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Morning Lights and Evening Shadows

BY

ROSSITER JOHNSON



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MORNING LIGHTS AND
EVENING SHADOWS

Morning Lights and Evening Shadows

A SONG FOR A NEW YEAR.

THE sea sings the song of the ages,
The mountain stands mutely sublime,
While the blank of Eternity's pages
Is filled by the fingers of Time.
But Man robs the sea of its wonder,
Making syllabled speech of its roar;
He rendeth the mountain asunder,
And rolleth his wheels through its core;
He delveth deep down for earth's treasure,
And every locked secret unbars;
He scanneth the heavens at pleasure,
And writeth his name on the stars.

But purpose is weaker than passion,
And patience is dearer than blood;
And his face groweth withered and ashen,
Ere he findeth and graspeth the good.
He pursueth the phantom of beauty,
Or peddleth his valor for pelf,
Till the iron of merciless Duty
Hath cloven the armor of self.

He soweth the life of his brother,
He wasteth the half of his soul;
The harvest is reaped by another,
And Death dippeth deep for his toll.

So the march of triumphal procession,
That Science were fain to begin,
Is hindered with painful digression
Of ignorance, folly, and sin.
Through mazes of needless confusion
The story of Freedom must bend,
And the grandest and simplest conclusion
Go stumbling along to its end.
Yet a year does not slide o'er the border
Of time but some progress it shows;
And a lustrum proves prescience and order:
Thus the drama creeps on to its close.

If the blood that was weaker than water
Too thinly and sluggishly ran,
Lo! the wine of the vintage of slaughter
Giveth strength to the sinews of Man.
And the shout of a lusty young nation
Now greets his gray brothers with glee;
And the swell of its ringing vibration
Sweeps over the land and the sea;
While Liberty looks for a morrow
That promiseth joyous increase,
As waneth her midnight of sorrow
And waxeth her morning of peace.

THE VICTORY.

WHEN Man, in his Maker's image, came
To be the lord of the new-made earth,
To conquer its forests, its beasts to tame,
To gather its treasures and know their worth,
All readily granted his power and place,
Save the Ocean, the Mountain, and Time, and Space;
And these four sneered at his puny frame,
And made of his lordship a theme for mirth.

Whole ages passed while his flocks he tended,
And delved and dreamed, as the years went by,
Till there came an age when his genius splendid
Had bridged the rivers, and sailed the sky,
And raised the dome that defied the storm,
And mastered the beauties of color and form;
But his power was lost, his dominion ended,
Where Time, Space, Mountain or Sea was nigh.

The Mountains rose in their grim inertness
Between the peoples, and made them strange,
Save as in moments of pride or pertness
They climbed the ridge of their native range,
And, looking down on the tribe below,
Saw nothing there but a deadly foe,
Heard only a war-cry, long and shrill,
In echoes leaping from hill to hill.

The Ocean rolled in its mighty splendor,
Washing the slowly wasting shore,
And the voices of nations, fierce or tender,
Lost themselves in its endless roar.

With frail ships launched on its treacherous surge,
And sad eyes fixed on its far blue verge,
Man's hold of life seemed brittle and slender,
And the Sea his master for evermore.

And Space and Time brought their huge dimensions
To separate man from his brother man,
And sowed between them a thousand dissensions,
That ripened in hatred and caste and clan.
So Sea and Mountain and Time and Space
Laughed again in his lordship's face,
And bade him blush for his weak inventions
And the narrow round his achievements ran.

But one morning he made him a slender wire,
As an artist's vision took life and form,
While he drew from heaven the strange fierce fire
That reddens the edge of the midnight storm;
And he carried it over the Mountain's crest,
And dropped it into the Ocean's breast;
And Science proclaimed, from shore to shore,
That Time and Space ruled man no more.

Then the brotherhood lost on Shinar's plain
Came back to the peoples of earth again.
"Be one!" sighed the Mountain, and shrank away.
"Be one!" murmured Ocean, in dashes of spray.
"Be one!" said Space, "I forbid no more."
"Be one!" echoed Time, "till my years are o'er."
"We are one!" said the nations, as hand met hand
In a thrill electric from land to land.

FAITH'S SURRENDER.

AS vanquished years behind me glide,
Trailing the banner of their boasts,
Lo! step for step and stride for stride,
Beside me walk their silent ghosts.
Each, while a narrow moment burned,
The breath of full existence shared;
Then mortal Substance backward turned,
Immortal Shadow onward fared.

Between the doing and the dreaming,
My slack hands fall;
Between the being and the seeming,
My senses pall;
And swiftly through life's broken arches
Care with his troop triumphant marches,
And claims me thrall.

There ever, 'mid the moving throng
Whose mocking footfalls echo mine,
Poor widowed Memory leads along
Her children in a lengthened line;
What time the head in silence hung,
I knew them by that voiceless sign—

Their tender forms forever young,
Their weary eyes as old as mine.

Between retreating and encroaching
Their footprints lie;
Between beseeching and reproaching
Their voices die;
And every scheme of better living
They mar with blotches of misgiving,
And thrust it by.

The one foul word in record fair
Stands out the foremost on the page,
Till all of good or glory there
Seems chance-achieved or shrunk with age;
The present help of manly strength,
The sturdy sway of manly will,
However bold, go down at length
Before some iron-visored ill.

Betwixt old baulk and new beginning,
How Courage quails!
'Twixt white intent and stain of sinning,
How Virtue fails!
And backward on her own path turning,
Where Hazard's lurid torch is burning,
How Reason pales!

From self the subtle motive spun,
Through self the generous purpose burns.

For self the martyr deed is done,
And round to self at last returns
The boon for others dearly bought,
The far result of sacrifice,
That triumphs in completed thought,
Or lights a gleam in dying eyes.

Betwixt grim fact and sad surmising,
Joys merge in pain;
'Twixt love of self and self-despising,
What grounds remain
Where Hope is Lord and Fear is vassal,
Where calm Content may build her castle,
Nor build in vain?

Though Truth be steadfast as the hills
Whose flinty faces mock at Time,
What boots it, if no living rills
Roll downward from that steep sublime?
I could not hold its airy height,
Though I should tread the narrow track,
While trembling foot and failing sight
Conspire too well to hurl me back.

Between the climbing and the creeping,
There's blood and bruise;
Between the laughing and the weeping,
The soul may lose
Her grasp of all that makes the morrow
Seem other than a greener sorrow,
With fresher dews.

THE DARK HERALD.

THE world is beautiful, and life is sweet,
And home sufficient heaven, to those that love.
Yet something happier were they if the feet
Of the Dark Herald, like the spheres above,
Moved in a steadfast orbit and came round
In some determined cycle to their door,
Commanding all together to give ground
For the new mortals waiting off the shore.

Then might they do their work, and live their life,
And love their loves, and go in calm content,
Taking the hands of brother, sister, wife,
For the long journey and its far event.
Then might they know with not a shade of doubt—
What now they argue from a fear of sin—
That He who made the mighty world without
Sustains and loves the weakest soul therein.

But who can see the brightest and the best
Snatched from the sight of those that need them
here,
See active life become eternal rest,
See parents weeping o'er their children's bier,
See age a burden and see youth grow pale,
See what the weak and innocent endure—
Nor feel that laws of Nature somehow fail
Just where their working should be most secure?

BREVI FINIETUR.

I SOMETIMES think my life has run
Beyond the measure of its worth,
And wonder when will rise the sun,
The last that I shall see on earth.
Again, life's brevity appears
The only marplot; and I plan
How all might round to right, if man
Could only live some hundred years.

But evermore this mournful thread
Through all reflection's fabric runs:
That if this dear one were not dead,
Were that one still the same as once,
Had these a few more years been spared,
And all my later fortune shared,
Contented then I had not cared
For what might lie beyond the suns;

That loss and blunders manifold,
Which mar our brief existence here,
Were not its knell so quickly tolled,
Might be redeemed some future year;
Then he who faltered at the start
And failed, were not the course so short,
Might, by some latent force or art,
Have won the race, the prize, the cheer.

OPPORTUNITY.

NOT idly dreaming of Thy heaven,
Nor longing for some vague delight,
With scorn of such as time has given,
Nor blind to glories of the night
With watching for the break of dawn,
Nor mourning good forever gone,
Far from my fellow men withdrawn,
Would I Thy mercies, Lord, requite.

The great to-come is Thine alone;
The past, we know not whose it is;
Its days and deeds are all its own,
And mine, mayhap, its miseries,
But though all things beyond may be
Obscured in hazy drapery,
One little circle round is free
From darkness, doubt, and mysteries.

That little circle, now and here,
Moves onward with me as I go;
That hazy curtain hanging near
Rolls backward with continual flow:
And still my growing pathway glides
Where some divine impulsion guides,
And still Thy firmament abides,
And through the mist its beacons glow.

The measure of Thy work is more
Than I may ever hope to span
With compass of the little lore
That puffs the mind of puny man.
I only know that round my feet
Lie shreds of purpose incomplete,
Which I must help to form and meet,
Revealing Thy eternal plan.

I only know that in my heart
Somehow there must be something good;
Thou wouldst not set my task apart
And give me stubble, hay, and wood,
And these alone, that my desire
Might build in mockery a pyre
But meant for the consuming fire,
Where otherwise some hope had stood.

Though, fair ambition's banner furled,
And every outlook growing less,
I labor through a crowded world,
With daily toil and strife and stress,
If eye and heart to heaven be true,
Some bit of sky I still may view,
And from that little arc of blue
The sphere of Thy creation guess.

A PHOTOGRAPH.

A FLASH of daylight on a darkened plate—
And lip and brow and eye
Monitions of their inmost thought relate
In tones that do not die.

The instant message of a single look,
With love and hope alight,
Is like the pages of an open book
To him who reads aright.

Yet sometimes, though the picture be ablaze
With life's most precious meed,
The careless handle, and the many gaze,
But only one can read.

THE YOUNG MAN SAID IN HIS HEART.

IF love be like a flower that fills the air
With odors delicate and renders earth
A place more purely sacred and more fair,
A garden of delight, a hall of mirth;
If I may pluck that flower and make it mine;
If I may wear it proudly on my breast;
If with its presence comes a strength divine
For noble action or for patient rest;
If life is hid and paradise unknown,
And every spring of happiness is dry,
Save with the blooming of that flower alone—
Then let me love, albeit the flower must die.

If love be like a star that shines by night
More softly radiant than its fellow stars,
Luring the mortal to a realm of light
Beyond the confines of these earthly bars;
If that way lies the path to worlds unsought
And life undreamed-of, with a nobler cause
For every act and every inmost thought,
And wider sympathies and juster laws;
If far beyond the firmament appears
That star still moving as I onward strain—
Though life is short, and shorter grow the years,
Still let me follow, though I ne'er attain.

If love be like the sea, the great round sea
That heaves and falls with its eternal tide.

From whose dominion earth is never free,
This earth whereon we pleasantly abide;
If love be like it in its far extent,
If love be like it in unfailing power,
If human love from love divine is sent,
Heaven's only likeness and man's richest dower—
Though but in visions are thy secrets seen,
And all that venture may be lost in thee,
And the soul's self as it had never been,
Still, take me to thy bosom, wondrous sea.

A VALENTINE.

THIS day is Love's—and yours and mine—
With nought to lend or borrow.
Let Sadness go with yesterday,
And Hope await the morrow.

Though days ago were sometimes dark,
And days to come may fail us,
We hold our Castle of Content,
Where nothing can assail us.

The sunshine of a perfect love,
Serene and strong and tender,
Brings all the fragrance of the spring
And all the summer's splendor.

Then be to-day my sweetheart true,
Nor dread nor dream of sorrow.
Love never knows a yesterday,
And never needs to-morrow.

ON THE CLIFF.

“SEE where the crest of the long promontory,
Decked by October in crimson and brown,
Lies like the scene of some fairyland story,
Over the sands to the deep sloping down.
See the white mist on the hidden horizon
Hang like the folds of the curtain of fate.
See where yon shadow the green water flies on,
Cast from a cloud for the conclave too late.

“See the small ripples in curving ranks chasing
Every light breeze running out from the shore,
Gleeful as children when merrily racing,
Hands interlocked, o'er a wide meadow floor.
See round the pier how the tossing wave sparkles,
Bright as the hope in a love-lighted breast.
See the one sail in the sunlight that darkles,
Laboring home from the lands of the west.

