shall hide in dens of shame to-night.

Each, where his tasks or pleasures call,
They pass, and heed each other not.
There is who heeds, who holds them all,
In his large love and boundless thought. 40

These struggling tides of life that seem
In wayward, aimless course to tend,
Are eddies of the mighty stream
That rolls to its appointed end.

THE WHITE-FOOTED DEER

During the stay of Long's Expedition at Engineer Cantonment, three specimens of a variety of the common deer were brought in, having all the feet white near the hoofs, and extending to those on the hind feet from a little above the spurious hoofs. This white extremity was divided, upon the sides of the foot, by the general color of the leg, which extends down near to the hoofs, leaving a white triangle in front, of which the point was elevated rather higher than the spurious hoofs.—*Godman's Natural History, Vol. II, p. 314.*—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

IT was a hundred years ago,
When, by the woodland ways,
The traveller saw the wild deer drink,
Or crop the birchen sprays.

Beneath a hill, whose rocky side
O'erbrowed a grassy mead,
And fenced a cottage from the wind,
A deer was wont to feed.

She only came when on the cliffs
The evening moonlight lay,
And no man knew the secret haunts
In which she walked by day.

5

10

White were her feet, her forehead showed
A spot of silvery white,
That seemed to glimmer like a star 15
In autumn's hazy night.

And here, when sang the whippoorwill,
She cropped the sprouting leaves,
And here her rustling steps were heard 20
On still October eves.

But when the broad midsummer moon
Rose o'er that grassy lawn,
Beside the silver-footed deer
There grazed a spotted fawn.

The cottage dame forbade her son 25
To aim the rifle here;
"It were a sin," she said, "to harm
Or fright that friendly deer.

"This spot has been my pleasant home
Ten peaceful years and more; 30
And ever, when the moonlight shines,
She feeds before our door.

"The red men say that here she walked
A thousand moons ago;
They never raise the war-whoop here, 35
And never twang the bow.

“I love to watch her as she feeds,
And think that all is well
While such a gentle creature haunts
The place in which we dwell.”

40

The youth obeyed, and sought for game
In forests far away,
Where, deep in silence and in moss,
The ancient woodland lay.

But once, in autumn's golden time,
He ranged the wild in vain,
Nor roused the pheasant nor the deer,
And wandered home again.

45

The crescent moon and crimson eve
Shone with a mingling light;
The deer, upon the grassy mead,
Was feeding full in sight.

50

He raised the rifle to his eye,
And from the cliffs around
A sudden echo, shrill and sharp,
Gave back its deadly sound.

55

Away into the neighboring wood
The startled creature flew,
And crimson drops at morning lay
Amid the glimmering dew.

60

Next evening shone the waxing moon
As sweetly as before ;
The deer upon the grassy mead
Was seen again no more.

But ere that crescent moon was old, 65
By night the red man came,
And burnt the cottage to the ground,
And slew the youth and dame.

Now woods have overgrown the mead,
And hid the cliffs from sight ; 70
There shrieks the hovering hawk at noon,
And prowls the fox at night.

THE WANING MOON

I'VE watched too late ; the morn is near ;
One look at God's broad silent sky !
Oh, hopes and wishes vainly dear,
How in your very strength ye die !

Even while your glow is on the cheek, 5
And scarce the high pursuit begun,
The heart grows faint, the hand grows weak,
The task of life is left undone.

See where upon the horizon's brim,
Lies the still cloud in gloomy bars; 10
The waning moon, all pale and dim,
Goes up amid the eternal stars.

Late, in a flood of tender light,
She floated through the eternal blue,
A softer sun, that shone all night 15
Upon the gathering beads of dew.

And still thou wanest, pallid moon!
The encroaching shadow grows apace;
Heaven's everlasting watchers soon
Shall see thee blotted from thy place. 20

Oh, Night's dethroned and crownless queen!
Well may thy sad, expiring ray
Be shed on those whose eyes have seen
Hope's glorious visions fade away.

Shine thou for forms that once were bright, 25
For sages in the mind's eclipse,
For those whose words were spells of might,
But falter now on stammering lips!

In thy decaying beam there lies
Full many a grave on hill and plain, 30
Of those who closed their dying eyes
In grief that they had lived in vain.

Another night, and thou among
 The spheres of heaven shalt cease to shine,
 All rayless in the glittering throng 35
 Whose lustre late was quenched in thine.

Yet soon a new and tender light
 From out thy darkened orb shall beam,
 And broaden till it shines all night
 On glistening dew and glimmering stream. 40

THE LAND OF DREAMS

A MIGHTY realm is the Land of Dreams,
 With steeps that hang in the twilight sky,
 And weltering oceans and trailing streams,
 That gleam where the dusky valleys lie.

But over its shadowy border flow 5
 Sweet rays from the world of endless morn,
 And the nearer mountains catch the glow,
 And flowers in the nearer fields are born.

The souls of the happy dead repair,
 From their bowers of light, to that bordering land, 10
 And walk in the fainter glory there,
 With the souls of the living hand in hand.

One calm sweet smile, in that shadowy sphere,
From eyes that open on earth no more —
One warning word from a voice once dear — 15
How they rise in the memory o'er and o'er!

Far off from those hills that shine with day,
And fields that bloom in the heavenly gales,
The Land of Dreams goes stretching away
To dimmer mountains and darker vales. 20

There lie the chambers of guilty delight,
There walk the spectres of guilty fear,
And soft low voices, that float through the night,
Are whispering sin in the helpless ear.

Dear maid, in thy girlhood's opening flower, 25
Scarce weaned from the love of childish play!
The tears on whose cheeks are but the shower
That freshens the blooms of early May!

Thine eyes are closed, and over thy brow
Pass thoughtful shadows and joyous gleams, 30
And I know, by thy moving lips, that now
Thy spirit strays in the Land of Dreams.

Light-hearted maiden, oh, heed thy feet!
O keep where that beam of Paradise falls:
And only wander where thou mayst meet 35
The blessed ones from its shining walls!

So shalt thou come from the Land of Dreams,
 With love and peace to this world of strife:
 And the light which over that border streams
 Shall lie on the path of thy daily life.

40

THE PLANTING OF THE APPLE-TREE

COME, let us plant the apple-tree.
 Cleave the tough greensward with the spade;
 Wide let its hollow bed be made;
 There gently lay the roots, and there
 Sift the dark mould with kindly care,
 And press it o'er them tenderly,
 As, round the sleeping infant's feet,
 We softly fold the cradle-sheet;
 So plant we the apple-tree.

5

What plant we in this apple-tree?
 Buds, which the breath of summer days
 Shall lengthen into leafy sprays;
 Boughs where the °thrush, with crimson breast,
 Shall haunt and sing and hide her nest;
 We plant, upon the sunny °lea,
 A shadow for the noontide hour,
 A shelter from the summer shower,
 When we plant the apple-tree.

10

15

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Sweets for a hundred flowery springs 20
To load the May-wind's restless wings,
When, from the orchard-row, he pours
Its fragrance through our open doors;
A world of blossoms for the bee,
Flowers for the sick girl's silent room, 25
For the glad infant sprigs of bloom,
We plant with the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Fruits that shall swell in sunny June,
And redden in the August noon, 30
And drop, when gentle airs come by,
That fan the blue September sky,
While children come, with cries of glee,
And seek them where the fragrant grass
Betrays their bed to those who pass, 35
At the foot of the apple-tree.

And when, above this apple-tree,
The winter stars are quivering bright,
And winds go howling through the night,
Girls, whose young eyes o'erflow with mirth, 40
Shall peel its fruit by cottage-hearth,
And guests in prouder homes shall see,
Heaped with the grape of °Cintra's vine
And golden orange of the line,
The fruit of the apple-tree. 45

The fruitage of this apple-tree
 Winds and our flag of stripe and star
 Shall bear to coasts that lie afar,
 Where men shall wonder at the view,
 And ask in what fair groves they grew;

50

And °sojourners beyond the sea
 Shall think of childhood's careless day,
 And long, long hours of summer play,
 In the shade of the apple-tree.

Each year shall give this apple-tree
 A broader flush of roseate bloom,
 A deeper maze of verdurous gloom,
 And loosen, when the frost-clouds lower,
 The crisp brown leaves in thicker shower.

55

The years shall come and pass, but we
 Shall hear no longer, where we lie,
 The summer's songs, the autumn's sigh,
 In the boughs of the apple-tree.

60

And time shall waste this apple-tree.
 Oh, when its aged branches throw
 Thin shadows on the ground below,
 Shall fraud and force and iron will
 Oppress the weak and helpless still?

65

What shall the tasks of mercy be,
 Amid the toils, the strifes, the tears
 Of those who live when length of years
 Is wasting this little apple-tree?

70

“°Who planted this old apple-tree?”

The children of that distant day
Thus to some aged man shall say; 75

And, gazing on its mossy stem,
The gray-haired man shall answer them:

“A poet of the land was he,
Born in the rude but good old times;
’Tis said he made some quaint old rhymes, 80
On planting the apple-tree.”

THE VOICE OF AUTUMN

THERE comes, from yonder height,
A soft repining sound,
Where forest-leaves are bright,
And fall, like flakes of light,
To the ground. 5

It is the autumn breeze,
That, lightly floating on,
Just skims the weedy leas,
Just stirs the glowing trees,
And is gone. 10

He moans by sedgy brook,
And visits, with a sigh,
The last pale flowers that look,
From out their sunny nook,
At the sky. 15

O'er shouting children flies
That light October wind,
And, kissing cheeks and eyes,
He leaves their merry cries
Far behind, 20

And wanders on to make
That soft uneasy sound
By distant wood and lake,
Where distant fountains break
From the ground. 25

No bower where maidens dwell
Can win a moment's stay;
Nor fair untrodden dell;
He sweeps the upland swell,
And away! 30

Mourn'st thou thy homeless state?
O soft, repining wind!
That early seek'st and late
The rest it is thy fate
Not to find. 35

Not on the mountain's breast,
Not on the ocean's shore,
In all the East and West:
The wind that stops to rest
Is no more. 40

By valleys, woods, and springs,
 No wonder thou shouldst grieve
 For all the glorious things
 Thou touchest with thy wings
 And must leave. 45

°THE SNOW-SHOWER

STAND here by my side and turn, I pray,
 On the lake below thy gentle eyes;
 The clouds hang over it, heavy and gray,
 And dark and silent the water lies;
 And out of that frozen mist the snow 5
 In wavering flakes begins to flow;
 Flake after flake
 They sink in the dark and silent lake.

See how in a living swarm they come
 From the chambers beyond that misty veil; 10
 Some hover awhile in air, and some
 Rush °prone from the sky like summer hail.
 All, dropping swiftly or settling slow,
 Meet, and are still in the depths below;
 Flake after flake 15
 Dissolved in the dark and silent lake.

Here delicate °snow-stars, out of the cloud,
 Come floating downward in airy play,
 Like spangles dropped from the glistening crowd

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink; 15
 Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
 Sure there was never a bird so fine.
 Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's °Quaker wife,
 Pretty and quiet, °with plain brown wings, 20
 Passing at home a patient life,
 Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
 Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink;
 Brood, kind creature; you need not fear 25
 Thieves and robbers while I am here.
 Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
 One weak chirp is her only note.
 Braggart and prince of braggarts is he, 30
 Pouring boasts from his little throat:
 Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink;
 Never was I afraid of man;
 Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can! 35
 Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
 Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
 There as the mother sits all day,
 Robert is singing with all his might: 40

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink;
 Nice good wife, that never goes out,
 Keeping house while I frolic about.
 Chee, chee, chee.

45

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
 Six wide mouths are open for food;
 Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
 Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
 Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink;
 This new life is likely to be
 Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
 Chee, chee, chee.

50

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
 Sober with work, and silent with care;
 Off is his holiday garment laid,
 Half forgotten that merry air:
 Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink;
 Nobody knows but my mate and I
 Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
 Chee, chee, chee.

55

60

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
 Fun and frolic no more he knows;
 Robert of Lincoln's a °humdrum crone;
 Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:

65

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
 Spink, spank, spink;
 When you can pipe that merry old strain,
 Robert of Lincoln, come back again.

70

Chee, chee, chee.

THE SONG OF THE SOWER

I

THE maples redden in the sun ;
In autumn gold the beeches stand ;
Rest, faithful plough, thy work is done
Upon the °teeming land.
Bordered with trees whose gay leaves fly 5
On every breath that sweeps the sky,
The fresh dark acres furrowed lie,
And ask the sower's hand.
Loose the tired steer and let him go
To pasture where the gentians blow, 10
And we, who till the grateful ground,
Fling we the golden shower around.

II

Fling wide the generous grain ; we fling
O'er the dark mould the green of spring.
For thick the emerald blades shall grow, 15
When first the March winds melt the snow,
And to the sleeping flowers, below,
The early bluebirds sing.
Fling wide the grain ; we give the fields
The ears that nod in summer's gale, 20

The shining stems that summer gilds,
 The harvest that o'erflows the vale,
 And swells, an amber sea, between
 The full-leaved woods, its shores of green.
 Hark! from the murmuring clods I hear 25
 Glad voices of the coming year;
 The song of him who binds the grain,
 The shout of those that load the °wain,
 And from the distant °grange there comes
 The clatter of the thresher's flail, 30
 And steadily the millstone hums
 Down in the willowy vale.

III

Fling wide the golden shower; we trust
 The strength of armies to the dust.
 This peaceful °lea may haply yield 35
 Its harvest for the tented field.
 Ha! feel ye not your fingers thrill,
 As o'er them, in the yellow grains,
 Glide the warm drops of blood that fill,
 For mortal strife, the warrior's veins; 40
 Such as, on °Solferino's day,
 Slaked the brown sand and flowed away —
 Flowed till the herds, on °Mincio's brink,
 Snuffed the red stream and feared to drink; —
 Blood that in deeper pools shall lie, 45
 On the sad earth, as time grows gray,
 When men by deadlier arts shall die,

Sprinkle the furrow's even trace 75
 For those whose toiling hands uprear
 The °roof-trees of our swarming race,
 By grove and plain, by stream and °mere;
 Who forth, from crowded city, lead
 The lengthening street, and overlay 80
 Green orchard-plot and grassy mead
 With pavement of the murmuring way.
 Cast, with full hands the harvest cast,
 For the brave men that climb the mast,
 When to the billow and the blast 85
 It swings and stoops, with fearful strain,
 And bind the fluttering mainsail fast,
 Till the tossed bark shall sit, again,
 Safe as a sea-bird on the main.

V

Fling wide the grain for those who throw 90
 The clanking shuttle to and fro,
 In the long row of humming rooms,
 And into ponderous masses wind
 The web that, from a thousand looms,
 Comes forth to clothe mankind. 95
 Strew, with free sweep, the grain for them,
 By whom the busy thread
 Along the garment's even hem
 And winding seam is led;
 A pallid sisterhood, that keep 100
 The lonely lamp alight,

In strife with weariness and sleep,
 Beyond the middle night.
 Large part be theirs in what the year
 Shall ripen for the reaper here.

105

VI

Still, strew, with joyous hand, the wheat
 On the soft mould beneath our feet,
 For even now I seem
 To hear a sound that lightly rings
 From murmuring harp and viol's strings,
 As in a summer dream.

110

The welcome of the wedding guest,
 The bridegroom's look of bashful pride,
 The faint smile of the pallid bride,
 And bridemaids' blush at matron's jest,
 And dance and song and generous °dower,
 Are in the shining grains we shower.

115

VII

Scatter the wheat for shipwrecked men,
 Who, hunger-worn, rejoice again
 In the sweet safety of the shore,
 And wanderers, lost in woodlands drear,
 Whose pulses bound with joy to hear
 The herd's light bell once more.

120

Freely the golden spray be shed
 For him whose heart, when night comes down
 On the close °alleys of the town,

125

Is faint for lack of bread.
 In chill °roof chambers, bleak and bare,
 Or damp the cellar's stifling air,
 She who now sees, in mute despair, 130
 Her children pine for food,
 Shall feel the dews of gladness start
 To lids long tearless, and shall part
 The sweet loaf with a grateful heart,
 Among her thin pale brood. 135
 Dear, kindly Earth, whose breast we till!
 Oh, for thy famished children, fill,
 Where'er the sower walks,
 Fill the rich ears that shade the mould
 With grain for grain, a hundredfold, 140
 To bend the sturdy stalks.

VIII

Strew silently the fruitful seed,
 As softly o'er the °tilth ye tread,
 For hands that delicately knead
 The °consecrated bread — 145
 The °mystic loaf that crowns the board,
 When, round the table of their Lord,
 Within a thousand temples set,
 In memory of the bitter death
 Of him who taught at Nazareth, 150
 His followers are met,
 And thoughtful eyes with tears are wet,
 As of the Holy One they think,

The glory of whose rising yet
 Makes bright the grave's mysterious brink. 155

IX

Brethren, the sower's task is done.
 The seed is in its winter bed.
 Now let the dark brown mould be spread,
 To hide it from the sun,
 And leave it to the kindly care 160
 Of the still earth and brooding air,
 As when the mother, from her breast,
 Lays the hushed babe apart to rest,
 And shades its eyes, and waits to see
 How sweet its waking smile will be. 165
 The tempest now may smite, the sleet
 All night on the drowned furrow beat,
 And winds that, from the cloudy hold,
 Of winter breathe the bitter cold,
 Stiffen to stone the mellow mould, 170
 Yet safe shall lie the wheat;
 Till, out of heaven's unmeasured blue,
 Shall walk again the °genial year,
 To wake with warmth and nurse with dew
 The germs we lay to slumber here. 175

X

Oh blessed harvest yet to be!
 Abide thou with the Love that keeps,

In its warm bosom, tenderly,
 The Life which wakes and that which sleeps.
 The Love that leads the willing spheres 180
 Along the unending track of years,
 And watches o'er the sparrow's nest,
 Shall brood above thy winter rest,
 And raise thee from the dust, to hold
 Light whisperings with the winds of May, 185
 And fill thy °spikes with living gold,
 From summer's yellow ray;
 Then, as thy garners give thee forth,
 On what glad errands shalt thou go,
 Wherever, o'er the waiting earth, 190
 Roads wind and rivers flow!
 The ancient East shall welcome thee
 To mighty °marts beyond the sea,
 And they who dwell where palm groves sound
 To summer winds the whole year round, 195
 Shall watch, in gladness, from the shore,
 The sails that bring thy glistening store.

°NOT YET

OH country, marvel of the earth!
 Oh realm to sudden greatness grown!
 The age that gloried in thy birth,
 Shall it behold thee overthrown?

Shall traitors lay that greatness low? 5
 No, land of Hope and Blessing, No!

And we, who wear thy glorious name,
 Shall we, like cravens, stand apart,
 When those whom thou hast trusted aim
 The death blow at thy generous heart? 10
 Forth goes the battle-cry, and lo!
 Hosts rise in harness, shouting, No!

And they who founded, in our land,
 The power that rules from sea to sea,
 Bled they in vain, or vainly planned 15
 To leave their country great and free?
 Their sleeping ashes, from below,
 Send up the thrilling murmur, No!

Knit they the gentle ties which long
 These sister States were proud to wear, 20
 And forged the kindly links so strong
 For idle hands in sport to tear?
 For scornful hands aside to throw?
 No, by our fathers' memory, No!

Our humming marts, our iron ways, 25
 Our wind-tossed woods on mountain-crest,
 The hoarse Atlantic, with its bays,
 The calm, broad Ocean of the West,
 And Mississippi's torrent-flow,
 And loud Niagara, answer, No! 30

Not yet the hour is nigh when they
 Who deep in °Eld's dim twilight sit,
 Earth's ancient kings, shall rise and say,
 "Proud country, welcome to the °pit!
 So soon art thou, like us, brought low!" 35
 No, sullen group of shadows, No!

For now, behold, the arm that gave
 The victory in our fathers' day,
 Strong, as of old, to guard and save —
 That mighty arm which none can stay — 40
 On clouds above and fields below,
 Writes, in men's sight, the answer, No!

°OUR COUNTRY'S CALL

LAY down the axe; fling by the spade;
 Leave in its track the toiling plough;
 The rifle and the bayonet-blade
 For arms like yours were fitter now; 5
 And let the hands that ply the pen
 Quit the light task, and learn to wield
 The horseman's °crooked brand, and rein
 The charger on the battle-field.

Our country calls; away! away!
 To where the blood-stream blots the green. 10
 Strike to defend the gentlest sway
 That Time in all his course has seen.