“See the low surf where it restlessly tumbles,
Swiftly advancing, and then in retreat.
See how the tall cliff yields slowly and crumbles,
Sliding away to the gulfs at our feet.
Sure is thy victory, emblem of weakness;
Certain thine overthrow, ponderous wall.
Brittle is sternness, but mighty is meekness—
O wave that will conquer! O cliff that must fall!”

“Ah, lady, how deep is this truth of your teaching!
All that delights and inthralls you I see;
But little you dream of the meaning far-reaching,
Yea, more than you meant them, your words have
for me.

Light run my fancies that once were too sober;
All the fair land of the future lies spread
Brightly before me, in hues of October;
Homeward, full-laden, my ship turns her head.

“Dimly across them falls fate’s mystic curtain:
If but thy fingers would draw it away,
Making the fanciful turn to the certain,
Then would the sounds and the sights of to-day
Ring like the strains of a ballad pathetic,
Heard when the voice of the singer is dumb;
Glow like the great words on pages prophetic,
Read when the fingers that wrote them are numb.

“Into the depths of thy dreamy eyes peering,
Watching thy lips for some shadowy sign,
Trembling in doubt betwixt hoping and fearing,
Stands my poor soul, and appeals unto thine.
Barren as sea-sand is every ambition,
Pride but the foam in the breaker concealed;
Fame is a shadow, and wealth a derision—
O love that will triumph! O life that must yield!”

ON THE STAIRS.

SWIFT tho' the foot-fall of midnight advances,
Let us linger a while on the stairs—
Nothing to witness our words and our glances
But the lampion that over us flares.
Ah, how in contrast with gloomy November
The gleam of their brilliance appears!
You may forget them, but I shall remember—
Remember these glances for years.

Press but the fingers for needless assurance,
Touch the lips for a token of truth—
Thus 'tis I gird for heroic endurance
The wavering weakness of youth!
So rises purpose that never shall slumber,
So rings its brave song in my ears;
You may forget them, while I fondly number
These lingering moments for years.

What tho' the spirit be robbed of its buoyance,
Still wrapped in the cumbersome clay?
What tho' the wear of incessant annoyance
Shall fritter endeavor away,
Turn the fair June into dull-eyed December,
Drown exultation in tears?
You may forget them, yet I shall remember—
Remember these moments for years.

Even as now I pass out of the portal,
To the slumberous silence of night,
So if Remembrance, immured but immortal,
From the dwelling of earth take her flight,
Then, when the ashes of life's falling ember
Are lighted with flickering fears,
You may forget them, while I shall remember
These moments surviving the years.

DEDICATION.

IF that indeed were fact, which seems
A pleasant universal fiction,
That's daily born of youthful dreams,
Nor dies of daily contradiction—

That every mortal has a mate,
And counterparts go blindly groping
To find perchance through fogs of fate
The end of all their weary hoping,—

I'd say: Whatever I have done
To manhood's earnest work befitting,
Be consecrate to her alone
Who waits for me, though all unwitting;

Who puts the signs of pain away,
Lest grief too soon her cheek should furrow;
Who beats temptation back to-day,
That I may see some glad to-morrow;

Who will not pluck a flower that grows
Beyond the path God spreads before her,
Nor ever thinks of passing those
That bloom beside it to adore her;

Who strives to add a cubit yet
By faith unto her moral stature—
Dear soul!—lest I should feel regret
At finding less than mine her nature;

Whose hands train many a trailing vine
That mine had rudely left to perish,
And all its tendrils deftly twine
In folds that failing years will cherish;

Whose steps will mark life's tune alway,
Though mine have stumbled, failed, and blundered;
Whose spirit walks with mine to-day,
However far our feet are sundered.

THE RIVALS.

“MY friend, we’re rivals now no more;
A silent suitor ranks us both—
Her lord henceforth, however loath,
Where mortal rivalries are o’er.
If both her lovers had been one,
And that one such as she had willed,
And life rolled smooth from sun to sun,
Till all her hopes had been fulfilled,
She could not then have laid it by
With more of graceful ease and trust
Than when before an opening sky
She dropped her veil of earthly dust.
I knew myself, I now confess,
To be unworthy of her hand;
But who for that e’er loves the less,
Or finds his courage e’er unmanned?
We all avow, we all believe,
That she we love with reverent heart
Could somehow many a fault retrieve,
And something of herself impart.
Her thoughts were such as none could reach
But with a spirit like her own,
And the low music of her speech
Was soft as Nature’s undertone.
Where’er she came she brought a spell
That brightened all the commonplace;

Whene'er she went a silence fell,
And something shadowed every face.
I loved her with a wild delight,
Unheedful of the Yes or No;
And in the balmy summer night
A score of times I told her so.
I told her how ambition kept
An even step with love's reply,
How half the powers of nature slept
Until awakened by a sigh.
She almost smiled, and all but wept,
And gently put the subject by,—
So gently that I knew my fate
Was then determined past recall,
And you, my rival, once my mate,
Were throned and crowned the lord of all
But tell me—now that this has past—
By what device, what novel art,
You found the hidden clue at last
And reached the portal of her heart.
For you and I, in days of youth,
Went hand-in-hand in search of truth,
And howsoever either fared
The gain or loss was always shared.
I could not sleep if you were sad,
You could but smile if I was glad,
And both in equal gauge retained
The skill or knowledge either gained.
I marveled you the happy way
Had found, and I so far astray.”

“You marveled? And I marveled too;
For I was sure she favored you.
And when her prompt refusal rang
 The knell of hope, I could not fend
Against the first, the only pang
 Of envy toward my boyhood friend.
But that was neither deep nor strong.
No unbecoming thought could long
Remain a tenant of the soul
Where love of her held high control.
And silent then I took the place
Of one who, distanced in the race,
Still feels, however fortune fall,
'Tis noble to have striven at all.
I even came to take a pride
In thinking he who by my side
Had walked since childhood's earliest day
So fair a prize had borne away;
Though I, too, wondered what availed
To win your cause where mine had failed.”

“Perhaps, unknown to you and me,
 Another suitor, who surpassed
All we could ever do or be,
 Had won the citadel at last.”

“No such appeared. I rather hold
 Our rival was no fleshly real,
No living man of mortal mould,
 But her own perfect, fair ideal.
What man could hope, in such a case?

Or who presume to emulate
The visionary power and grace
That such a fancy could create?
For her perception was the kind
That, to no force of Nature blind,
With equal vision seems to see
What must, what might, what ought to be.
And she could look through screen and scroll
Of measured words and mannered vole,
To read the secrets of the soul.
I felt this power when first we met—
Felt, feared, but did not quite regret;
I felt it more when last we spoke,
Before her thread of being broke;
Yet knew whate'er she read in me
Was still wrapped up in secrecy."

"Nay, souls like hers are never given
To form ideals this side heaven.
They do not seek the name of wife
And put a price-mark on their life,
Saying: 'For thus much excellence,
Thus much of manhood, thus much sense,
Or wit, or goodness, I'm for sale;
And nothing less can e'er avail.'
They step into this world of ours
With all their sympathies and powers
Spread to the full to catch the need
Of fellow-men with generous deed,
Or helpful thought, or word of cheer,

Or smile that hope's renewal brings,
Or such encouragement as springs
From simply knowing they are here.
They love as God loves, and they find
Their heart's desire in all mankind.
It seems as if their garment's hem
Made sacred every path it swept,
And everything that walked or crept
Were happier for the sight of them.
Their days glide on like living streams
That find a pre-appointed way;
Their years are eras, and their dreams
Substantial visions made to stay.
There is no twilight in their age;
There is no darkness in their death;
They calmly yield their latest breath,
And leave their lives a heritage.
They do their work and take no toll;
Their gaze is not on any goal;
They never think of Honor's roll.
And such was she—God rest her soul!"

A BOOK RE-OPENED.

HERE is the book that we read together
In the quiet of softest summer eves.
There is wear of age on its tarnished leather,
And rain-drop spots on some of the leaves.

It opens itself at certain pages,
Where the print grows dim while the margin
shines;
And an image there my eye engages
Of a landscape overlying the lines.

The view that I have is a varied picture
Of meadow and valley and hill and stream,
With a river's brink as the only stricture
To feet that wander in daylight dream.

And by that brink, where an elm hangs over,
Its roots interlaced with a carpet green,
I see a maid, and perhaps her lover,
Sitting side by side, with a book between.

The stream that rose in a woldland ferny,
And found its way to this sunny shore,
Now murmurs low on its solemn journey
To lose its song in the cataract's roar,

While the Sun glides down to his gorgeous haven
Behind the crest of the beetling bank,
And profiles of rock and tree are graven
On the placid water in rank upon rank.

A terrace of turf with a footing of shingle
The girl and her lover have made their seat;
A runnel's prattle near by in a dingle;
One fleecy cloud—and the scene's complete.

'This thus today that I bridge the ages—
The age of youth and of manhood's prime—
As I turn again the familiar pages
That together we read in that rosy time.

There were the songs of an era we knew not,
And there were madrigals of our own;
But few there were that from sympathy drew not
A smile or a tear, a sigh or a moan.

When the birds were still, as the Sun departed,
She rose and murmured, "We can not remain."
"'Twill be sunlit to-morrow," I said, light-hearted.
It was—but we met there never again.

I have long since learned that a bit of perfection
Dropped into our life comes once—no more,
Though we travel and search in the same direction
Till feet are weary and heart is sore.

In the City of Silence, half hid in the grasses,
A marble stone, in a shaded nook,
Relates to me a tale that surpasses
All I have read in this treasured book.

THE DARK AGES.

A BOY was born in my house last night—
The child of many a prayer and hope—
And by the wandering planets' light
A seer has written his horoscope.

That parchment tells me as welcome tales
As a happy parent ever hears;
It follows the boy through endless vales
Of beauty, but never a vale of tears.

O kindly seer, for a minute or two
Look over my shoulder and see me trace
Your erring page with a pen that's true
To the days he must live if he wins the race.

He has all to receive and little to give,
When he cries for the moon or basks in the sun;
But teeth are to cut, the doctor must live—
I put a black mark at the age of one.

The horse on wheels and the flannel dog
Are a joy to him as any alive;
But the school-bell rings, and he must jog—
Another black mark at the age of five.

Pass over, now, to his middle 'teens.

He loves, and will love for ever, he thinks;
But alas! her seniority intervenes—
Draw a mark as dark as the ways of that minx.

To college he goes with hope in his breast
For learning and friends and honors attained;
But pride and jealousy join to wrest
All joy from his soul, and the page is stained.

Anon his profession is mastered with care;
He dreams of fine cases with little delay;
But trace a dark line while there in his chair
He wishes and waits for patients that pay.

With vigilant skill and a tender heart
He'll see many a life-tide rise and fall;
But when his own beloved depart,
Mark that as the darkest age of all.

Sunshine and shade—fair day and foul night—
Not surelier come than this dismal alloy.
Resume, then, good seer, your stylus and write
A truer, though darker, life-line for my boy.

THREE WOMEN.

THREE women have I known the earth above—
Three whom I thought superlatively good.
One for her country died, and one for love,
And one for motherhood.

She who her country served was strong and bright—
Almost a martyr's nerve, a soldier's tread.
Men seeing her were manlier for the sight,
While women ceased from dread.

She was the flower of earth whose broken heart
Shed its dear life-drops upon barren ground—
Forgave the blow, smiled and denied the smart
Died to conceal the wound.

And she who gave her life for newer life
Thought only of the little one's career—
Hoped he was equal to the coming strife,
And passed without a fear.

Three women do I mourn the earth beneath,
Who left the world forever in their debt.
These three I sorely grudge to thee, O Death
And never can forget.

A VETERAN BY THE WAYSIDE.

HE basks beside the garden wall,
And gazes on the passing show,
Where, answering the diurnal call,
The tides of life sway to and fro.

The mellow sunshine, sifted through
The boughs o'erhanging, flecks the stone;
And softest airs that ever blew
Maintain a quiet monotone.

No sound escapes his ample throat—
No cry of welcome or surprise;
But, as I pass, I pause to note
His dark, deep, meditative eyes.

I think he dreams of days long gone:
His lonely watch on guard by night,
His welcome to the rising dawn,
His plunging in the sudden fight.

With watch and warfare in the past,
Swift time has left his youth behind;
But scars from duty done outlast
The strength wherewith he served mankind.