See, from a thousand °coverts — see,
Spring the armed foes that haunt her track;
They rush to smite her down, and we
Must beat the banded traitors back. 15

Ho! sturdy as the oaks ye cleave,
And moved as soon to fear and flight,
Men of the glade and forest! leave
Your woodcraft for the field of fight. 20
The arms that wield the axe must pour
An iron tempest on the foe;
His serried ranks shall reel before
The arm that lays the panther low.

And ye, who breast the mountain-storm 25
By grassy steep or highland lake,
Come, for the land ye love, to form
A bulwark that no foe can break.
Stand, like your own gray cliffs that mock
The whirlwind, stand in her defence; 30
The blast as soon shall move the rock
As rushing squadrons bear ye thence.

And ye, whose homes are by her grand
Swift rivers, rising far away,
Come from the depth of her green land, 35
As mighty in your march as they;
As terrible as when the rains
Have swelled them over bank and °bourne,

With sudden floods to drown the plains
And sweep along the woods upturn.

40

And ye, who throng, beside the deep,
Her ports and hamlets of the strand,
In number like the waves that leap
On his long-murmuring °marge of sand —
Come like that deep, when, o'er his brim,
He rises, all his floods to pour,
And flings the proudest barks that swim,
A helpless wreck, against the shore !

45

Few, few were they whose swords of old
Won the fair land in which we dwell ;
But we are many, we who hold
The grim resolve to guard it well.
Strike, for that broad and goodly land,
Blow after blow, till men shall see
That Might and Right move hand in hand,
And glorious must their triumph be !

50

55

°THE LITTLE PEOPLE OF THE SNOW

Alice. — One of your °old world stories, Uncle John,
Such as you tell us by the winter fire,
Till we all wonder it is grown so late.

Uncle John. — The story of the witch that ground to
death

Two children in her mill, or will you have 5
The tale of °Goody Cutpurse?

Alice. — Nay now, nay;
Those stories are too childish, Uncle John,
Too childish even for little Willy here,
And I am older, two good years, than he;
No, let us have a tale of °elves that ride, 10
By night, with jingling reins, or °gnomes of the mine,
Or °water-fairies, such as you know how
To spin, till Willy's eyes forget to wink,
And good Aunt Mary, busy as she is,
Lays down her knitting.

Uncle John. — Listen to me, then. 15
°Twas in the olden time, long, long ago,
And long before the great oak at our door
Was yet an acorn, on a mountain's side
Lived, with his wife, a cottager. They dwelt
Beside a glen and near a dashing brook, 20

A pleasant spot in spring, where first the wren
 Was heard to chatter, and, among the grass,
 Flowers opened earliest; °but when winter came,
 That little brook was fringed with other flowers, — 25
 White flowers, with crystal leaf and stem, that grew
 In clear November nights. And, later still,
 That mountain glen was filled with drifted snows
 From side to side, that one might walk across;
 While, many a fathom deep, below, the brook
 Sang to itself, and leaped and °trotted on 30
 Unfrozen, o'er its pebbles, toward the vale.

Alice. — A mountain's side, you said; the Alps, per-
 haps,
 Or our own Alleghanies.

Uncle John. — Not so fast,
 My young geographer, °for then the Alps,
 With their broad pastures, haply were untrod 35
 Of herdsman's foot, and never human voice
 Had sounded in the woods that overhang
 Our Alleghany's streams. I think it was
 °Upon the slopes of the great °Caucasus,
 Or where the rivulets of °Ararat 40
 Seek the Armenian vales. That mountain rose
 So high, that, on its top, the winter-snow
 Was never melted, and the cottagers
 Among the summer blossoms; far below,
 Saw its white peaks in August from their door. 45

One little maiden, in that cottage home,
 Dwelt with her parents, light of heart and limb,
 Bright, restless, thoughtless, flitting here and there,

Like sunshine on the uneasy ocean waves,
And sometimes she forgot what she was °bid, 50
As Alice does.

Alice. — Or Willy, quite as oft.

Uncle John. — But you are older, Alice, two good years
And should be wiser. Eva was the name
Of this young maiden, now twelve summers old.

Now you must know that, in those early times, 55
When autumn days grew pale, there came a troop
Of childlike forms from that cold mountain top;
With trailing garments through the air they came,
Or walked the ground with girded loins, and threw
Spangles of silvery frost upon the grass, 60
And edged the brooks with glistening °parapets,
And built it crystal bridges, touched the pool,
And turned its face to glass, or, rising thence,
They shook from their full laps the soft, light snow,
And buried the great earth, as autumn winds 65
Bury the forest floor in heaps of leaves.

A beautiful race were they, with baby brows,
And fair, bright locks, and voices like the sound
Of steps on the crisp snow, in which they talked
With man, as friend with friend. A merry sight 70
It was, when, crowding round the traveller,
They smote him with their heaviest snow flakes, flung
Needles of frost in handfuls at his cheeks,
And, of the light wreaths of his smoking breath,
Wove a white fringe for his brown beard, and laughed 75
Their slender laugh to see him wink and grin
And make grim faces as he floundered on.

But, when the spring came on, what terror reigned
 Among these Little People of the Snow !
 To them the sun's warm beams were shafts of fire, 80
 And the soft south wind was the wind of death.
 Away they flew, all with a pretty scowl
 Upon their childish faces, to the north,
 Or scampered upward to the mountain's top,
 And there defied their enemy, the Spring; 85
 Skipping and dancing on the frozen peaks,
 °And moulding little snow-balls in their palms,
 And rolling them, to crush her flowers below,
 Down the steep snow-fields.

Alice. — That, too, must have been
 A merry sight to look at.

Uncle John. — You are right, 90
 But I must speak of graver matters now.

Midwinter was the time, and Eva stood,
 Within the cottage, all prepared to dare
 The outer cold, with ample furry robe
 Close belted round her waist, and boots of fur, 95
 And a broad kerchief, which her mother's hand
 Had closely drawn about her ruddy cheek.
 "Now, stay not long abroad," said the good dame,
 "For sharp is the outer air, and, mark me well,
 Go not upon the snow beyond the spot 100
 Where the great °linden bounds the neighboring field."

The little maiden promised, and went forth,
 And climbed the rounded snow-swells firm with frost
 Beneath her feet, and slid, with balancing arms,
 Into the hollows. Once, as up a drift 105

She slowly rose, before her, in the way,
 °She saw a little creature, lily-cheeked,
 With flowing flaxen locks, and faint blue eyes,
 That gleamed like ice, and robe that only seemed
 Of a more shadowy whiteness than her cheek. 110
 On a smooth bank she sat.

Alice. — She must have been
 One of your Little People of the Snow.

Uncle John. — She was so, and, as Eva now drew near,
 The tiny creature bounded from her seat;
 “And come,” she said, “my pretty friend; to-day 115
 We will be playmates. I have watched thee long,
 And seen how well thou lov’st to walk these drifts,
 And scoop their fair sides into little cells,
 And carve them with quaint figures, huge-limbed men,
 Lions, and °griffins. We will have, to-day, 120
 A merry ramble over these bright fields,
 And thou shalt see what thou hast never seen.”
 On went the pair, until they reached the bound
 Where the great linden stood, set deep in snow,
 Up to the lower branches. “Here we stop,” 125
 Said Eva, “for my mother has my word
 That I will go no farther than this tree.”
 Then the snow-maiden laughed: “And what is this?
 This fear of the pure snow, the innocent snow,
 That never harmed aught living? Thou mayst roam 130
 For leagues beyond this garden, and return
 In safety; here the grim wolf never prowls,
 And here the eagle of our mountain crags
 Preys not in winter. I will show the way

And bring thee safely home. Thy mother, sure, 135
 Counsell'd thee thus because thou hadst no guide."

By such smooth words was Eva won to break
 Her promise, and went on with her new friend,
 Over the glistening snow and down a bank
 Where a white shelf, wrought by the eddying wind, 140
 Like to a billow's crest in the great sea,
 Curtained an opening. "Look, we enter here."
 And straight, beneath the fair o'erhanging fold,
 Entered the little pair that hill of snow,
 Walking along a passage with white walls, 145
 And a white vault above where °snow-stars shed
 A wintry twilight. Eva moved in awe,
 And held her peace, but the snow-maiden smiled,
 And talked and tripped along, as down the way,
 Deeper they went into that mountainous drift. 150

And now the white walls widened, and the vault
 Swelled upward, like some vast cathedral dome,
 Such as the °Florentine, who bore the name
 Of heaven's most potent angel, reared, long since,
 Or the unknown builder of that wondrous °fane, 155
 The glory of °Burgos. Here a garden lay,
 In which the Little People of the Snow
 Were wont to take their pastime when their tasks
 Upon the mountain's side and in the clouds
 Were ended. Here they taught the silent frost 160
 To mock, in stem and spray, and leaf and flower,
 The growths of summer. Here the palm upreared
 Its white °columnar trunk and spotless sheaf
 Of plume-like leaves; here cedars, huge as those

Of °Lebanon, stretched far their level boughs, 165
Yet pale and shadowless; the sturdy oak
Stood, with its huge gnarled roots of seeming strength,
Fast anchored in the glistening bank; light sprays
Of myrtle, roses in their bud and bloom,
Drooped by the winding walks; yet all seemed wrought 170
Of stainless °alabaster; up the trees
Ran the lithe jessamine, with stalk and leaf
Colorless as her flowers. "Go softly on,"
Said the snow-maiden; "touch not, with thy hand,
The frail creation round thee, and beware 175
To sweep it with thy skirts. Now look above.
How sumptuously these bowers are lighted up
With shifting gleams that softly come and go.
These are the northern lights, such as thou seest
In the midwinter nights, °cold, wandering flames, 180
That float with our processions, through the air;
And here, within our winter palaces,
Mimic the glorious daybreak." Then she told
How, when the wind, in the long winter nights,
Swept the light snows into the hollow dell, 185
She and her comrades guided to its place
Each wandering flake, and piled them quaintly up,
In shapely °colonnade and glistening arch,
With shadowy aisles between, or bade them grow,
Beneath their little hands, to bowery walks 190
In gardens such as these, and, o'er them all,
Built the broad roof. "But thou hast yet to see
A fairer sight," she said, and led the way
To where a window of °pellucid ice

Stood in the wall of snow, beside their path. 195
 "Look, but thou mayst not enter." Eva looked,
 And lo! a glorious hall, from whose high vault
 Stripes of soft light, ruddy and delicate green,
 And tender blue, flowed downward to the floor
 And far around, °as if the aërial hosts, 200
 That march on high by night, with beamy spears,
 And streaming banners, to that place had brought
 Their radiant flags to grace a festival.