In days of sadness or of mirth,
With measured step he walked beside—
Upon the lawn or by the hearth
A guard, an ornament, a pride.

For all life's pulses running low
His tranquil memory makes amend:
He knows he never shunned a foe;
He knows he never failed a friend.

While thus, with retrospect serene,
He waits the stroke that comes to all,
I would my conscience were as clean
As his beside the garden wall.

MY SHIP.

'T was a gallant craft as ever sailed,
And a marvelous merry crew she bore,
When with canvas set and colors nailed
I sent her out to a distant shore.
I sent her out with a broad command
To cruise at will through the Golden Isles,
And bring me the product of every land
That the soul delights or the sense beguiles.

Tough are the timbers that compass her sides,
And the lines are graceful that curve to her keel,
And she leaves a foamy wake as she rides
Secure with her steadiest man at the wheel.
And that foamy wake in my dreams I see,
Where whitens the wave for a thousand miles;
And the man at the wheel, unmindful of me,
Is looking ahead for the Golden Isles.

If waking I walk on the lonely shore,
The foam of her furrow has melted away,
And I know that her sailors are merry no more,
And her pilot I know must be withered and gray.

But I still believe that her ensign burns,
And on her brown canvas the sunlight smiles,
As heavily laden she homeward turns,
Or cruises yet 'mid the Golden Isles.

And I never doubt she will surely come,
Riding in on some happy tide,
Strained and battered, but bearing home
All that she sought o'er the ocean wide.
And if Father Charon should pluck my sleeve
And point to his skiff, with a laughing lip
I'd do his bidding, and still believe
I am only going to meet my ship.

WHEN FOOLISH WORDS.

WHEN foolish words have been forgot,
And wiser memory reads between—
Like some dear child's handwriting seen
Half-blindly through an awkward blot—
How clearly runs the legend then:
There's something more in friendship's faith
Than careless hand or vagrant breath
Can make or break with tongue or pen.

Yet foolish words will have their sway,
Like smoke that wraps a generous fire
And forces tears and rouses ire,
And seem decisive for a day.
I owe your memory heavy debt,
My friend of many sacred years;
But would you double these arrears,
Learn also sometimes to forget.

AUTUMN.

WHAT sudden splendor loads the falling year!
Like an old man whose honors come too late,
Yet walks with regal step and brow sedate
The purple pathway to his gilded bier.
Sharp-tongued is Fate to utter words austere
When her keen glance upon the dial-plate—
Where neither bribe of love nor force of hate
Can stop the shadow in its swift career—
Catches the hour the mortal must not pass.
So long as sorrow and distress endure,
How calmly she denies our prayers, alas!—
Patience should be, where all things are secure—
But grimly she delights to turn the glass
Just when its sands run brightest and most pure.

ALL PARTNERS.

[These verses, which refer to the execution of President Garfield's assassin, were published originally in the *New York Sun*, June 30, 1882. That which they foretold came to pass in September, 1901, and was the occasion of the lines that follow these.]

YES, hang him, of course! He deserves to rise
Where his heels may dangle o'er Haman's head.
At least we shall have one scoundrel the less,
Conveniently crazed in his fiendishness,
To walk our streets in an innocent guise,
With his hidden pistol and stealthy tread.

But when we have hanged him, what comes then?
Had he any confederates? Let us see!
For the law is imperfect and lame at best,
And censure's weight should be made to rest
On as many as possible, women or men,
Who have joined in breaking its just decree.

When a youth the Ephesian temple fired,
That his name, as he said, might live thro' time,
'Twas decreed that it never be written or
spoken—
A law by the chroniclers quickly broken,
Who've given him all that he desired,
And offered his chosen reward for crime.

Thus you, the historians, you are to blame.
You offered this fellow a heavy bribe:
If he'd only compass a shameful deed,
A sickening sorrow to all who read,
You'd give him something as good as fame
To any one of his vulgar tribe.

Then you, the reporters, hungry for news,
And nibbling at nothings for printed prate,
You've dosed us to death with his nauseous
name,
With how he looks and whence he came,
And what he drinks, and how he chews,
Till the simple reader thinks him great.

And we who have read are guilty beside:
To be curious hold we a sacred right,
As we smother a fainting man in the street,
Or run to evil with hurrying feet,
Making a crowd where the felons may hide,
And balking justice to gratify sight.

The quack who has striven the law to impede,
The garrulous parson to decency blind,
Every fool that has asked for his autograph,
Or greeted his jest with a silly laugh,
Is an accessory after the deed,
And before the next we shall have of its kind.

When a few more years bring another such blow,
And the head of the nation lies in state,
While our streets with the emblems of mourning
are filled,
And door-posts are darkened and songs are
stilled,
While we follow the funeral, sad and slow,
We shall think of these things, God help us, too
late.

THANKSGIVING, 1901.

IN the freshness of our sorrow,
In the darkness of our grief,
With a loss that no to-morrow
Can repair or give relief,—
With a cloud upon our history
Such as fades not in the years,
And the burden of a mystery
That forever forces tears,—
How shall any heart be grateful
As becomes this festal day,
With the sinful and the hateful
Driving happy thoughts away?
With the manhood held so proudly,
That grew up through fateful times,
And the faith that spoke so loudly
In orations and in rhymes,
There was still a viper crawling
Through the garden we had made,
And the stroke of fate was falling

When our guards were least afraid.
That the nation's will is thwarted
By the vilest of the vile,
And the worst with best consorted,
Do we render thanks the while?
Not by these, which are but outward
Acts and feelings of the hour,
Must our thoughts be driven doubtward
And our faith resign its power.
We give thanks that evil forces,
Malice-laden, are so small,
That the law's majestic courses
Falter not, whate'er befall.
We give thanks that he who perished
On that sunny autumn day
Left a memory to be cherished
Till the earth shall pass away;
That his dying, as his living,
Was a lesson for our youth,
With no flaw, and no misgiving
Of the grace and force of truth;
Of the might of earnest manhood,
Tense in war and calm in peace,
To unite our wondrous country
And its honor to increase.
Then from high or lowly stations,
From the East unto the West,
When we think of those our martyrs
Who have passed unto their rest,
Let us thank the God of Nations
That we are so richly blest.

THE GATE OF TEARS.

THE summer-house was old and worn,
A Moorish roof of painted pine,
On seven slender shafts upborne,
Half hidden by a clambering vine,
And half in sunlight, while the leaves
Of two great maples flecked the floor
With dancing shapes all shadowed o'er,
And rustled round the broken eaves.
It stood upon a point of land
Far poised above a silver flood,
And the deep gulf on either hand
By swallow-flights alone was spanned,
Or fleecy clouds in flying scud.
What lovers may have whispered there
In silences of evening air,
What robbers at the midnight hour
Conspired to clutch crime's bloody dower,
What tuneless poet watched the stars,
What hermit soul through mortal bars
Withdrawn from every mortal care,—
I reckon not, for I see it still
As in one dreamy afternoon
When Summer's strength was freshly hewn,
And Autumn's haze was on the hill.

Then we were children—happy time!
For this old world seemed shining new,
And life was but a rattling rhyme,
And all its pretty tales were true.
We played the old familiar games
Until they palled upon the sense,
And personated squires and dames,
And knaves and knights, in grave pretence,
Till Helen, flinging from her lap
The autumn leaves, sprang up and cried,
“I know a game we have not tried—
We’ll play at finding on the map!”

She brought the atlas from the house,
And spread it on the arbor floor;
We clustered round and conned it o’er,
With wary eyes and thoughtful brows.
The turn went round until it fell
To Arthur, him of fewest years
Among us, and he pondered well,
Then bade us find the Gate of Tears
What mighty travels now began—
What voyages in unknown seas!
We cruised among the Cyclades,
And visited the Cingalese,
And lingered at the Isle of Man.
We crossed the Himalayan slopes,
And climbed the Mountains of the Moon;
We trod Peruvian bridge of ropes,
And lowland dyke, and Danish dune;
We sailed the great Australian Bight,

We basked awhile on tropic shores,
We pulled the daring whaler's oars,
And lost ourselves in Arctic night.
On Orinoco's tangled banks
The chattering monkeys mocked our quest;
And in the red man's straggling ranks
We thrid the forests of the West;
We followed up the Niger's course,
And all the Dnieper's muddy miles,
And where Ontario's waters force
St. Lawrence through his Thousand Isles.
With vague conjecture, jests, and jeers,
We spelled out many a foreign name,
But still were baffled by the game,
And could not find the Gate of Tears.
"You give it up," said Arthur—"Good!
But see how plain it now appears—
A voyage through the Red Sea's flood
Will bring you to the Gate of Tears."
The Red Sea's flood, we knew not then.
We've known too well in after years;
For time and truth have made us men—
Swift time, stern truths told o'er again—
And all have found the Gate of Tears.

O Helen of the golden hair,
Of all thy little mates that day,
Not one but would have borne thy care,
Or plucked his own right eye away,
To save those dark, deep, lustrous spheres
Of thine from sorrow's bitter tears.

It might not be; for thine the lot
 Of all good women since the fall:
 One-half of life beside the cot,
 The other half beside the pall—
 Presiding over birth and death,
 Our earliest and our latest breath—
 Our entrance on a life of fears,
 Our exit at the Gate of Tears.

O Father Land, of lands the best,
 O Mother Freedom, dearer still,
 What mystery moves the mighty Will,
 That many days must still be dressed
 In sable weeds, and pain and loss,
 The mourner's tear, the martyr's cross,
 Appear wherever we can see
 One step advances liberty?
 So was it when our Washington
 Through seven long years kept heart of hope,
 From Cambridge elm to Trenton slope,
 From Valley Forge to Yorktown's sun.
 So was it, too, when Lincoln led
 His people through the bloody years
 That Fate exacted as her price
 To shrive us of a hideous vice,—
 Then bowed his own most reverend head,
 And left us at the Gate of Tears.
 So when our third great President,
 His welcoming hand extended free,
 Was struck with murderous intent
 By treacherous tool of Anarchy.

The whole world breathing prayers of hope,
The nation quivering with its fears,
For him the gates of triumph ope,
For us, alas! the Gate of Tears.

So may it be when you and I,
And all of us, uncertain stand,
Compelled to cross, though fain to fly,
The shadows of the border-land:
With tranquil mind that knows at length
All its own weakness, and its strength,
Following in quiet self-control
The light that shines from out the soul,
The wisdom never born of years,
That leads where clearer suns may rise
And show the gloomy Gate of Tears
An outer gate of Paradise.

ON THE BEACH AT AMAGANSETT.

GIVE me a handful of the glittering sand
That's rolled about by every breaking wave;
Sit here upon the margin of the land,
And meet my questioning with answer brave.

Whence and how came it to this pleasant shore?
"From the far north, ten thousand years ago,
Crept down the mighty avalanche that bore
A half-world load of rock and ice and snow.

"And somewhere in its cold, capacious breast
Were wrapped the deep foundations of this isle
Torn from the Arctic mountains' frozen crest,
And dragged a mile a year—a year a mile."

What legend from those days could tell you this?
"Where Hudson perished and where Franklin
failed,
From many a broken ledge and cliff we miss
The very rocks your sands have here impaled.

"The sands themselves are but the shining grist
Crushed from the gravel in that mighty mill
As, moving with remorseless roll and twist,
The giant glacier worked its patient will."

But how and whence that Arctic quarry rose?

“ ’Tis plainly written on its splintered side:
Millions of years before, ’mid earthquake throes
’Twas heaved aloft by some volcanic tide.

“And there it rested, looking o’er the plain,
Silent and solemn as the starry flocks,
Until the circling ages in their train
Brought round the cycle of the equinox.”

Tell me what placed it in the depths of earth

“Go back in thought a myriad ages more,
And see this rolling globe of mighty girth
Hurlled from the Sun with all its mineral store

“Mingled and kneaded in the glowing mass.

Was all we have of rock or tree or air,
Slowly to be evolved as changes pass,
Fires melt, frosts crack, winds blow, and waters
wear.”

And whence your Sun? and whence his motive force?

“Sprung from a nebula that floated free.
Rotation was the law that ruled his course,
And all else followed by necessity.”

And whence the nebula? How does it come

The substance of this sand exists at all?
I wait for answer—and your lips are dumb.
The march of Science leads us to a wall.

Change upon change, we tell the changes o'er;
But genesis of matter still escapes,
And more of searching only brings us more
Mysterious substance in familiar shapes.

While the great riddle thus remains unsolved,
And Science can not pass beyond its tether,
However worlds and systems are evolved,
The sage and simpleton must stand together.

AT FIFTY-TWO.

IF I were Shakespeare, I should die to-day.
If I were Lincoln, I should set my hand
Unto the hardest task that e'er was planned
Of complex forces and unknown assay.

If I were Washington, the land would leap
With gladness for a freedom newly won;
If Caesar, I should cross the Rubicon;
And if Magellan, sail the greater deep.

Burns, Byron, Collins, Motherwell, and Praed—
By fifteen years I have o'erpassed the time
When poets die, without one worthy rhyme
Or verse whose color will not surely fade.

Seven years I am beyond the martial age;
But sword or banner hangs not on my wall,
Where shadows pass, like some dim funeral
Of valorous comrade or preceptor sage.

What Rubicons I fancied I should cross!
But every brook is either bridged or dry.
There seems no more to be a call for high
Heroic action—save in patient loss.

I've closed no gulf that parted friend from friend,
Nor widened any fertile stream of thought:
My whole half century figures up to nought—
Unless achievement be not life's sole end—

Unless there must be for whom good's designed,
As well as those through whom it comes to pass—
Reflective souls, wherein, as in a glass,
Creative thinkers meet their pictured mind.

I am not Shakespeare—but his plays are mine.
I am not Lincoln—but I saw that face,
The saddest and the wisest of our race;
Nor Washington—but Freedom's heir in line.

So something still of triumph there must be
In lowly places; and before the mast
A man may hope that he shall come at last,
With his great Captain, to the tranquil sea.

THE MAD DOG OF EUROPE.

WE thought he was a gentle beast, the mildest
of the litter;

We patted him and petted him, and boasted of
his brain;

He growled a little now and then ; we smiled, or gave
a titter;

We never dreamed a dog so mild could need a
leash or chain.

We knew he had a kennel where the dogs of war
were breeding;

We knew their howl was loud and long, we knew
their bite was death;

But still we kept our careless way, of dangers all
unheeding,

Though we saw the jaws unmuzzled and could
smell the fetid breath.

With the dawning of the dog-days he appeared an-
other creature:

That gentle beast passed off the scene, as in
dissolving views,

And quickly came one differing in every limb and
feature—

A hideous hound with frothing mouth, sharp
teeth, and iron thews.

That rabid bloodhound runs amuck, through town
and farmstead ripping;

He bites whate'er comes in his way, and roars
and snaps at all;

His eye is red, his claws are curved, his jaws with
blood are dripping—

The blood of mothers, blood of men, and blood of
children small.

Ho, Briton, Belgian, Frenchman, Russ, relax not
your endeavor!

Be ever brave and confident, whate'er may swim
or fly.

'Tis yours to save the world's best hope and give
it peace forever;

You have a hard but holy task—all rabid dogs
must die.

October, 1914.

My countrymen, Americans, your history reminds
you

That ever have you struck for truth, and never
vainly bled.

How can the triumph thrill you, if the day of vic-
tory finds you

Still held aloof and listless when that rabid dog
lies dead?

May, 1917.

A BOY'S POEM.

OVER the water and under the sky,
Dreamily sailing, the clouds go by.
Fleecy and white as a wild swan's breast,
Darkened and dim as the mountain's crest,
Reddened with flashes of sunset fire,
Rolled into portents and effigies dire,
Smiling or frowning for calm or for storm —
Whatever the color, whatever the form —
Daily and nightly the clouds go by,
Over the water and under the sky.

Over the water and under the sky,
Steadily sailing, the ships go by.
Bearing away on the Arctic breeze,
Floating along to the tropic seas,
Beating about at the stormy cape,
Cleaving the fog like a ghostly shape,
Carrying cargoes for peaceful trade,
Bristling with guns for destruction made —
Sailing forever, the ships go by,
Over the water and under the sky.

Over the earth and under the sky,
The great procession of life goes by.
Some in laughter and some in tears,
Leaping in childhood or crippled in years,

Toiling along under wearisome load,
Gallop[ing] off on a flowery road,
Hopeful and hopeless, the small and the great,
The captive in chains and the monarch in state,—
All in the endless procession go by,
Over the landscape and under the sky.

Over the landscape and under the sky,
Dreamily roving, our souls go by.
Seeking the wonders of every clime,
Reading the tales of a far-away time,
Marching where thousands keep step to the drum,
Brooding in solitude sightless and dumb,
Taking the world at the worst or the best,
Willing to labor and careless of rest,
If eternity finds us, when life's gone by,
Under the daisies and over the sky.

THE INDIAN TRAIL.

IN days ago, where rocky cliffs
Rise far above the river's vale,
There was a path of doubts and ifs—
We called it then the Indian Trail.

In ragged line, from top to base,
O'er shelving crag and slippery shale.
By bush and brier and jumping-place,
Wound up and down the Indian Trail.

No girl, though nimble as a fawn,
No small-boy cautious as a snail,
No dog, no mule, no man of brawn,
Could safely tread that Indian Trail.

Beyond the age of childish toy,
Before the age of gun and sail,
The fearless and elastic boy
Alone could use the Indian Trail.

'Twas like a great commencement day,
Like change from little fish to whale,
From tearful March to smiling May,
When first you climbed the Indian Trail.

I've threaded many a devious maze,
And Alpine path without a rail,
Yet never felt such tipsy craze
As touched me on the Indian Trail.

'Twas easy by the White Man's Path
For all the lofty cliff to scale;
But boys returned from river bath
Preferred to take the Indian Trail.

Our younger brothers, who'd insist
Upon their rights of taggle-tail,
Were shaken off and never missed
When once we reached the Indian Trail.

And those who plundered orchard crop
Regarded not the farmer's hail,
But left him puzzled at the top,
While they went down the Indian Trail.

All this was years and years ago—
To count them now would not avail—
And every noble tree is low
That shadowed then the Indian Trail.

The beetling cliff—ah, what a sin!—
Is full of vaults for beer and ale;
The rocks are stained like toper's chin,
Where flourished once our Indian Trail.

They've stripped off every bush and flower,
From Vincent to Deep Hollow dale;
The charm is sunk, the memory sour—
There is no more an Indian Trail.

Far driven from our hunting-ground
On breezy hill and billowy swale,
Some wander still, but some have found
The skyward end of Indian Trail.

Dear boys! it takes away my breath,
To think how youth and genius fail.
Those grim pursuers, Time and Death,
Are baffled by no Indian Trail.

Life yields such comfort as it hath,
But labor wears and custom stales;
I plod all day the White Man's Path,
And dream at night of Indian Trails.

MY GOLDEN CHARIOT.

WHEN the stress of the day is over, and twilight offers rest,
I turn from the din of the workshop to the dreamy
land of the west,
Where the crimson doors are open, and across that
fleecy floor
They move, with beckoning fingers, the dear delights
of yore.
I have a golden chariot, with seats for all my friends,
And it rolls in stately silence o'er a road that never
ends.
The horses need no urging to pursue the airy track;
For they are of my boyhood, and think they're
going back.

I call old comrades round me, I can take them
every one,
And before the glory darkens we journey toward
the sun.
We roam once more together in the pleasant paths
of youth,
Where fact grew into fancy, and fancy gilded truth.

Come, Ted, my earliest playmate, and sit beside
me here;

For you shall hold the ribbons, and I will give the
cheer.

Bid every boy we played with, however far away,
Once more put on his jacket and ride with us to-day.

There's Walter coming slowly, and whistling as he
comes;

And Herbert singing "Rosalie" to twirling of his
thumbs.

Joe and Jimmy, never parted, climb up together now;
And Wally'll try to worry them—he always loved
a row.

Make room for Sammy and his crutch—we can't
leave him behind;

And lend a hand to little Mose—you know he's al-
most blind.

Then, Dick, we need your humor, as well as Char-
lie's smiles,

And Emmet's quaintly solemn face, and Gussy's
winsome wiles.

Hello there, Tom! come forward!—we play no
hiding game.

In our last fight you licked me, but I love you
just the same.

And Frank, you rogue, you cheated me at marbles,
broke me dead;
But I doff my hat when I read the lines on the
marble over your head.
Yes, Ben, you may bring your cornet, though some
of us used to say
'Twould frighten a locomotive to hear you when
you play.
And, Dan, you were always whittling, as if you
thought to aid
In shaping the fate of nations with a turn of your
shining blade.

What are you saying, Harvey?—we mustn't forget
the girls?
Then call them quickly hither, with their ribbons
and their curls.
You never feared to approach them, for you were
a ladies' man,
While I as a boy was bashful and fled at the flirt
of a fan.
The day I have not forgotten when Lois spelled
me down,
And Dora laughed at my singing, and Katie called
me clown.
But I've grown a good bit bolder; I could even sit
beside
Mehitabel, Ruby, or Margaret; and we'll take them
on our ride.

And now they all are kinder than in that early day;
For heads are somewhat wiser that wear a little
gray.

They've learned that men are mortal, and life has
fewer joys

Than in the merry springtime when we were girls
and boys.

You guessed not, girls, that timid lad admired you
from afar,

Nor dreamed that you would one day ride in his
aerial car.

You think your youth forever gone far down the
western main,

Nor rolling wheels nor flying heels can bring it
back again.

But the golden chariot waits for us within my gates,
To overtake the flight of Time and thwart the som-
ber Fates.

MART M'INTYRE'S KIOSK.

The Strand, Charlotte. Nineteenth Century.

FRIENDS of my youth, roll back with me the
burden of our years,

And far into the olden time our boyish steps shall
fare.

Down by the margin of the lake a sandy beach
appears—

Mart McIntyre's kiosk we see, and Mart himself
is there.

As Venus rose from our the foam, so did that temple
rise

From out Ontario's rolling surf, one fragment at
a time,

While Mart took in the driftwood and hailed each
plank a prize—

The contributions of the wrecks from many a
land and clime.

With his own hands he builded up a structure most
unique,

The inspiration of the hour his only plan in mind.
Its style was neither Gothic nor Byzantine nor
Greek—

To rank him first of Cubists I've lately been in-
clined.

With one plank nailed on upright, the next he
spiked across;

The third one slanted this way, the fourth one
slanted that;

And some were gaily painted, some were draped
with fern and moss;

The roof was partly very steep and partly very
flat.

Four windows let the sunshine in, but kept out
cold and rain;

And one was round, of colored glass, and one of
diamond shape;

While two were square, but different in size of
sash and pane;

And over all a rusty pipe to let the smoke escape.

The door upon two hinges turned, one leather and
one brass,

Amusingly mismated like the rest of that strange
pile;

But what cared we who thereby to the inner shrine
did pass?—

Not Milton's golden-hinged doors our steps could
more beguile.

For there were cakes, with harmless ale in heavy
bottles held—

To cut the string and hear it pop was not the
least of joys—

And eggs and pies and gingerbread the dainty
menu swelled;

And there serene sat McIntyre, our Mart, the
friend of boys.

The counter was a cabin door; the table was a hatch,
Whereon some idle sailor-boy had drawn a check-
er-board;

And there in dark and rainy days we played a
friendly match

Beneath a wooden chandelier, and little triumphs
scored.

When fish were scarce, or would not bite, or sun
too hot would shine,

Or sudden lightning, wind and rain would drive
us to the shore,

All willingly we moored our barque, wound up the
useless line,

Found welcome in the rough kiosk, and had con-
tent galore.

Nor mere material joys alone in that retreat we
found;

For Mart was wise in many ways and could a
tale unfold

Of sailors slain on bloody decks or swept away and
drowned,

Of mermaids round the coral isles, of pirate's
buried gold.

The stream still flows, the surf still beats along
the sounding shore;

But that kiosk no longer stands upon the sandy
plain,

While Mart, the host and architect, can welcome us
no more,

And of those happy youngsters you and I alone
remain.

Mart McIntyre, Mart McIntyre, how often in my
dreams

I find again your old kiosk, just as it used to be;
And through a rift in yonder cloud you sit in state,
meseems,

Presiding o'er a new kiosk beside the Jasper Sea.

A LOVE-LETTER WITHOUT A LADY.

IS the new summer bursting as freshly as ever,
Along the smooth margin of old Genesee,
Where the trillium wakes with a lingering shiver
Beneath the low boughs of the evergreen tree?