And in that hall a joyous multitude
 Of these by whom its glistening walls were reared, 205
 Whirled in a merry dance to silvery sounds,
 That rang from cymbals of transparent ice,
 And ice-cups, quivering to the skilful touch
 Of little fingers. Round and round they flew,
 As when, in spring, about a chimney-top, 210
 A cloud of twittering swallows, just returned,
 Wheel round and round, and turn and wheel again,
 Unwinding their swift track. So rapidly
 Flowed the °meandering stream of that fair dance,
 Beneath that dome of light. Bright eyes that looked 215
 From under lily brows, and gauzy scarfs
 Sparkling like snow-wreaths in the early sun,
 Shot by the window in their mazy whirl.
 And there stood Eva, wondering at the sight
 Of those bright revellers and that graceful sweep 220
 Of motion as they passed her; — long she gazed,
 And listened long to the sweet sounds that thrilled
 The frosty air, till now the encroaching cold
 Recalled her to herself. "Too long, too long

I lingered here," she said, and then she sprang 225
Into the path, and with a hurried step
Followed it upward. Ever by her side
Her little guide kept pace. As on they went,
Eva bemoaned her fault; "What must they think —
The dear ones in the cottage, while so long, 230
Hour after hour, I stay without? I know
That they will seek me far and near, and weep
To find me not. How could I, wickedly,
Neglect the charge they gave me?" As she spoke,
The hot tears started to her eyes; she knelt 235
In the mid path. "Father! forgive this sin;
Forgive myself I cannot" — thus she prayed,
And rose and hastened onward. When, at last,
They reached the outer air, the clear north breathed
A bitter cold, from which she shrank with dread, 240
But the snow-maiden bounded as she felt
The cutting blast, and uttered shouts of joy,
And skipped, with boundless glee, from drift to drift,
And danced round Eva, as she labored up
The mounds of snow. "Ah me! I feel my eyes 245
Grow heavy," Eva said; "they swim with sleep;
I cannot walk for utter weariness,
And I must rest a moment on this bank,
But let it not be long." As thus she spoke,
In half-formed words, she sank on the smooth snow, 250
With closing lids. Her guide composed the robe
About her limbs, and said: "A pleasant spot
Is this to slumber in; on such a couch
Oft have I slept away the winter night,

And had the sweetest dreams." So Eva slept, 255
 But slept in death; for when the power of frost
 Locks up the motions of the living frame,
 The victim passes to the realm of Death
 Through the dim porch of Sleep. The little guide,
 Watching beside her, saw the hues of life 260
 Fade from the fair smooth brow and rounded cheek,
 As fades the crimson from a morning cloud,
 Till they were white as marble, and the breath
 Had ceased to come and go, yet knew she not
 At first that this was death. But when she marked 265
 How deep the paleness was, how motionless
 That once lithe form, a fear came over her.
 She strove to wake the sleeper, plucked her robe,
 And shouted in her ear, but all in vain;
 The life had passed away from those young limbs. 270
 Then the snow-maiden raised a wailing cry,
 Such as the dweller in some lonely wild,
 Sleepless through all the long December night,
 Hears when the mournful °East begins to blow.

But suddenly was heard the sounds of steps, 275
 Grating on the crisp snow; the cottagers
 Were seeking Eva; from afar they saw
 The twain, and hurried toward them. As they came
 With gentle chidings ready on their lips,
 And marked that deathlike sleep, and heard the tale 280
 Of the snow-maiden, mortal anguish fell
 Upon their hearts, and bitter words of grief
 And blame were uttered: "Cruel, cruel one,
 To tempt our daughter thus, and cruel we,

Who suffered her to wander forth alone 285
 In this fierce cold!" They lifted the dear child,
 And bore her home and chafed her tender limbs,
 And strove, by all the simple arts they knew,
 To make the chilled blood move, and win the breath
 Back to her bosom; fruitlessly they strove; 290
 The little maid was dead. In blank despair
 They stood, and gazed at her who never more
 Should look on them. "Why die we not with her?"
 They said; "without her, life is bitterness."

Now came the funeral day; the simple folk 295
 Of all that pastoral region gathered round
 To share the sorrow of the cottagers.
 They carved a way into the mound of snow
 To the glen's side, and dug a little grave
 In the smooth slope, and, following the bier, 300
 In long procession from the silent door,
 Chanted a sad and solemn melody:

"Lay her away to rest within the ground.
 Yea, lay her down whose pure and innocent life
 Was spotless as these snows; for she was reared 305
 In love, and passed in love life's pleasant spring,
 And all that now our tenderest love can do
 Is to give burial to her lifeless limbs."

They paused. A thousand slender voices round,
 Like echoes softly flung from rock and hill, 310
 Took up the strain, and all the hollow air
 Seemed mourning for the dead; for, on that day,
 The Little People of the Snow had come,
 From mountain-peak, and cloud, and icy hall,

To Eva's burial. As the murmur died, 315
 The funeral-train renewed the solemn chant :

“Thou, Lord, hast taken her to be with Eve,
 Whose gentle name was given her. Even so,
 For so Thy wisdom saw that it was best
 For her and us. We bring our bleeding hearts, 320
 And ask the touch of healing from Thy hand,
 As, with submissive tears, we render back
 The lovely and beloved to Him who gave.”

They ceased. Again the plaintive murmur rose.
 From shadowy skirts of low-hung cloud it came, 325
 And wide white fields, and fir-trees capped with snow,
 Shivering to the sad sounds. They sank away
 To silence in the dim-seen distant woods.

The little grave was closed; the funeral train
 Departed; winter wore away; the spring 330
 Steeped, with her quickening rains, the violet tufts,
 By fond hands planted where the maiden slept.
 But, after Eva's burial, never more

The Little People of the Snow were seen
 By human eye, nor ever human ear 335
 Heard from their lips articulate speech again;
 For a decree went forth to cut them off,
 For ever, from °ommunion with mankind.

The winter clouds, along the mountain-side,
 Rolled downward toward the vale, but no fair form 340
 Leaned from their folds, and, in the icy glens,
 And aged woods, under snow-loaded pines,
 Where once they made their haunt, was emptiness.

But ever, when the wintry days drew near,

Around that little grave, in the long night,
Frost-wreaths were laid and tufts of °silvery rime
In shape like blades and blossoms of the field,
As one would scatter flowers upon a bier.

345

The first of these was the discovery of gold in California in 1848. This discovery led to a great influx of people to California, and the state became a free state in 1850. The second was the discovery of gold in Colorado in 1859. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Colorado, and the state became a free state in 1876. The third was the discovery of gold in Nevada in 1859. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Nevada, and the state became a free state in 1864.

The fourth was the discovery of gold in Idaho in 1860. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Idaho, and the state became a free state in 1890. The fifth was the discovery of gold in Montana in 1862. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Montana, and the state became a free state in 1889. The sixth was the discovery of gold in Wyoming in 1869. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Wyoming, and the state became a free state in 1890.

The seventh was the discovery of gold in Utah in 1863. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Utah, and the state became a free state in 1896. The eighth was the discovery of gold in Arizona in 1863. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Arizona, and the state became a free state in 1909. The ninth was the discovery of gold in New Mexico in 1861. This discovery led to a great influx of people to New Mexico, and the state became a free state in 1906.

The tenth was the discovery of gold in Texas in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Texas, and the state became a free state in 1845. The eleventh was the discovery of gold in Florida in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Florida, and the state became a free state in 1845. The twelfth was the discovery of gold in Louisiana in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Louisiana, and the state became a free state in 1845.

The thirteenth was the discovery of gold in Mississippi in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Mississippi, and the state became a free state in 1845. The fourteenth was the discovery of gold in Alabama in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Alabama, and the state became a free state in 1845. The fifteenth was the discovery of gold in Georgia in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Georgia, and the state became a free state in 1845.

The sixteenth was the discovery of gold in South Carolina in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to South Carolina, and the state became a free state in 1845. The seventeenth was the discovery of gold in North Carolina in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to North Carolina, and the state became a free state in 1845. The eighteenth was the discovery of gold in Virginia in 1845. This discovery led to a great influx of people to Virginia, and the state became a free state in 1845.

NOTES

THANATOPSIS. (PAGE 1)

Thanatopsis was written in the summer of 1811, when Bryant was but seventeen years of age. It first appeared in print in the *North American Review* for September, 1817. During the years which elapsed between its composition and its publication it lay concealed among the poet's papers at his father's home, where it was discovered by Dr. Bryant. In its original form it contained but forty-nine lines, and read differently in many places from the final draft. The revised form came out in 1821, in the edition of Bryant's poems which appeared that year. It is interesting to compare the two drafts, and for that purpose the first one is given below. Note the abrupt beginning and ending.

“ Yet a few days, and thee,
The all-beholding sun shall see no more,
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in th' embrace of ocean shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolv'd to earth again;
And, lost each human trace, surrend'ring up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to th' insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.
Yet not to thy eternal resting place

Shalt thou retire alone — nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world — with kings
The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. — The hills,
Rock-ribb'd and ancient as the sun, — the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods — the floods that move
In majesty, — and the complaining brooks,
That wind among the meads and make them green,
Are but the solemn decorations all,
Of the great tomb of man. — The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven
Are glowing on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom. — Take the wings
Of morning — and the Borean desert pierce —
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
That veil the Oregon, where he hears no sound
Save his own dashings — yet — the dead are there,
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep — the dead reign there alone. —
So shalt thou rest — and what if thou shalt fall
Unnoticed by the living — and no friend
Take note of thy departure? Thousands more
Will share thy destiny. — The tittering world
Dance to the grave. The busy brood of care
Plod on, and each one chases as before
His favorite phantom. — Yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee.”

The word *thanatopsis* comes from the Greek *Θανατος* (death) and *ὄψις* (view), and means a view of death, or a meditation on the subject of death.