Creeps the trailing arbutus o'er hillock and hollow,
Through leafage whose greenness and glory are
fled?

Rises dawn with a flush of new glories to follow?
Comes the night with less terror and chill in its
tread?

In the grottoes we know, are the sculptures of
Winter

Made ruin and rubbish, the sport of the Spring?
From the great rocky walls do they crumble and
splinter,

Whence newly-born rivulets saunter and sing?

Has the last shrunken drift from the meadows de-
parted,

Like a stage-ghost at dawn, with the dust on
its face?

O'er the long, grassy slopes have the cloud-shadows
started,

As in summers of old, their perpetual chase?

Do you wander as once under cliff and through
tangle,

By pools where cross-currents in dark eddies
meet?

Or study the offers of crevice and angle

That hold out temptations to hazardous feet?

It is long, long ago now—and longer in seeming—

Since I stood with you by that river so fair.

But its ripple or roar, as it runs through my dream-
ing,

Has no meaning or music unless you are there.

There's a love that comes forth³ at the bidding of
beauty,

And virtue, and goodness, 'twixt woman and man;

There's a love more allied to devotion and duty,

That owes its existence to kindred and clan.

There is also a love that no mystery darkens,

No passion need fire, and no blindness defend,

No whisper can hurt while suspiciousness hearkens,

No envy distract, and no jealousy rend.

It is born of the spirit that finds itself mated—

Or soaring or mining—by one of its kind;

That can follow it far, or await it belated,

Can lead it in freedom, or cheer it confined;

That feels how it labors, or triumphs, or struggles;
That sees what it aims at, and knows why it fails;
That peers at a glance through the gauzes and
juggles
That screen and succeed where no merit avails.

No thrill marks its birth, and no rapture its pres-
ence;

But it grows in each fibre by circumstance tried,
From boyhood to manhood through long juvenes-
cence,—

And such 'tis I send you from Merrimack's side.

To Joseph O'Connor,
Author of *The White Rose*,
and other poems.

LAURENCE.

HE came in the glory of summer; in the terror
of summer he went:

Like a blossom the breezes have wafted; like a
bough that the tempest has rent.

His blue eyes unclosed in the morning, his brown
eyes were darkened at morn;

And the durance of pain could not banish the beauty
wherewith he was born.

He came—can we ever forget it, while the years of
our pilgrimage roll?—

He came in thine anguish of body, he passed 'mid
our anguish of soul.

He brought us a pride and a pleasure, he left us
a pathos of tears:

A dream of impossible futures, a glimpse of uncal-
endared years.

His voice was a sweet inspiration, his silence a sign
from afar;

He made us the heroes we were not, he left us the
cowards we are.

For the moan of the heart follows after his clay,
with perpetual dole,

Forgetting the torture of body is lost in the triumph
of soul.

A man in the world of his cradle, a sage in his
infantine lore,
He was brave in the might of endurance, was pa-
tient—and who can be more?
He had learned to be shy of the stranger, to wel-
come his mother's warm kiss,
To trust in the arms of his father—and who can
be wiser than this?
The lifetime we thought lay before him, already was
rounded and whole,
In dainty completeness of body and wondrous per-
fection of soul.

The newness of love at his coming, the freshness of
grief when he went,
The pitiless pain of his absence, the effort at argued
content,
The dim eye forever retracing the few little foot-
prints he made,
The quick thought forever recalling the visions that
never can fade,—
For these but one comfort, one answer, in faith's
or philosophy's roll:
Came to us for a pure little body, went to God for
a glorified soul.

EVELYN.

IF I could know
That here about the place where last you
 played—
Within this room, and yonder in the shade
 Of branches low—
Your spirit lingered, I would never go,
But evermore a hermit pace the round
Of sunny paths across this garden ground,
 And o'er the fleckered lawn
Whereon your little chariot was drawn.
 And round these lonely walls,
 Where no sound ever falls
So pretty as your prattle or your crow,—
 If I could only know!

If I could know
That to some distant clime or planet rare
 Sweet souls like thine repair,
Where love's own fountains fail not as they flow,
I'd be a traveller, and would ever go,
Day after day, along the selfsame road,
Leaving behind this desolate abode,

My head upon my pillow only lay
To dream myself still farther on the way,
 Until at last I rest,
Clasping my little daughter to my breast,
Though half eternity were wasted so,—
 If I could only know!

 If I could know
That you a child with childlike ways remain,
I'd never wish to be a man again,
 But only try to grow
As childlike, using all the idle toys
That you and I have played with, till their noise
Brought back the echoes of your merry laugh,
When paper windmill whirled upon its staff,
Or painted ball went rolling on the floor,
 Or puss peeped out behind the door,
 Or watch, held half in fear,
With its mysterious pulses thrilled your ear:
All manly occupation I'd forego,
 If I could only know!

 If I could know
That henceforth, in some pure eternal sphere,
The little life that grew so swiftly here
 Would still expand and grow,
How should I strive against my wasting years,
With toil from sun to sun, and midnight tears,
To build my soul up to the height of yours,
 And catch the light that lures,

The inspiration that impels,
The strength that dwells,
Beyond the bounds of earthly cares and fears,
Beyond this bitter woe,—
If I could only know!

Alas! what do I know?
I know your world scarce compassed yonder stone—
As little seems my own!
I know you never knew unhappiness—
Would I could mourn the less!
I know you never saw death's darker side—
The shore where we abide!
I know you never felt the nameless dread—
Ah, but if mine were fled!
I know you never heard a lover's vow—
And I'm your lover now!
I know no answer to my wail can come—
Let me be dumb!

TO HELEN.

COULD I but hope
That in the radiance of the world beyond,
Where all your virtues are revealed anew
Under intenser light and clearer sky,
I still might be admitted to your side,
Despite imperfect manhood and a life
Of errors and of promise unfulfilled—
Then might I mourn the less my wildering loss,
And revel in a happiness to come,
And gladly go.

But when I think
Of the fresh beauty of your youthful face,
Which never lost its charm through care or pain
In anxious nights or doubt-beclouded days,
Nor yielded to accumulating years,
Because illumined by a generous soul
For ever sympathetic with all good,
Each moment faithful to a holy trust—
I shrink from my wide contrast and am like
To lose all hope.

And yet I know,
When living thoughts hark back to silent years,
And all the record of my life with you

Rolls in upon the flood of memory—
The fragrance of that May day when we wed,
The new ambitions as we wrought together,
The tremulous watching for a dawn of life,
The varied visions of unfolding powers,
The sudden dashing of our dearest hopes,
Our nights of vigil and our days of grief,
Farewell to youth, and hail to genial age—
And through it all your clear abiding love,
Which smoothed my roughness, hallowed every
 thought,
And made me thus your true companion still—
I know such love, outlasting life and time,
May yet convoy me to our happier home—
 Thank God! I know.

And with it all
One other wish—nay, hope—nay, certainty—
That when you meet me on the dim confine
Where Life-that-was bids, "Now take leave of all
But those fair memories that never fade,"
While Life-that-is rolls back the noiseless gate
Of that continuing city where you dwell—
You will not come alone. Those little hands
That long ago slipped softly out of ours
Will lay their dainty fingers in my palm,
And faces three repeat their mother's smile,
As age to buoyant youth returns, and youth
 Aspires to age.

WILLIAM HAMILTON GIBSON.

(1850-1896.)

WHO Nature loves by Nature is beloved.
She makes him gentle and she keeps him fair;
By woods and waters where her treasures are
Within his hand she lays a hand ungloved.
For him no stream is stopped, no mountain moved,
No bird-song hushed, nor any branch made bare;
Useless the archer's shaft, the fowler's snare;
Nor for his feet is any pathway grooved.
So Gibson lived and wrote, and drew and dreamed,
Whose sun too early dropped adown the west,
Whose every day with purest visions teemed,
That gave another's day a fresher zest;
And like dear Nature's self he often seemed
To draw no lines 'twixt labor, play, and rest.

A SOLDIER POET

(Michael O'Connor, 1837-1862.)

WHERE swell the songs thou shouldst have
sung

By peaceful rivers yet to flow?

Where bloom the smiles thy ready tongue

Would call to lips that loved thee so?

On what far shore of being tossed

Dost thou resume the genial stave,

And strike again the lyre we lost

By Rappahannock's troubled wave?

If that new world hath hill and stream,

And breezy bank, and quiet dell,

If forests murmur, waters gleam,

And wayside flowers their story tell,

Thy hand ere this has plucked the reed

That wavered by the wooded shore,

Its prisoned soul thy fingers freed,

To float melodious evermore.

So seems it to my musing mood,

So runs it in my surer thought,

That much of beauty, more of good,

For thee the rounded years have wrought;

That life will live, however blown

Like vapor on the summer air;

That power perpetuates its own;

That silence here is music there.

A WOMAN OF THE WAR.

(Margaret Augusta Peterson, 1841-1864.)

THROUGH the sombre arch of that gateway
tower

Where my humblest townsman rides at last,
You may spy the bells of a nodding flower,
On a double mound that is thickly grassed.

And between the spring and the summer-time,
Or ever the lilac's bloom is shed,
When they come with banners and wreaths and
rhyme,

To deck the tombs of the nation's dead,

They find there a little flag in the grass,
And fling a handful of roses down,
And pause a moment before they pass
To the Captain's grave with the gilded crown.

But if perchance they seek to recall
What name, what deeds, these honors declare,
They cannot tell, they are silent all
As the noiseless harebell nodding there.

She was tall, with an almost manly grace,
And young, with strange wisdom for one so
young,
And fair, with more than a woman's face;
With dark, deep eyes, and a mirthful tongue.

The poor and the fatherless knew her smile;
The friend in sorrow had seen her tears;
She had studied the ways of the rough world's guile,
And read the romance of historic years.

What she might have been in these times of ours,
At once it is easy and hard to guess;
For always a riddle are half-used powers,
And always a power is lovingness.

But her fortunes fell upon evil days—
If days are evil when evil dies—
And she was not one who could stand at gaze
Where the hopes of humanity fall and rise.

Nor could she dance to the viol's tune,
When the drum was throbbing throughout the
land,
Or dream in the light of the summer moon,
While Treason was clenching his mailed hand.

Through the long gray hospital's corridor
She journeyed many a mournful league,
And her light foot fell on the oaken floor
As if it never could know fatigue.

She stood by the good old surgeon's side,
And the sufferers smiled as they saw her stand;
She wrote, and the mothers marveled and cried
At their darling soldiers' feminine hand.

She was last in the ward when the lights burned low
And Sleep called a truce to his foeman Pain;
At the midnight cry she was first to go,
To bind up the bleeding wound again.

For sometimes the wreck of a man would rise,
Weird and gaunt in the watch-lamp's gleam,
And tear away bandage and splints and ties,
Fighting the battle all o'er in his dream.

No wonder the youngest surgeon felt
A charm in the presence of that brave soul,
Through weary weeks, as she nightly knelt
With the letter from home or the doctor's dole.

He heard her called, and he heard her blessed,
With many a patriot's parting breath;
And ere his soul to itself confessed,
Love leaped to life in those vigils of death.

"O, fly to your home!" came a whisper dread,
"For now the pestilence walks by night."
"The greater the need of me here," she said,
And bared her arm for the lancet's bite.

Was there death, green death, in the atmosphere?
Was the bright steel poisoned? Who can tell?
Her wondering friends beside the bier
Were assured by the clergyman all was well.

Well—and alas that it should be so!

When a nation's debt reaches reckoning-day—
Well for it to be able, but woe
To the generation that's called to pay!

Forth from the long gray hospital came
Every boy in blue who could walk the floor;
The sick and the wounded, the blind and lame,
Formed two long files from her father's door.

There was grief in many a manly breast,
While men's tears fell as the coffin passed;
And thus she went to the world of rest,
Martial and maidenly unto the last.

And that youngest surgeon, was he to blame?—
He held the lancet—Heaven only knows.
No matter; his heart broke all the same,
And he laid him down and never arose.

So Death received, in his greedy hand,
Two precious coins of the awful price
That purchased freedom for this dear land—
For master and bondman—yea, bought it twice.

Such fates too often such women are for!
God grant the Republic a large increase,
To match the heroes in time of war,
And mother the children in time of peace.

CUSHING.

(October 27, 1864.)