2. **Communion**: fellowship.
3. **various**: diversified.
10. **sad images**: gloomy conceptions.
11. **stern agony**: the suffering preceding death.
12. **narrow house**: the grave.
22. **image**: form.
28. **swain**: a country fellow.
29. **share**: ploughshare.
34. **patriarchs**: heads of families in ancient times who governed their descendants by paternal right. The term is usually applied to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his sons. **Infant world**: world in the earliest period of its history.
36. **seers**: prophets, those who foresee future events.
40. **venerable**: to be regarded with awe or reverence.
43. **melancholy**: sombre, gloomy.
51. **Barcan wilderness**. Barca or Barka is a province in the eastern part of Tripoli. Nearly the whole of its area is barren. Bryant uses the word *wilderness* in the sense of desert, and *vice versa*. See l. 1, *The Prairies*.
52. **continuous**: unbroken.
53. **Oregon**: Columbia River, northwestern part of the United States.
64. **phantom**: something which has only an apparent existence, an apparition.
73. **summons comes**: summons is the singular form of the word (plural summonses); hence *comes*, not *come*.
74. **innumerable caravan**: countless company of travellers.

THE YELLOW VIOLET. (PAGE 4)

5-12. Ere russet fields . . . the snow-bank's edges cold. Wordsworth, in his poem *To the Small Celandine*, has the following stanza:—

“ Ere a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush
 Has a thought about her nest,
 Thou wilt come with half a call
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless prodigal,
 Telling tales about the sun,
 When we've little warmth, or none.”

5. russet: brown.

8. virgin: pure, fresh. A favorite word with Bryant.

17-19. Yet slight thy form . . . the passing view to meet.
 Gray, in his *Elegy*, expresses the same thought, but in a more general way:—

“ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE TO A WOOD

(PAGE 5)

This poem first appeared with *Thanatopsis* (see introductory note to *Thanatopsis*), under the title *A Fragment*, a name doubtlessly given it by the editors. Bryant afterward gave it its present title.

11. primal curse: a reference to the curse pronounced upon the earth after Adam and Eve sinned. See Gen. iii. 17.

18. wantonness: playfulness.

30. causey: causeway, road.

33. fixed: permanent, established for all time.

34. tripping. Is this an appropriate word to use in speaking of a stream of water?

TO A WATERFOWL. (PAGE 8)

The lines *To a Waterfowl* are based on the following incident: On the fifteenth of December, 1815, Bryant visited Plainfield, a village a few miles from his home, to see what inducements it

offered him as a lawyer about to begin practice. Night drew on as he approached the place, and a feeling of loneliness and despair was stealing over him, when, on looking toward the west, he saw a lone bird flying along the horizon. He watched it as it made its way across the sky, and its unwavering flight inspired him with renewed courage. That evening he wrote the poem. It was first published in the *North American Review* for March, 1818.

2. last steps: explain.

7. As darkly seen against the crimson sky. This line was first written, "As darkly painted on the crimson sky," but was changed before the poem appeared in print. Why is the present form superior to the original one?

9. plashy: watery.

10. marge: margin, brink.

15. illimitable: boundless.

25. abyss: infinite space.

GREEN RIVER. (PAGE 9)

3. hie: hasten.

13. plane-tree's speckled arms. The plane-tree, which is known also as the sycamore and the buttonwood, yearly detaches its bark in large scales, showing a white surface beneath. This gives the tree a spotted appearance.

33. simpler: a person who collects medicinal plants.

38. river-cherry: wild-cherry.

55-58. Though forced to drudge . . . are subtle and loud. It is readily seen in these lines that the practice of law, which Bryant was following at the time the poem was written (1817), was very distasteful to him.

A WINTER PIECE. (PAGE 12)

Note how rapidly yet how clearly the pictures are drawn.

15. simples: medicinal plants.

33. **interposing** : coming between.
 39. **Albeit** : although.
 74. **virgin**. See note on l. 8, *The Yellow Violet*.
 88. **wildered** : bewildered.
 91. **sluices** : sources of supply.
 109. **lymph** : sap.
 114. **wind-flower** : anemone. Called wind-flower because formerly supposed to open only when the wind was blowing.

“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN.” (PAGE 16)

The title of this poem is taken from Matt. v. 4 (the Sermon on the Mount).

1. **deem** : think.

2. **tenor** : course. Gray uses the word in his *Elegy* :—

“Along the even tenor of their way.”

13. **bier** : a vehicle on which the dead are borne to the grave, a hearse.

“NO MAN KNOWETH HIS SEPULCHRE.” (PAGE 17)

The title of this poem is taken from Deut. xxxiv. 6, and refers to the burial of Moses. Because of his sin in claiming for himself the credit due God for the gift of water at Meribah in the wilderness, Moses was refused the privilege of entering the promised land. He was permitted to see it, however, viewing it from the height of Pisgah near Jericho. Here God buried him.

6. **Moab's rocks**. Moab was a small district bordering the Dead Sea on the east. It is now a part of Asiatic Turkey.

HYMN TO DEATH. (PAGE 19)

16-17. **True it is . . . thy conquests** : a reference to the death of the poet's sister, who died in her twenty-second year. She was his favorite companion in his boyhood.

27. ripe : full-grown.

48-49. Nimrod : a Biblical character who early in the history of the human family ruled over a considerable part of southwest Asia. He is commonly spoken of as a mighty hunter. See Gen. x. 8-9. Sesostris : also known as Rameses II., a celebrated king of Egypt, who reigned about 1400-1350 B.C. He gained renown both as a warrior and as a builder. It was under his rule that the children of Israel met with the severe persecution that led them to flee from the land. See Encyclopædia or Ancient History. the youth . . . from Libyan Ammon : Alexander the Great of Macedonia (356-323 B.C.), the greatest military leader of ancient times. With an army of a few thousand soldiers he conquered the known world. In the midst of his success he visited the temple of Jupiter Ammon (a heathen deity represented in the form of a ram or of a human being with a ram's head) in the Libyan desert, where he was addressed by the priest in charge as a son of the god. From that time he is said to have demanded the homage accorded a deity. See Encyclopædia or Ancient History.

60. fanes : cathedral.

75. extortioner's hand : an extortioner is one who takes by force.

76. perjurer : one who swears falsely.

77. lithe : cunning, treacherous. voluble : fluent.

80. calumnies : malicious reports, slanders.

106. felon's latest breath : a felon is a criminal whose offence is of a serious nature.

109. obloquy : slander.

113. whelm : engulfed, overwhelmed.

128. green pupilage : early period of study.

137. For he is in his grave. The poet's father died on March 20, 1820. See *Birth and Parents* in the Biographical Sketch given in the Introduction.

140. Untimely ; unseasonably, prematurely.

147. deemed. See note on l. 1, "*Blessed are they that Mourn.*"
 167. desultory: disconnected, without logical sequence.

THE AGES. (PAGE 25)

The Ages was recited before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Harvard University in 1821. It is the custom of that society to invite some eminent literary man to deliver its annual address, and as Bryant was regarded as the leading American poet at the time, the invitation was extended to him.

15. mimic canvas: painting.
 27. palm: victory. The palm has long been regarded as the symbol or token of victory, supremacy, or triumph.

44. prodigal: lavish.

68-70. Unwinds the eternal dances . . . sun's broad circle: traces out the movements of the heavenly bodies.

94. reverent: humble, respectful.

109-119. Those ages have no memory . . . but the eternal tombs remain: a reference to the ruins of temples and statues, the mausoleums and the pyramids of Egypt. See Ancient History.

136-141. Oh, Greece! thy flourishing cities . . . in distant climes: a reference to the struggle for supremacy between Athens and Sparta, the oppression of the masses of the people by the few who ruled, and the institution *Ostracism*. See Ancient History.

174. pattered: muttered.

178. orgies: drunken revelries.

183. Etrurian: of Etruria, an ancient country in the west-central part of Italy.

187. Arno's classic side. The Arno (formerly Arnus) is a small river in west-central Italy. Next to the Tiber it was the most celebrated river in the Roman Empire.

191. stole: a narrow band of silk or other material, worn by priests over the shoulders and hanging down in front to the knees or below them.

194. **dole**: lot, fate.

196. **mitre's kind control**: the kind control of the priesthood. A mitre is a covering for the head, worn by church dignitaries. It is a high cap with two points or peaks.

199-207. **At last the earthquake . . . dissolves the flaxen thread**: a reference to the downfall of the pope as a temporal ruler. See Mediæval History.

211. **Asian monarch's chain**: a reference to the Christ.

236. **ancient**: that has been of long duration.

244. **yon bright blue bay**: Massachusetts Bay.

250. **tawny**: of a dull, yellowish brown color.

255. **interminable**: boundless.

265. **disembowered**: deprived of or removed from a bower.

ODE FOR AN AGRICULTURAL CELEBRATION

(PAGE 39)

This ode was sung at the Cattle Show of the Berkshire Agricultural Society in 1823.

3. **sages**: wise men.

8. **laurels**: evergreen shrubs, the leaves of which were used as symbols of victory by the ancient Greeks.

14. **diadem**: crown. Used here to signify royal power. **wane**: decline, decrease.

THE RIVULET. (PAGE 41)

The rivulet celebrated in this poem ran within a few yards of the Bryant homestead at Cummington.

13. **vernal hymn**: song of spring.

19. **Duly**: in a proper manner.

49. **ground-bird**: ground-sparrow.

MARCH. (PAGE 44)

5. passing: exceedingly.

9-10. For thou to northern lands . . . sun dost bring. On or about March 21 the sun crosses the equator on its way north.

SUMMER WIND. (PAGE 45)

9. potent fervors: powerful heat.

11. declines: droops.

16. brazen: dazzling, as if made of brass. Coleridge, in his *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, uses the expression, "All in a hot and copper sky."

22. virgin. See note on l. 8, *The Yellow Violet*.

25. voluble. See note on l. 77, *Hymn to Death*.

27-28. Is it that . . . He hears me? a reference to the Greek myth which taught that the winds were confined in a cavern. See *Æolus* in *Classical Dictionary*.

"I BROKE THE SPELL THAT HELD ME LONG"

(PAGE 47)

2. witchery: enchantment, fascination.

3. lore: knowledge pertaining to a particular subject.

6. Consorts: associates with.

7. deemed. See note on l. 1, "*Blessed are they that Mourn.*"

MONUMENT MOUNTAIN. (PAGE 49)

17. tith: cultivated land.