HE wrought a deed of darkness that shines in
light eternal.

His mission was destruction, but he builded for
all time.

Behooves his grateful countrymen to keep such
memories vernal,

When they trace the lines of history or build the
poet's rhyme.

'Twas the fourth and final season of that struggle
for existence

When the great Republic trembled from circum-
ference to core;

When a million men were battling, o'er a thousand
miles of distance,

And six hundred war-ships watching a thousand
leagues of shore;

When the schoolhouse was a barrack, and the flag
flew from the steeple; *

When women paced the hospital, and old men
ran the mill;

When every throb was quickened in the pulses of the
people,
While the sentries walked in silence and the guns
were never still.

'Twas the summer of the Wilderness, that dark and
bloody thicket—

The summer of Cold Harbor, of Atlanta, of Mo-
bile—

When the shadows on the hearthstone seemed to
hush the very cricket,
And Doubt, with somber presence, sat at every
morning meal.

At the little town of Plymouth sixteen hundred
under Wessells

Blocked the port and held the post against nine
thousand under Hoke—

Held it with their hasty earthworks and their little
wooden vessels,

Till the iron monster Albemarle came down the
Roanoke.

All day long, in heavy columns, the determined foe
assaulted;

All day long the stout defenders held the lines
before the town.

Though their dead were piled in windrows, yet the
rebels never halted,

Till they reached the very muzzles of the guns
that struck them down.

But the Albemarle, the monster with her prow beneath the water,
And her sloping sides of iron, and two-hundred-pounder balls,
Came steaming down the river, like a dragon to the slaughter,
To enfilade the land-works and destroy the wooden walls.

Down she came with steady purpose, of the shot and shell unheeding—
Bows on, she struck the Southfield, and the Southfield was a wreck;
Drove adrift the small Miami, with her crew all torn and bleeding,
And her brave commander Flusser lying dead upon the deck.

And the other craft were scattered, and her guns were turned on Plymouth,
Where Wessells' sixteen hundred thus far unmoved had stood.
"Lo, the foe in front we baffle, but behind comes up Behemoth,
And our little fleet has perished, and we are but flesh and blood."

Here the white flag of surrender—there the black flag of no quarter
For a hundred Carolinians who were loyal men and true,

With the oft-repeated savagery of vengeful death or
torture

For three hundred dusky freedmen who had
donned the army blue.

Thus fell Plymouth, and the Albemarle returned
unto her mooring,

And the British blockade-runner sailed once more
the Roanoke—

Carried rifles, carried powder, carried bullets death-
insuring,—

Until young Lieutenant Cushing to his ship's com-
mander spoke:

“Be it mine to meet the monster, with a score of
trusty sailors,

In the blackness of the midnight, with torpedo,
launch, and fall!

River bed or wreath of glory, grim stockade with
sullen jailers,

Wounds or blindness, fail or triumph, life or
death, I risk it all!

“Only give me first a furlough, that my sisters and
my mother

I may visit once again, lest I shall see them never
more.”

In his Northern home those dear ones hide the pang
they can not smother,

When he hastens back to duty on the Carolina
shore.

In a moonless, cloudy midnight a small launch
crept up the river—

On her bowsprit a torpedo, in her hold a score
of men.

Every tongue was tied to silence, every nerve was
on the quiver,

Till the great hulk loomed above them, fast asleep
within her den.

Round about her for a rampart, slowly rising, creak-
ing, falling,

Swayed a raft of heavy logging, with the motion
of the tide.

Cushing's little craft backed water, to the farther
shore close hauling,

Then with full steam darted forward, climbed the
logs, and reached her side.

“Who goes there!” a flash of lightning leaping out
from that dark cover,

And a mammoth shot went crashing through the
gallant little boat.

But Cushing pulled his lanyard, and the Albemarle
heeled over,

Sorely wounded, slowly sinking, never more to
fight or float.

Eighteen men were killed or captured. One with
Cushing swam the river,

While the bullets pelted round them like the drops
of coming rain—

Swam the river, waded marshes, found a skiff in
leafy cover,
And when morning light was breaking reached the
friendly fleet again.

Thus he wrought the deed of darkness that shines
in light eternal!

Thus his errand was destruction, when he builded
for all time!

And we, his grateful countrymen, must keep such
memories vernal,

On History's heroic page and in the household
rhyme.

TO ELWELL STEPHEN OTIS.

(At a dinner of the Society of the Genesee.)

FORTY years have told their story since a conflict grim and fearful

Opened with its earliest scenes in this Republic of the West;

And the farmer and the merchant, and the wife and mother tearful,

The mechanic, and the scholar, gave the country of their best.

Elwell Otis,

Your black coat is

Turning rather blue—

And your trousers too,

All from cap to shoe—

Very blue, dark blue—

Turning army blue.

On the edge of dubious battle, where the nation's fate is pending,

See the boys from our own valley scaling Little Round Top's height!

See them drag up Hazlett's cannon, every nerve and muscle bending,

Reach the crest, repel the Texans, hold the key-point of the fight!

Captain Otis,

Please take notice

That of you,

And your comrades clad in blue,

History says, with honor due,

That you turned the bloody balance

At Rebellion's Waterloo.

Lo, the Red Man, where he loiters at the edges of
the prairies

Once a feeding-ground of bison and an empire all
his own—

Victim both of trader's greed and of benevolent
vagaries,

In our Age of Steel a sorry remnant of the Age
of Stone.

Colonel Otis,

News afloat is,

And I do

Think it true,

That none so well as you,

Knows—what—to—do.

With Piegan, Crow and Sioux.

Where Magellan got his death-wound, and where
Dewey got his glory,

Lies an island realm once slumbering through the
idle tropic day;

There have Otis, Merritt, Lawton, writ a new and
better story,

And the poets shall no longer sneer at cycles of
Cathay.

General Otis,

Our unanimous vote is,

We would hear from you

Of remarks a few—

Be they old or new,

Fanciful or true—

Would have a speech from you.

THE LAND OF NODDY.

A Lullaby.

PUT away the bauble and the bib!
Smooth out the pillow in the crib!
Softly on the down
Lay the baby's crown,
Warm around its feet
Tuck the little sheet,—
Snug as a pea in a pod!
With a yawn and a gape,
And a dreamy little nap,
We will go, we will go,
To the Landy-andy-pandy
Of Noddy-oddy-poddy,
To the Landy-andy-pand
Of Noddy-pod.

There in the Shadow-Maker's tent,
After the twilight's soft descent,
We'll lie down to dreams
Of milk in flowing streams;
And the Shadow-Maker's baby
Will lie down with us, may be,
On the soft mossy pillow of the sod.

In a drowse and a doze,
All asleep from head to toes,
We will lie, we will lie,
In the Landy-andy-pandy,
Of Noddy-oddy-poddy,
In the Landy-andy-pand
Of Noddy-pod.

Then when the morning breaks,
Then when the robin wakes,
We'll leave the drowsy dreams,
And the twinkling starry gleams,
We'll leave the little tent,
And the wonders in it pent,
To return to our own native sod.
With a hop and a skip,
And a jump and a flip,
We will come, we will come,
From the Landy-andy-pandy
Of Noddy-oddy-poddy,
From the Landy-andy-pand
Of Noddy-pod.

A SILLY DREAM.

(Written for a very young friend.)

I DREAMED I was a paper kite, quite large and strong and new;
And a barefoot boy with yellow hair said he wondered how she flew.
He got a monstrous ball of twine—'twould hold a baby whale;
He stole his mother's carpet-rags, and made a splendid tail.
He then took off his brown straw hat, and let his hair fly free,
To learn which way the breezes blew—they blew right out to sea.
He called another boy to "hoist," with measured step and slow;
And when he heard the rustling leaves, he said "Now let her go!"
Away I soared into the sky, above the shining sands;
The string ran out so rapidly it almost burned his hands.
He called the other boy to help, and then he called his dog;
I lifted them from off their feet, and dragged them through a bog.
I jerked them o'er a six-rail fence, and round a chestnut grove,

Where, seizing on the pendent boughs, to stop they
vainly strove.

I raced them through a village street, where all ran
out to see,

And some did wildly shout, "Stop thief!" and some
cried, "Let 'em be!"

A great mass meeting haply lay within their line
of flight;

They ploughed a lane right through the crowd, and
passed on out of sight.

O'er many a field, through many a stream, they
went with flying shoon;

They could not stop for I was bound to sail be-
yond the moon.

Its never-turning farther side I long had wished to
scan,

And enter that mysterious realm unknown to mortal
man.

I passed the disk, I gazed full-eyed upon the won-
drous view,

But brought the string against the edge, which
quickly burned it through,

Then down I fell, down, ever down, with helpless,
wobbling motion,

But woke and found it wasn't true, just as I touched
the ocean.

Tell what I saw? Alas! I lost my note-book in
the sea.

Now, wasn't that a silly dream, for a great big
boy like me?

A RHYME OF THE RAIN.

LIKE a blotch upon a beauty
Comes a cloud across the sky;
Like an unrelenting duty
Fall the raindrops from on high.
Like death upon a holiday,
Like sleigh-ride upon wheels,
Like jilting on a jolly day,
Like medicine at meals,
Sets in a storm preposterous,
Of every plan the bane:
Now sullen and now boisterous,
Malicious, mean, or roisterous,
But always moist and moisture-ous,
Forever on the gain,
And never on the wane,
Bringing sudden consternation,
And a long-drawn botheration,
To the men upon the house-top, and the cattle in
the plain.
How it pours, pours, pours,
In a never-ending sheet!
How it drives beneath the doors!
How it soaks the passer's feet!

How it rattles on the shutter!

How it rumples up the lawn!

How 'twill sigh, and moan, and mutter,

From darkness until dawn!—

Making human life a burden,

Making joy a flimsy wile,

Making bondage seem a guerdon

In the rainless fields of Egypt, by the clever river
Nile.

Yet how pleasantly the rain,

With its delicate refrain,

May sing away the sultriness of summer day or
night!

Set the drooping grass a-springing,

And the robin's throat a-ringing,

Fill the meadow-lands with verdure, and the hills
with glistening light!

Or in April, fickle-hearted,

Ere the chill has quite departed,

That the frosts, and the snows, and the howling
winds have brought,

When all the signs of gladness

Take a sombre tinge of sadness,

For days and deeds that come no more, and dreams
that fell to nought!

Then, in half unwelcome leisure

'Tis a sort of solemn pleasure

To sit beside the ingle,

Or to lie beneath the shingle,

And listen to the patter of the rain, rain, rain,

To the drip, drip, drip,
And the patter, patter, patter,
On the roof, and the shutter, and the pane.

But whether night or day-time,
In harvest-time or play-time,
And whether pour or patter,
The early rain or latter
Reigns over human purpose, and plays with human
fears—
Sets mighty armies shouting,
Sends little Cupid pouting,
Turns trusting into doubting,
And triumph into tears.

Oh sadly I remember
One treacherous September,
When the autumn equinoctial came a week or more
too soon.
I had started with a cousin
For the church, among a dozen
Maids and matrons who were airing
The fall styles, and gayly wearing
The very newest, sweetest thing in bonnets 'neath
the Moon.
And midway of the journey,
Like a thousand knights in tourney,
The leveled lances of the rain drove furious at our
breast;
And the fall styles fell and wilted,

On the dames so proudly kilted,
And by sudden transformation worse than worst
became the best.

Though I now am sere and yellow,
I was then a valiant fellow,
And esteemed it more a joy to serve the ladies than
to live.

Imagine, then, my feelings,
'Mid the shrinkings and the squealings,
When my water-proof umbrella proved a sieve, sieve,
sieve!

When my shiny new umbrella proved a sieve!
What a sorry lot of mortals
Sat within the sacred portals,
In their mermaid millinery looking sad, sad, sad!
Nothing dry except the sermon,
Which discoursed on dews of Hermon
And the streams that, saith the Scripture, do make
glad, glad, glad!

So the preacher praised the waters
To those mothers, wives, and daughters,
Every dripping, draggled one of whom was mad,
mad, mad!

And my bright and handsome cousin—
Sweetest girl among the dozen,
Or among a dozen dozen you might meet along the
way,

Then a hopeful, sprightly maiden,
Full of fancies laughter-laden,
Dates the ruin of her chances from that rainy Sab-
bath day.