27. pinnacles: sharp projections.

30. middle: in the midst of.

31. capitals: tops, heads.

35. beetling: overhanging.

42. beautiful river: the Housatonic. See introductory note to the poem.

49. reverend: enforcing reverence or awe by the appearance.

99. deemed. See note on l. 1, "*Blessed are they that Mourn.*"

100-103. Like worshippers . . . earth o'erlooking mountains: a reference to the early Greeks' belief that their gods and goddesses lived on the summit of Mount Olympus.

101. affect: take possession.

136. hapless: unfortunate.

SONG OF THE GREEK AMAZON. (PAGE 54)

The Amazons were a legendary nation of female warriors who lived in the region north and east of the Black and the Caspian seas. The name is now applied to any woman who takes part in war.

2. scimitar: a sabre with a much-curved blade. It is a favorite weapon of the Turks, Arabs, and Persians.

3. flower: prime of life.

14. virgin. See note on l. 8, *The Yellow Violet*.

21. virgin: maiden.

23. Othman: Turkish. Commonly written *Ottoman*.

25. lute: a mediæval stringed instrument.

TO A CLOUD. (PAGE 55)

In connection with the study of this poem, read Shelley's poem entitled *The Cloud*.

17. Andalusia: one of the kingdoms or great divisions of Spain. It is in the southern part.

22-28. O'er Greece long fettered . . . and they are broke. The Greeks were conquered by the Turks in the fifteenth century, and were held in subjugation until 1820, when they arose in revolt, and after much desperate fighting regained their independence in 1829.

The struggle was watched with great interest by many countries, and was made the theme of many poems and orations. See Halleck's *Marco Bozzaris*, Bryant's *The Greek Partisan*, and Webster's *The Revolution in Greece*.

27. **Othman**. See note on l. 23, *Song of the Greek Amazon*.

33. **meteor**: used here as a synonym for cloud. The term is applied to any transient phenomenon or appearance in the atmosphere or above it, as clouds, rain, shooting-stars, etc. See Dictionary.

HYMN TO THE NORTH STAR. (PAGE 57)

6. **constellations**: groups of fixed stars.

18. **virgin orb**: pure sphere. **main**: sea, ocean.

20. **kindling air**: air that is becoming heated.

24. **shapes**: forms, figures.

37. **bards**: poets.

38. **Sages**. See note on l. 3, *Ode for an Agricultural Celebration*.

A FOREST HYMN. (PAGE 59)

2. **shaft**: pillar, column. **architrave**: beam resting on columns and supporting the upper part of a building.

29. **century-living**. Note how by setting this epithet in contrast, the great age of the forest trees is impressed upon us.

34-36. **These dim vaults . . . Report not**. These lines originally read:—

“Here are seen

No traces of man's pomp or pride. No silks

Rustle; no jewels shine; nor envious eyes

Encounter.”

They were changed at the suggestion of Christopher North who, in reviewing Bryant's poems in *Blackwood's Magazine* (April, 1832), said, “Such sarcastic suggestions jar and grate; and it would please us much to see that they were omitted in a new edi-

tion. The grandeur of the grove temple and the serenity of the grove worship needed not such paltry contrasts to make them impressive."

57. **annihilated**: reduced to nothing.

57-61. **not a prince . . . graced him**. North also objected to these lines. (See note on ll. 34-36.) "Can an American Republican," he asked, "not forget his scorn of European kings even in the living temple of God?"

66. **emanation**: a bursting forth.

86. **Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulchre**. This line originally read, "Upon the sepulchre and blooms and smiles." What objection may be offered to this form?

"OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS." (PAGE 63)

This poem, written in 1820, was addressed to Miss Frances Fairchild of Great Barrington, to whom the poet was married in 1821.

JUNE. (PAGE 64)

5. **that in flowery June**. The poet's wish to die in June was granted, his death occurring on June 12, 1878. See *Death* in Introduction.

51. **circuit**: extent.

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS. (PAGE 67)

2. **sere**: dry, withered.

13. **wind-flower**. See note on l. 114, *A Winter Piece*.

18. **upland**: high land. **glade**: an open space in a forest covered with grass. **glen**: a depression between hills, a narrow valley.

22. **smoky**: having the appearance of smoke, hazy.

25. **And then I think of one**. See note on ll. 16-17, *Hymn to Death*.

29. **unmeet**: out of place.

A MEDITATION ON RHODE-ISLAND COAL. (PAGE 72)

5. **Lalla Rookh** : the title of a long and rather laborious poem by Thomas Moore.

12. **Tiverton** : one of the townships of Newport County, Rhode Island.

57. **Adams** : probably John Adams. **La Fayette** : Marquis de La Fayette, a French nobleman who aided the Americans in the Revolutionary War. He revisited the United States in 1824.

62. **chapeau bras** : a hat so made that it can be compressed and carried under the arm. Such hats were particularly worn on dress occasions by gentlemen in the eighteenth century. Now worn in the United States army by general and staff officers. The name comes from the French words *chapeau* and *bras*.

81. **Havre** : a seaport in France at the mouth of the Seine.

82. **spinning-jenny** : a machine for spinning wool or cotton.

87. "ruler of the inverted year" : from Book IV. of *The Task*, by William Cowper (1731-1800).

THE GLADNESS OF NATURE. (PAGE 76)

5. **hang-bird** : the Baltimore oriole, which suspends its nest from a branch of a tree.

8. **wilding bee** : wild bee ; wild in the sense of not domesticated.

9. **azure** : blue.

12. **aspen bower** : a shady recess formed by aspen or poplar trees.

THE CONJUNCTION OF JUPITER AND VENUS

(PAGE 78)

17-19. **the imperial star of Jove** : the planet Jupiter. Jove was the highest god of the Romans, the supreme ruler of heaven and earth. He was called Zeus by the Greeks. **she . . . Pours**

forth the light of love : Venus, the most brilliant of the planets. Venus was the Roman goddess of love.

42. **dog-star**: the star Sirius or Canicula, the brightest of the fixed stars, and the chief star of the constellation Canis Major. It was regarded by the Romans as the cause of the diseases common in the months of July and August, which period they termed dog days.

59-60. **Happy they Born at this hour**. The Romans believed that a person's life was greatly influenced by the star under whose ascendency he was born.

“The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.”

— Act I., Sc. II., *Julius Cæsar*.

64. **Hapless Greece**. This poem was written in 1826 while the Greeks were struggling against Turkey for their independence. See note on ll. 22-28, *To a Cloud*.

87. **Missolonghi**. The town of Missolonghi was captured by the Turks in 1826 after a ten months' siege.

A SUMMER RAMBLE. (PAGE 81)

29. **thou**: the poet's wife.

50. **sabbath**: repose.

53. **deem**. See note on l. 1, “*Blessed are they that Mourn.*”

A SCENE ON THE BANKS OF THE HUDSON

(PAGE 84)

12. **Suspended in the mimic sky**: reflected in the water.

13. **void**: empty space.

24. **insatiate**: incapable of being satisfied.

WILLIAM TELL. (PAGE 85)

William Tell, a celebrated Swiss hero and patriot, was born in the latter part of the thirteenth century. In 1307 he joined a league organized to oppose the Austrian governor, Gessler, whose tyranny was unbearable. Legend says that for refusing to bow to the governor's cap, he was condemned to shoot an apple from his son's head with a bow and arrow, a feat which he easily performed. Determined on revenge, however, if he injured his child, he concealed a second arrow under his cloak, which was discovered. He admitted that it was intended for Gessler, and for this was taken a prisoner on board the governor's vessel. But a violent storm arising, he was required to steer the boat, and, watching his chance, sprang ashore. Hiding himself, he awaited his opportunity, and when Gessler attempted to land, shot him dead. These incidents form the subject of Schiller's most popular drama, *William Tell*.

THE PAST. (PAGE 86)

13. **Thou hast my better years.** This poem was written in 1828, when Bryant was thirty-four years of age.

25. **abysses :** depths.

40. **inexorable :** relentless, unyielding.

51. **Alone :** only.

54. **Him :** the poet's father. See note on l. 137, *Hymn to Death*.

55. **her :** the poet's sister. See note on ll. 16-17, *Hymn to Death*.

THE HUNTER'S SERENADE. (PAGE 88)

1. **bower :** an attractive abode or retreat.

4. **savanna's side :** a savanna is a tract of land covered with vegetable growth, but without trees.

15. **papaya :** a tree of the western and southern United States, which yields a sweet edible fruit. Commonly written papaw.

46-47. The solitary mound . . . the elder world : a reference to the mounds found in various places in the Mississippi Valley. They were built by a race of people that occupied the land before the coming of the Indians.

TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN. (PAGE 93)

8. ground-bird. See note on l. 49, *The Rivulet*.

11. portend : foretell.

15-16. Blue, blue as if . . . from its cerulean wall. In the poem, *The Pressed Gentian*, Whittier uses these lines :—

“As fair as when beside its brook
The hue of bending skies it took.”

16. cerulean : azure, blue.

THE TWENTY-SECOND OF DECEMBER. (PAGE 94)

On December 22, 1620, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts. Compare Bryant's treatment of the event with that of Mrs. Felicia Hemans, given in her poem, *The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England*.

9. bays : wreaths of laurel, the symbol of victory, excellence, and renown due to achievement.

SONG OF MARION'S MEN. (PAGE 95)

3. The British soldier trembles. In the edition of Bryant's poems published in England, in 1832, this line read, “The foeman trembles in his camp.” The change was made by Irving, who edited the book, because the publisher refused to print it as it stood.

13. Woe to the English soldiery. This line was changed to “Woe to the heedless soldiery” in the edition referred to above.

30. up : over, at an end.

41. **barb**: horse. The word is contracted from Barbary, the name of a vast territory in the northern part of Africa, which was once noted for its fine breed of horses.

49. **Santee**: river in South Carolina.

THE PRAIRIES. (PAGE 98)

1. **Desert**: wilderness.

4. **I behold them for the first**. In 1832 Bryant made his first excursion west of the Alleghanies, visiting his brothers, who had become the proprietors of a large landed estate in Illinois. It was while on this visit that he wrote *The Prairies*.

7. **undulations**: having the appearance of waves.

8-10. **As if the ocean . . . motionless forever**. Any one who has seen both the prairie and the ocean cannot help but appreciate this comparison.