She had spent her last round dollar
For the bonnet, gloves, and collar
That should have proved effective on the smart
 young pulpiteer;

But he rode home in the carriage
Of her rival, and their marriage
Was solemnized (my cousin's word) in less than
 half a year.

But gladly I remember
One crimson-hued September,
When we strayed along the hedges and within the
 gorgeous wold;

A merry autumn party
Of men and maidens hearty,
Rejoicing in the foliage of scarlet and of gold.

We saw in lessening distance
The fair things of existence;
And ere we thought of turning,
Or heeded sign of warning,
We heard upon the fallen leaves the footsteps of the
 rain.

Away went rules conventional!
And I, with haste intentional,
Just clapped my good old broad-brim on the head of
 Annie Trayne.

That extemporized umbrella
Threw cold water on a fellow
Who was courting, in a careless kind of way, Miss
 Annie Trayne;
While it made me quite a gallant,

And a fine young man of talent,
In the eyes and estimation of the beautiful Annie
Trayne.

In the dreamy summer haze
Of my far-off boyish days,
I had chased the luring butterfly across the grassy
plain,

But I never threw my hat
O'er a prize so fair as that
When it sheltered, caught, and gave me the lovely
Annie Trayne.

And I've blessed that gentle rain
Again and yet again,
For the flowers it set blooming in my life:
For the crimson and the gold
That adorn the little fold
Where I find an autumn shelter with my wife.

WAYSIDE MUSINGS.

A DOZEN steps down to the highway,
At the turn of a country lane,
Where an elm tree's pendulous branches
 Attempter the sun and the rain,
I perch on a mossy fence-rail,
 Like a gull on a drifting mast,
To dream of the day that is passing,
 As other men dream of the past.

White clouds, like a bridal procession,
 Are trailing up heaven's blue aisles,
With movements suggestive of sadness,
 And loitering remnants of smiles.
On the slope of the woodside meadow
 The shadows turn with the sun,
And there comes a perpetual murmur
 From the gravelly bed of the run.

Afar on the bluff's brown forehead
 Are clustered the homes of thrift;
On the intervale, ripe for the sickle,
 The harvests their billows lift.
I have eaten their bread and their honey,
 But to-day, for an hour, I scorn
The bees in the upland clover,
 The reapers of lowland corn.

I will sit here a monarch like Adam,
Creation's procession to scan,
While bird and beast pass by me,
And that beast of burden, Man.
They are all of the race of the shadow;
They fade like a wavelet's gleam;
But I for the moment seem real—
I with my mid-day dream.

What creature is that in the meadow,
Parting the grass and the weeds
With a long and slender furrow,
Like a water-snake in the reeds?
Aha! it is five young truants,
Running from yonder school,
To wander at will in the woodland,
Or sport in the shadowy pool.

I am with you, my lads, for the frolic;
Let us never grow up into men!—
With you all day—but to-morrow,
Ah! you must excuse me then.
For I know your beldame mistress,
The bane of ingenuous youth,
And have felt the bamboo ferule
That bites like a serpent's tooth.

Can this be the last Paris fashion—
The gentleman just passing by—
One leg of his trousers bright scarlet,
And the other of indigo dye?

He's thrown away hat, gloves, and neck-cloth,
His arms to the elbows are bare,
And, intent on the acme of coolness,
He's not wearing very much hair.

What a gay and a glorious creature
Is Man when he dares to be free,
When he casts off conventional trammels—
Like that one out there, or like me.
Perhaps he's a poet. O brother!—
But the fellow breaks into a run,
As over the brow of yon hillock
The jailer appears with a gun.

With a click, and a thud, and a rustle,
As hoofs fall on gravel or clay,
Rides a horsewoman up at a canter,
And down by the woodland away.
Superbly she sits in the saddle,
Enjoying the breeze she imparts,
With her skirt like a black flag behind her
The dear little pirate of hearts!

Two legs, and a walking-stick twirling,
A light Derby hat, a moustache—
There carry the hopes that are human,
The blessings of Cupid and cash.
Two eyes of the hue of the raven,
Two gloves of the shade of the dress,
With a parasol slant on the shoulder—
These carry his joy or distress.

I can see by the faltering footsteps,
By the parasol's pondering whirl,
That something the man has just uttered
Has fluttered the heart of the girl.
O lover, I earnestly wish you
The answer you yearn for to-day;
May the time never come when in secret
You would that her Yea had been Nay.

Is there aught looks so neat as a nurse-girl,
In pinafore, ribbons, and cap?
Is there aught that's so sweet as a baby
When taking his midday nap?
One hand on the perambulator,
While one holds an open book,
She trundles along the highway,
And crosses the bridge o'er the brook.

O latest Arcadian dreamer,
What magical carpet is this?
O cherub! O chariot! O charmer!
O paper-and-calico bliss!
Enjoy while you may, and be happy;
For the moment the hero shall make
The proposal or clench with the villain,
Believe me, that cherub will wake.

It comes with a rumble of thunder,
It goes with a roll and a flash,
The circus with forty red wagons,
To music of laughter and lash.

Ah there was my boyhood ambition,
A dream worth a hundred of these—
To ride in the sawdust arena,
Or swing on the flying trapeze.

But I saw them one stormy midnight,
When a whirlwind had shattered their cope,
All patching the rotten canvas,
And splicing the broken rope,
While the rain, like a gallery's plaudits,
Pelted master, musician, and clown,
And the Queen of Equestrian Artists,
And the Fat Woman's lilac gown.

What is youth, but a season of dodging?
Or strength, if a stronger pursues?
Or beauty without its admirers?
Or glory, but yesterday's news?
Then let me be sometimes an idler,
Or poet—synonymous terms—
Like a butterfly just graduated
At the head of his class, the worms.

But let me descend from the fence-rail,
And hurry away, as I must,
Ere the cloud that is raised by the circus
Has made me a worm of the dust—
To return on some casual morrow,
For a dream that is never outclassed,
When I ponder a day that is passing
As other men muse on the past.

THE ROLLING WORLD

(Watch-night Song of the Authors Club.)

OH, the rolling world, it rolls away—
Rolls and hums—rolls and hums!
And as it rolls, it scatters on the way
Pills and plums—pills and plums!
Oh, what a rolling world!
Here's a pill for me and a plum for you;
And the one is green and the other is blue;
Oh, what a rolling world!
R-o-o-s-t high! S-i-n-g low!
Never mind the rolling world!

Oh, the rolling world, it rolls away—
Rolls and rhymes—rolls and rhymes!
And for the song there's a bill to pay—
Dollars and dimes—dollars and dimes!
Oh, what a rolling world!
Here's a dime for me and a dollar for you,
And more on the bush where the last ones grew;
Oh, what a rolling world!
R-o-o-s-t high! S-i-n-g low!
Never mind the rolling world!

Oh, the rolling world, it rolls away—
Rolls and whirls—rolls and whirls!
Rolling up lumps of moistened clay
Into boys and girls—boys and girls!

Oh, what a rolling world!
 Here's a son for me and a daughter for you,
 And we'll change them about, if that won't do!

Oh, what a rolling world!
 R-o-o-s-t high! S-i-n-g low!
 Never mind the rolling world!

Oh, the rolling world, it rolls away—
 Rolls and sings—rolls and sings!
 And as it rolls, it seems to say:

“Get up, little poets, and try your wings!”

Oh, what a rolling world!
 Here's a rhyme for me and a verse for you,
 And the capital letter that marks them true

All over the rolling world!
 R-o-o-s-t high! S-i-n-g low!
 Never mind the rolling world!

Oh, the rolling world, it rolls away—
 Steady and true—steady and true!
 And the reason is, the wise men say,

It has nothing else to do—nothing else to do!

Oh, what a rolling world!
 Here's a hint for me and a moral for you—
 How steady we shall be when we've nothing to do

But roll with the rolling world!
 R-o-o-s-t high! Sing low!
 Hurrah for the rolling world!

AN ANALYTICAL SONG.

(Nonsense Night at the Quill Club.)

WHAT'S a quill but a feather
And a barrel put together—
The barrel full of wisdom, and the feather full of
wind?

Take your penknife from your pocket,
Give a cut or two andnock it,
And the wisdom flows out freely and the wit is
unconfined.

Chorus—Are you barrel?—are you feather?
Come, shorten up your tether,
While we gather at the table of the Quill, Quill,
Quill!
When there's wit and wisdom going,
If your own is overflowing,
Never mind it, do not bind it, let it spill, spill, spill!

That's the very thing we're here for,
And the Quill is what we cheer for
When we have the jolly meeting at the winter sea-
son's end—

When we've done with sober reason,
And when common sense is treason,
And we try to make an idiot of our most exalted
friend.

Chorus—Are you barrels? are you feathers?
Come, shorten all your tethers,
And brighten up the banquet of the Quill, Quill,
Quill!
If you have a jest, now fling it!
If you know a song, now sing it—
Sing it loud, and sing it louder, with a will, will, will!

AN INDIAN LOVE-SONG.

FROM his ambush in thy shadowy eyes, Love
 sped a shaft at mine;
'Twas feathered with a shining tress, and barbed
 with a smile divine.
My heart is all a-quiver; but hear me while I sing—
O, let me be thy beau, and I will never snap the
 string!

Then clad in noiseless moccasins the feet of the
 years shall fall;
For I will cherish thee, my love, till Time shall
 scalp us all.

Not with the glittering wampum have I come thy
 smiles to woo;
But to offer a cabin passage down life's river in my
 canoe;
And to beguile the voyage, if thou wilt come aboard,
Till sunset fire the waters the fire-water shall be
 poured,

While clad in softest moccasins the feet of the
 years shall fall;
And I will cherish thee, my love, till Time shall
 scalp us all.

My pipe of peace thy frosty scorn has shattered,
stem and bowl;
But a thousand thongs from thy dear hide are
knotted round my soul.
Safe from the swoop of tomahawk my dove shall
ever be;
And if Famine stare us in the face, I'll jerk my
heart for thee.

So, clad in noiseless moccasins the feet of the
years shall fall;
And I will cherish thee, my love, till Time shall
scalp us all.

NINETY-NINE IN THE SHADE.

- O for a lodge in a garden of cucumbers!
O for an iceberg or two at control!
O for a vale that at mid-day the dew cumbers!
O for a pleasure-trip up to the pole!
- O for a little one-story thermometer,
With nothing but zeroes all ranged in a row!
O for a big double-barreled hygrometer,
To measure the moisture that rolls from my brow!
- O that this cold world were twenty times colder!
(That's irony red hot, it seemeth to me.)
O for a turn of its dreaded cold shoulder!
O what a comfort an ague would be!
- O for a grotto frost-lined and rill-riven,
Scooped in the rock under cataract vast!
O for a winter of discontent even!
O for wet blankets judiciously cast!
- O for a soda-fount spouting up boldly
From every hot lamp-post against the hot sky!
O for proud maiden to look on me coldly,
Freezing my soul with a glance of her eye!
- Then O for a draught from a cup of cold pizen!
And O for a through ticket, *via* Coldegrave,
To the baths of the Styx, where a thick shadow lies
on
And deepens the chill of its dark-running wave!

ZERO IN THE SUN.

AS rail-tracks shorten in the cold,
Obedient to Nature's law,
So shrinks the man of iron mould,
When these rude winds their weapons draw—
These "eager airs" of icy breath,
Whose myriad poniards, piercing, chilling,
Seem dealing back a vengeful death,
For cuts of that proverbial shilling.

The fuel-vendors thank their stars
That Lehigh higher yet must go;
And babies cuddle close to Mars,
Because the Mercury is low;
And Sunday at the twilight hour,
Once lit by tinder flames of Venus,
My flame bewails, with visage sour,
The coldness that has come between us.

I'd fly to her, I'd break the ice
By axing like an honest man;
But breaking ice is not so nice
When it means, Fanny, be my Fan!
When ghosts of frozen smiles benumb
The loving lips that shiver bluely;
And when the cool reply may come:
"Ask pa,"—and pa is Mr. Cooley.

I'll don my double-worsted hose;
I'll pile the grate with embers bright;
I'll read my Burns, and toast my toes,
And sing the songs that skalds indite;
Or hie me to some fur-rin shore—
Fire Island, or a land of geysers,
Or Hottentots, or hellebore—
To check my chattering incisors;

Drink ginger-tea as pudding thick,
Compounded in a red-hot can,
Stirred with a fire-wood toddy-stick,
And ladled with a warming-pan,—
Unless some friendly foe, instead,
Will hold me over Etna's crater,
Heap coals of fire upon my head,
And drop me like a hot potater.