13. **The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye**. The prairies of the West, with an undulating surface, *rolling prairies*, as they are called, present to the unaccustomed eye a singular spectacle when the shadows of the clouds are passing rapidly over them. The face of the ground seems to fluctuate and toss like billows of the sea.

17-18. **the prairie-hawk . . . yet moves not**. The prairie-hawk sometimes balances himself in the air for hours together, apparently over the same spot, probably watching his prey.

20. **crisped**: caused to ripple. **limpid**: clear.

21. **Sonora**: a district in the northwestern part of Mexico.

31. **constellations**. See note on l. 6, *Hymn to the North Star*.

38. **sacrilegious**: impious, profane.

45-46. **A race, that long . . . Built them**. The size and extent of the mounds in the valley of the Mississippi indicate the existence, at a remote period, of a nation at once populous and enterprising within its borders.

48. **Pentelicus** : a mountain near Athens, famous for its marble.

50. **Parthenon** : celebrated marble temple built at Athens in honor of Athene, the patron goddess of that city. See Greek History.

70. **beleaguerers** : besiegers.

71. **forced** : captured by assault, stormed.

80-81. **the rude conquerors . . . with their chiefs**. Instances are not wanting of generosity like this among the Indians toward a captive or survivor of a hostile tribe.

94. **gave back** : reflected.

95. **Missouri's springs** : sources of the Missouri.

96. **issues** : the water that flows out. **Oregon**. See note on l. 53, *Thanatopsis*.

97. **He rears his little Venice** : builds his home in the midst of the water. Venice, a city in northeastern Italy, is built on piles in the midst of a great marsh.

112. **savannas**. See note on l. 4, *The Hunter's Serenade*.

THE HUNTER OF THE PRAIRIES. (PAGE 102)

9. **savannas**. See note on l. 4, *The Hunter's Serenade*.

23. **brinded** : of a gray or tawny color with streaks of darker hue, brindled. **catamount** : the cougar. The name is also applied in some parts of the United States to the lynx or wild-cat.

25. **plane** : also known as the sycamore and buttonwood.

27. **cumbered** : burdened.

33. **Fire** : prairie-fire. **sere**. See note on l. 2, *The Death of the Flowers*.

39. **I meet the flames with flames again**. Travellers upon the prairies, when about to be overtaken by a prairie-fire, frequently save themselves by setting fire to the grass to the windward and following the flames. When the approaching fire reaches the space that has been burned over, it of course dies.

51. **maze** : network, labyrinth.

SEVENTY-SIX. (PAGE 105)

Seventy-six deals with the influence exercised by the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776.

5. **yeoman's iron hand**: the strength of the common people.
7. **ocean-mart**: a seaport.
26. **Already had the strife begun**. The War of the Revolution began in April, 1775.
27. **Concord's plain**: a few miles northwest of Boston. Scene of the first battle of the war.
29. **Lexington**: village near Concord. Scene of a battle on the same day that the fight occurred at Concord.
31. **vernal sward**: fresh spring turf.

TO THE APENNINES. (PAGE 106)

This poem was written in Italy in 1835, while the poet was on his first visit to Europe.

1. **Apennines**: a range of mountains extending almost the whole length of Italy.
5. **Peruvian**: of Peru, a country in the western part of South America.
6. **virgin**. See note on l. 8, *The Yellow Violet*.
7. **aërial**: reaching far into the air, lofty.
14. **Etrurian**. See note on l. 183, *The Ages*.
20. **hind**: female of the red deer.
25. **Asian horde**: the Huns, who in 375 A.D. swept into Europe from Asia, defeated the Goths, and later, under the leadership of Attila, overran the greater part of Europe, including Italy. They subdued the Romans and compelled them to pay tribute.
26. **Libyan**: of Libya. Libya was the ancient Greek name of that part of northern Africa which lies between Egypt and the Atlantic. Carthage, whose forces under Hannibal invaded Italy,

and almost conquered the Romans, was situated in that region. **Scythian**: a member of an ancient nomadic race which lived on the plains north and northeast of the Black Sea. **Gaul**: an inhabitant of ancient Gaul, a country that was made up of what is now France, Belgium, northern Italy, and parts of Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. The Gauls and the Romans fought many bloody wars.

31. **beleaguering**: besieging.

34. **the curse of Cain**: the infamy ascribed to murderers. According to the Bible, Cain was the first murderer in the history of the human race. See Gen. iv. 8-11.

39. **Jove**. See note on l. 18, *The Conjunction of Jupiter and Venus*. **Bacchus**: the Roman god of wine. He was known as Dionysus by the Greeks. **Pan**: the Greek god of pastures, forests, and flocks. Called Inuus by the Romans.

41. **middle**. See note on l. 30, *Monument Mountain*.

CATTERSKILL FALLS. (PAGE 110)

Catterskill Falls are in the midst of the Catskill Mountains, southeastern New York. The name is now written Kaaterskill Falls.

25. **mien**: appearance.

32. **linden**: the lime-tree. The American species is commonly called the basswood.

37. **crescent**: a term applied to the moon while on the increase during the first quarter.

46. **pensive**: thoughtful and somewhat melancholy.

74. **quaint**: odd.

75. **mail**: armor composed of rings of metal.

78. **carbine**: a short rifle.

87. **phantom**: ghostly.

95. **phantoms**. See note on l. 64, *Thanatopsis*.

114. **stagnant**: without current or motion.

THE BATTLE-FIELD. (PAGE 115)

4. **battle-cloud**: the cloud of smoke produced by the discharge of guns.
12. **kine**: cows.
14. **wain**: wagon used to carry provisions, etc.
25. **proof**: trial, test.
28. **sage**. See note on l. 3, *Ode for an Agricultural Celebration*.

SELLA. (PAGE 118)

5-41. Note the many references in these lines to Sella's love for the water.

12. **A sweet eternal murmur**. Wordsworth in his *Tintern Abbey* uses the expression, "With a soft inland murmur." Which is the more musical?

22. **passionless**. What conception does this word give us of Sella? **graved**: carved.

23. **niches**: cavities or hollow places in a wall, in which to place statues, vases, etc.

29. **wells**: pools.

31-32. **And, deep beyond . . . blue space**. Note how prettily the poet has described the reflection of the clouds in the water.

35. **with a stripe of green**: with grass along its borders.

38. **sylvan lakelet**: small lake surrounded with woods.

40. **shallop**: boat. The word is a general one, including boats of all sizes from a canoe to a yacht.

62. **quarry**: an example of metonymy, *i.é.* the container is used in place of the thing contained.

72. Magical footgear is common in mythological literature, *e.g.* Hiawatha's enchanted moccasins, Mercury's winged sandals, Cinderella's glass slippers.

82. **I cannot see thy name**. Note how Sella's fairylike nature

is brought out by having that of her unimaginative mother placed in contrast.

88. **contexture**: the manner in which the slippers were made.

96. **sounding**: an especially effective word.

122-123. **Tripped one as beautiful . . . in a dream**. Mark the vagueness of the description given of the river-nymph. Why is it not made more definite?

136-216. Compare the description given in these lines of the wonders of the ocean with the one in chapters 15-16, Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*.

142. **mazy screen**: network of foliage.

144. **coralline**: a submarine plant consisting of many jointed branches.

145. **dulse**: a seaweed of a reddish brown color.

146. **sea-thong**: a kind of blackish seaweed found on the northern coasts of the Atlantic. **sea-lace**: also a blackish seaweed.

147. **fronds**: foliage.

159-160. **Sella, dear . . . vainest dream**: Sella's mother again brought in in contrast. See note on l. 82 above.

163. **distaff**: the staff for holding the wool or flax from which the thread is drawn in spinning by hand.

173. **sea-nymphs**: imaginary deities, who, according to the early Greeks, lived in all parts of the sea.

174. **abyss**. See note on l. 25, *The Past*.

175. **plummet**: the lead attached to a sounding line.

177. **pulses of the tide**: the rising and falling movements of the tide in its ebb and flow.

187. **Culled**: selected.

188. **Midrib**: the middle rib or nerve of a leaf.

199. **Pinnacles**. See note on l. 27, *Monument Mountain*.

200. **Molten by inner fires**: reduced to a liquid state by heat in the interior of the earth.

205. **abyss**. See note on l. 25, *The Past*.

213. azure. See note on l. 9, *The Gladness of Nature*.
- 224-225. I must see . . . or I shall die. Such touches as this keep us from losing sight of the fact that Sella is a human being.
245. till I thought of thee again. See note on ll. 224-225 above.
271. Waned: diminished.
272. patriarch's board. Patriarch, as used here, means a venerable old man. For another use of the word, see l. 34, *Thanatopsis*.
- 291-294. And now the younger sister . . . named the wedding-day. Note the introduction of the younger sister, possessed of all the characteristics common to an ordinary being. She serves the same purpose as the mother. See note on l. 82 above.
301. canisters: small baskets made of reeds, rushes, or willow twigs.
310. spousal rite: marriage ceremony.
- 320-326. There she stood . . . soon to pass away: the turning point in the story. Sella seems about to be lost to us as a human being when she is suddenly separated from her fairy land by an act of her brothers.
343. alabaster: white.
353. quaint old measures: strange old tunes.
424. demeanor: behavior.
430. middle. See note on l. 30, *Monument Mountain*.
- 489-491. From afar . . . pillared arches: bade them build aqueducts.
515. pastoral: rural, of the country.

THE DEATH OF SCHILLER. (PAGE 136)

Schiller, the great national poet of Germany (1759-1805), was noted for his deep and earnest sympathy with all mankind.

Give careful attention to the epithets used in describing the different peoples spoken of in the poem.

8. **Hindoo**: native inhabitant of Hindostan (British India).

9. **Pawnee**: Indian belonging to Pawnee tribe, whose former home was along the Platte River, but now in Indian Territory.
stark: strong, vigorous.

10. **sallow**: having a yellow color. **Tartar**: name applied to members of various Mongolian races in Asia and Europe.

12. **Malay**: one of a race of a brown or copper complexion in the Malay Peninsula (southeastern Asia), and the western islands of the Indian Archipelago.

THE FUTURE LIFE. (PAGE 137)

This poem, written in 1839, was addressed to Mrs. Bryant.

2. **disembodied**: divested of the body.

25. **sordid**: dull.

THE FOUNTAIN. (PAGE 139)

In connection with the study of this poem read Whittier and Lowell's poems by the same title.

16. **viburnum**: a flowering shrub.

19. **chipping-sparrow**: commonly called chippy.

23. **plane**. See note on l. 25, *The Hunter of the Prairies*.

26. **tulip-tree**: a large tree, found in America, bearing tuliplike flowers. Sometimes called whitewood.

31. **liver-leaf**: same as liverwort. Belongs to a natural order of plants of which the buttercup is the type. Its flowers are bluish white.

34. **sanguinaria**: the blood-root. It bears a delicate white flower of a musky scent, the stem of which breaks easily, and distils a juice of a bright red color.

47-57. **Hark, that quick fierce cry . . . Mangled by tomahawks**. Note the rapidity of movement in this description.

71. fells: skins with the hair on, pelts.
 107. quaintly: gracefully, neatly.
 108. linden-leaf. See note on l. 32, *Catterskill Falls*.

THE OLD MAN'S COUNSEL. (PAGE 144)

6. vernal: spring.
 7. tilth. See note on l. 17, *Monument Mountain*.
 13. Pithy: forceful, full of energy.
 14. optimist: one who looks on the bright side of things, —
 opposed to pessimist.
 19. middle. See note on l. 30, *Monument Mountain*.
 28. shadbush: a name given to a flowering shrub because its
 blossoms appear at about the time the shad ascend the rivers to
 spawn.
 32. pulses: rise and fall. See note on l. 177, *Sella*.
 36. ancient: aged man.
 72. devoted: doomed.
 88. venerable. See note on l. 40, *Thanatopsis*.

AN EVENING REVERY. (PAGE 147)

2. office: duty.
 6. plaited tissues: leaf-buds.
 12. painted: marked with bright colors.
 16. alcoves: small rooms commonly used for sleeping rooms.
 18. noisome cells: unhealthful rooms.
 58. while I am glorying in my strength. *An Evening Revery*
 was written in 1840 when the poet was forty-five years of age.
 59. Impend around: threaten from near at hand. bourne:
 boundary.

THE ANTIQUITY OF FREEDOM. (PAGE 150)

17. gyves: fetters, chains.
 18. Armed to the teeth: very fully or completely armed.

26. **swart**: swarthy, black.
42. **deluge**: the great flood in the time of Noah.
54. **Quaint maskers**: subtle individuals whose real characters are kept hidden. **mien**. See note on l. 25, *Catterskill Falls*.
59. **chaplets**: garlands, wreaths.
60. **unbrace thy corslet**: loosen or take off thy armor. It was the custom among the knights of feudal times to put off the heavier parts of their armor when not engaged in combat. See the description given of Brian de Bois Guilbert, Chapter II., Scott's *Ivanhoe*.

A HYMN OF THE SEA. (PAGE 152)

10. **warping**: flying with a bending or waving motion.
19. **stemming**: steering.
- 24-39. **But who shall bide thy tempest . . . upon the rocks.** In *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Byron describes the destruction of a fleet by a storm at sea in this way:—

“ The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
 Their clay creator the vain title take
 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
 Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.”

29. **thoughtless**: free from care.
35. **engines**: cannon, guns.
36. **whelmed**. See note on l. 113, *Hymn to Death*.
42. **Welters**: wallows.
45. **middle**. See note on l. 30, *Monument Mountain*.
46. **line**: sounding line.
59. **living**: in motion.

THE PLANTING OF THE APPLE-TREE. (PAGE 164)

13. thrush : robin.

15. lea : meadow, grassy field.

43. Cintra's vine. Cintra is a city in the western part of Portugal which is noted for its wines.

51. sojourners : travellers.

73. Bryant wrote to a friend, Dr. Orville Dewey, in November, 1846 : " I have been, and am, at my place on Long Island, planting and transplanting trees, in the mist, sixty or seventy ; some for shade, most for fruit. Hereafter, men, whose existence is at present merely possible, will gather pears from the trees which I have set in the ground, and wonder what old covey of past ages planted them."

THE SNOW SHOWER. (PAGE 169)

In connection with the study of this poem read Lowell's *The First Snow-fall* and Emerson's *The Snow Storm*.

12. prone : headlong.

17. snow-stars. The star shape of the snow-crystal makes this expression an especially apt one.

20. milky way : the luminous belt which is seen stretching across the sky at night.

21. burlier : more bulky.

37. middle. See note on l. 30, *Monument Mountain*.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN. (PAGE 171)

Robert of Lincoln or Boblincoln is one of the names given the bird commonly known as the bobolink. It is also called the rice-bird and the reedbird. In connection with Bryant's characterization of it, read Lowell's *The Bobolink*.

11-12. Wearing a bright black . . . white his crest. The male bird is black and white.

19. Quaker wife : so termed because of her quiet life and modest color.

20. with plain brown wings. The female bird is brown.

66. humdrum crone : dull fellow.

THE SONG OF THE SOWER. (PAGE 175)

4. teeming : productive.

28. wain. See note on l. 14, *The Battle-field*.

29. grange : farmhouse.

35. lea. See note on l. 15, *The Planting of the Apple-tree*.

41. Solferino's day : a reference to the battle fought at Solferino, a village in northern Italy, on June 24, 1859, between the Austrians on the one side and the French and Sardinians on the other. Three hundred thousand men took part in the struggle of whom thirty-five thousand were slain. The Austrians were defeated.

43. Mincio's brink. The battle of Solferino was fought on the banks of the Mincio River, a small stream in northern Italy. See note on l. 41 above.

56. rue : regret.

67. matted : tangled.

77. roof-trees : houses. An example of synecdoche, *i.e.* putting a part for the whole. The real meaning of the word *roof-tree* is a beam in the angle of a roof.

78. mere : lake.

116. dower : gift.

126. alleys : narrow streets designed for the habitation of the poorer classes.

128. roof-chambers : rooms in an attic.

143. tilth. See note on l. 17, *Monument Mountain*.

145. **consecrated bread** : bread reserved for use at the Lord's Supper.

146. **mystic** : emblematical. The bread used at the Lord's Supper is emblematical of the body of the Christ. See Matt. xxvi. 26.

173. **genial** : enlivening, quickening.

186. **spikes** : ears of corn or grain.

193. **marts** : markets.

NOT YET. (PAGE 182)

This poem was written in July, 1861, a few days after the first battle of Bull Run. It was addressed to the nations of Europe that were anxiously desiring the overthrow of our government.

32. **Eld's dim twilight** : oblivion of the past.

34. **pit** : abyss, grave.

OUR COUNTRY'S CALL. (PAGE 184)

This poem is a companion piece of *Not Yet*. It was written in September, 1861, and was addressed to the men of the North.

7. **crooked brand** : sabre, cavalry sword.

13. **coverts** : places of concealment.

38. **bourne** : boundary.

44. **marge**. See note on l. 10, *To a Waterfowl*.

THE LITTLE PEOPLE OF THE SNOW. (PAGE 187)

The Little People of the Snow is marked by an ideal fancy which is rarely found in Bryant's poems. It is distinctly a fairy tale, and hence may be regarded as a companion piece of *Sella*.

1. **old world stories** : stories dating back many ages, or stories of the eastern hemisphere.

6. **Goody Cutpurse** : commonly written Moll Cutpurse. A name given to Mary Frith, a notorious woman robber who lived in Shakespeare's time.

10. **elves**: imaginary beings with diminutive human forms, supposed to inhabit unfrequented places and to interfere in human affairs.

11. **gnomes**: also imaginary beings with diminutive human forms, but very ugly and misshapen. Supposed to be the guardians of mines and miners.

12. **water-fairies**: sea-nymphs. See note on l. 173, *Sella*.

16-18. 'Twas in the olden time . . . yet an acorn: the time of the story suggested.

23-31. but when winter came . . . toward the vale. Compare these lines with ll. 181-210 (ll. 8-37, Prelude to Part Second), Lowell's *The Vision of Sir Launfal*.

30. **trotted**. Is this an appropriate epithet?

34-38. for then the Alps, . . . Alleghany's streams. Another suggestion as to the time of the story. See note on ll. 16-18 above.

39-41. Upon the slopes . . . Armenian vales. The geographical setting of the story brought out.

39. **Caucasus**: a range of mountains between the Black and Caspian seas. Mt. Elbrooz, the loftiest peak, is 18,526 feet high.

40. **Ararat**: a mountain, 17,260 feet high, in the eastern part of Armenia and about two hundred miles south of the Caucasus range. Tradition has it that the first home of the human race was somewhere near its base.

50. **bid**: bidden. Either form is correct, but the latter has the preference.

61. **parapets**: defences. Ice, when forming along the edges of running water, has a tendency to crumple. This is probably what the poet had in mind.

87-88. And moulding . . . flowers below. The frost, of course, is meant.

101. **Linden**. See note on l. 108, *The Fountain*.

107-110. She saw a little creature . . . than her cheek. Note the descriptive words used. Why are they effective?

120. **griffins** : fabulous monsters, half lion and half eagle.
146. **snow-stars**. See note on l. 17, *The Snow-shower*.
153. **Florentine** : Michael Angelo (1475-1564), the great painter, sculptor, and architect.
155. **fane**. See note on l. 60, *Hymn to Death*.
156. **Burgos** : a city in the north-central part of Spain, known chiefly for its magnificent cathedral. The building was begun in 1221 and finished in 1567. The architect's name is unknown.
163. **columnar** : having the form of a column.
165. **Lebanon** : a province in Asiatic Turkey bordering on the east shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It is noted for its cedars.
171. **alabaster** : a variety of limestone, usually white in color, much used for ornamental purposes. For another use of the word, see l. 343, *Sella*.
180. **cold** : an unusual word to use with flames. Is it appropriate ?
188. **colonnade** : a series or row of pillars.
194. **pellucid** : transparent, clear.
- 200-203. **as if the aërial hosts . . . grace a festival**. The beauty and appropriateness of this simile make it deserving of careful consideration.
214. **meandering** : consisting of intricate windings and turnings.
274. **East** : the east wind. According to classic mythology the east wind was the same as, or closely akin to, the morning wind and was invariably associated with storms.
296. **pastoral**. See note on l. 515, *Sella*.
338. **communion**. See note on l. 2, *Thanatopsis*.
346. **silvery rime** : hoar-frost.

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