GOLDEN BUTTER.

(Written for the Pot-Luck Club.)

WHEN bread goes down and wit goes round,
And every palate's in a flutter,
The gastric muse is surely bound
To sing the praise of golden butter.

Not only in the winter morn,
When buckwheat pancakes smoke and splutter,
Nor on autumnal ears of corn
That bathe themselves in golden butter,

But slipping on through History's page,
Where other unctions clog and clutter,
And dripping down from age to age,
Behold the strains of golden butter!

When Jason left the shores of Greece,
Commander of the Argo cutter,
He went to find the famous fleece
That Phrixus took from golden butter.

When miners gathered at the dam
Above the mill of John A. Sutter,
He found his old hydraulic ram
Transformed into a golden butter.

And at our great Centennial rout
A clever sculptress deftly cut her
Clear way to fame by carving out
A graceful girl in golden butter.

Let oleo and other shams
Go back into their native gutter,
While dairy-maids as high-tide clams
Are happy with their golden butter.

With biscuit light and tea-pot bright,
The storms without may roar or mutter,
While we sit calm at candlelight,
And revel in the golden butter.

In peaceful days or days of strife,
When bane or bliss is too, too utter,
We'll grease the whirling wheels of life
With pretty pats of golden butter.

In days of rain or days of drouth,
With flowing style or futile stutter,
As melts it not within our mouth,
We'll sing the praise of golden butter.

A POEM IN TWO GAUGES.

(The Poet, sojourning on an Island in the Atlantic, receiveth an Order for a Poem. But the careless Editor neglecteth to tell him the Width of the Column. Therefore the Poet, anxious to Please, writeth his poem Twice over, in different gauges—which incidentally illustrateth the Elasticity of Language.)

NARROW GAUGE.

SEE the fog!
Hear the dog!
Feel the wind,
How unkind-
Ly it blows
The wild rose.
And the waves,
How they roar
In the caves
By the shore.
The poor bird
Never heard
Such a strife
In his life.
And the fish
In the dish
Scarcely wish
They were free
To go back
To the black,
Angry sea.

BROAD GAUGE.

BEHOLD how Nature's mantle wraps this isle
In fold on fold of gray and fleecy mist!
Hark how the canine creature doth beguile
The weary hours, and never will desist!
With cruel power the blast remorseless blows,
And fairest things before its fury quail;
It tears the petals of the wild brier rose,
And rudely scatters them about the vale.
Through the dim corridors of Neptune's caves
That underlie the crags along the shore,
With step unsteady go the wandering waves,
And answer back to one another's roar.
On yonder tree the poor affrighted bird
Cowers, forgetful of his gushing song;
Such direful tumult he has never heard
In any season of his whole life long.
How very nice these browned and basted fish
Are, with the buttered muffins and the tea!
Ah, quiet rogues, I know you do not wish
Yourselves again in that tempestuous sea!

THE LAST COAL.

(With these words the Chairman introduced the Professor, who lectured on Coal.)

WHEN all the coal is burned,
And every cinder sifted;
When autumn leaves have turned,
And winter snows are drifted;
When every wheel is still
That steam has kept in motion,
And only sails and oars
Traverse the rolling ocean;
When gravity alone
Can make the rail-cars rush,
And on the upward grades
We all get out and push;
When smith no more can strike
The iron while it gloweth;
Nor puddler plant his pike
Where molten metal floweth;
Nor bellman find a use
For ringing midnight rousers;
Nor any tailor's goose
Can crease our Sunday trousers;

When all we eat is raw,
And all we drink is freezing;
When stiff is every jaw,
And every nostril sneezing;
When papers, bills, and books
Are on a hand-press printed;
When with the ancient punch
Our current coins are minted;
When fire-insurance men
To find a risk are troubled;
When fans are thrown away,
And furs and flannels doubled;
When some aërial trust
Has all the sunshine bottled,
And pipe-lines take the heat
From each volcano throttled;
When in the Yellowstone
We hear the caterer holler:
"Our hot spring cooks your egg,
And charges but a dollar!"
When Corydon at eight
His Phyllis has good-nighted,
Because the hour is late
In streets no longer lighted;
When all our cake is dough,
And prematurely frosted,
Because the woodpile's low
And coal mines are exhausted—
If we shall live that day to see,
What *will* become of you and me?

SALVAGE.

(Passages from occasional poems.)

THE STAGE RIDE.

THE sandy highway, fringed with green,
By sparkling water-courses led
Along some ancient river's bed,
With wealth of intervale between,
Winds upward toward the purple range,
As journeys one in morning dream,
And bridges many a murmuring stream,
And revels in continual change.
Just over there the mountains lie,
The quiet brood of quiet sky;
Just over there their shadow falls.
We wind through many a narrow dell,
And vale whose bounds more gently swell,
Right onward toward the rocky walls;
And still through this delusive air
Their rugged sides above us bend
And seem to mark our journey's end,
Just over there, just over there.
But lo! the clouds, in tatters dressed,
Come clambering o'er the mountain crest,
And tumbling here, or settling there,
Now buoyed a while in denser air,
Now clinging to some rocky ledge,
In sunlight dark, in shadow pale,

Creep slowly down as if to wage
An Indian warfare on the vale.
Our leaders snuff the coming shower,
And put forth more determined power:
Our wheels more eager crunch the sand,
We grasp the rail with firmer hand,
Hold hats against the stiffening breeze,
More nimbly dodge the drooping trees,
Fall helpless in the ambushed jolts,
Dream timidly of breaking bolts,
Suspend a while the anxious breath
Where one mis-step might hurl to death,
Dash at the low hill's rocky face,
Spin like a peg-top round its base,
Go thundering through the heaving bridge,
And roll along the causeway's ridge,—
Till horses, driver, men, and freight
Seem but an animated whole,
With one quick impulse all elate,
The thrill of one impassioned soul.

NEW AND OLD.

NEW lamps for old!—and shall we have more
light

On any mystery of our mortal days,
Since Eighty-five has set in endless night,
And Eighty-six has risen on our gaze
With brighter rays?

New hopes for old desires, forgotten now,
That last year often broke our nightly rest,

Tried the whole heart, and taxed the furrowed brow,
 And sent the fancy nor'-by-south-by-west,
 On foolish quest!

New blossoms for dead fruit, and sweets in hive!
 This sturdy branch of Time's perennial tree,
 Which counts its harvests up to eighty-five,
 Must bear of golden pippins two or three
 For you and me.

New loves for hatreds dead! Fresh faith and strong,
 For worn-out grudges and resentments old,
 For all the brood of prejudice and wrong,
 The petty spites and malice manifold
 That now are cold.

New blood for watery Age! New brawn for Youth!
 Fresh heaps of fuel for Ambition's fires!
 New explorations in the realms of Truth,
 New songs of genius from unheard-of lyres
 And silent choirs!

New friends, perhaps—but old ones none the less!
 New passions, possibly; for who can tell
 What shape the passing cloud will take, or guess
 What current bears him, or what tempest swell
 Bodes ill or well!

YOUTH AND VERSE.

VERSE is the gift of youth. The song-birds
 cease
 Their warblings when the springtime blossoms
 fall!

The summers strengthen and the fruits increase
To a more sober music; and the tall
Ripe grain that tosses like a pluméd pall
Nods to funereal measures, till at last
The sickle undermines the golden wall,
The dream of glory fades into the past,
And through the stubble cries the shrill autumnal
blast.

Youth may be pardoned for its lack of thought,
Its careless rhymes and repetitious song;
It can but know the little that is taught,
It can but guess at life—and guesses wrong.
But in the bubbling spirit it is strong,
That stirs and strives within the blood and brain,
Propels the rolling world its course along,
And drags the cautious elders in its train,
And scales the mountain height, and dares the
furious main.

GREAT AND SMALL.

OUR lives are little, but our times are great.
We come, we see, we linger, and we pass;
Weave but a single thread in web of state,
Or give the field a single spear of grass.
We are in action like a boyish class,
Where each one stumbles through his dozen lines,
And looks bewildered at the stubborn mass
Of foreign words and intricate designs,—
But lo! when all is done, through all an Iliad shines.

HAMLETS unheard-of fifty miles away
Became historic when their streets ran blood,
And gentle streams that through the meadows
play,
With rippling song that only sang of good,
Told henceforth to the overhanging wood
A tale of sorrow and unending tears,
And bore a stain that neither ebb nor flood
Can wash away through all the coming years,
Till Greed forget his crimes, and Sympathy her
fears.

Yet wisdom was not wanting to the tale,
And History wrote new marvels in her age.
She saw, one April morn, the glories pale
Of all the naval heroes on her page.
In single ship or battle-line they wage
Successful warfare; but behold at bay
Fortress and fire-raft, hulk with chain and kedge,
Gunboat and ram, all blazing in the fray,
And all by our great sailor conquered in a day.

In ancient times the spirits of the slain
Were said to fight again in upper air,
While still their comrades struggled on the plain
Or rose in ghostly ranks to join them there.
But in our western Alleghanies, where
The Chattanooga through its valley goes,
An army clambered up the mountain stair,
Plunged into clouds, and then beyond them rose,
And crossed the yellow Moon, pursuing still their
foes.

There was one Marathon in Greece of old;
There is one Waterloo in Belgium now;
And yonder, nestled in a gentle fold
Of the Blue Ridge, along a hillock's brow,
Lies a great field whereon the reverent plow
Follows the selfsame lines that once it drew;
For there three thousand patriots sealed their
vow

To be to freedom and their country true,
And made of Gettysburg a three-days' Waterloo.

There, as it should be when a people rise
In the true majesty of final law,
Was little of the tactics of the wise
Or brilliant general, neither did it draw
From accident or from opponent's flaw
The great result. No whirl of Fortune's wheel
Determined who the bitter leek should gnaw.
The brains were with the hands that held the steel,
And stubborn will prevailed against a fiery zeal.

From such, of such, for such, a great man rose,
Amid the rudeness of the wondrous West,
And carried all the burden of our woes
With gentle words and sympathetic breast,
And ever edged his wisdom with a jest,
While deepened still the lines that care had worn,
His finger on the people's pulses pressed,
Until the burden and the heat were borne,
Then vanished like a dream,—and we forever mourn,

A FAREWELL.

ONCE to these college halls I bade farewell,
 And twice returned to read a simple measure,
 To tickle fancy with the rhythmic spell
 That gives an equal glow to dross and treasure;
 And now a third attempt, by your good pleasure.
 Be this the last. And let some younger voice
 Hereafter wile away your evening's leisure
 With graceful art on themes of lighter choice,
 That sadden less the ear and more the heart rejoice.

For I have dwelt so many years afar
 From this the scene of youth's delicious days,
 And turned so often to the evening star
 That dropped on you the plummet of its rays,
 And felt the rush, the swirl, the swift amaze,
 As day chased day in ever hastening flight,—
 I could but trace again the earlier ways,
 And speak once more the feelings, true but trite,
 Of one who knows full well 'tis time to say Good
 night!

A drowsy infant when your story's done—
 A schoolboy tinkering at his broken skate—
 A youth who sees the final dance begun—
 A lover leaning o'er a garden gate—
 A maiden listening for the word of fate—
 A soldier thinking of to-morrow's fight—
 A statesman conscious of expiring date—
 A watcher doubtful of the morning light,—
 I understand them all: they hate to say Good night!

GOOD NIGHT! AND GOOD MORNING!

(Read at the close of the Alumni Dinner,
University of Rochester, June 18, 1913.)

WE said Good morning! long ago,
When skies were blue and eyes were bright.
But now the shadows longer grow,
And we perchance must say Good night!

Why not Good night?—a restful phrase,
A lullaby of youth and age,
The vesper call of toilsome days
That bids come home and take our wage.

Good night to classmates down the slope
Who've heard that call and gone before!
Good morning to the cheerful hope
That we shall meet them all once more!

Good night to errors now outgrown!
Good night to strivings all unwise!
Good morning to the daylight thrown
Through life's deceptive sophistries!

Good night to jealousies and hates
That soiled too oft our early page!
Good morning to the nobler fates
That bring us love's fair heritage!

Good night unto a troubled past
That still we would not all forget!
Good morning to a future vast
That reaches—where, we know not yet!

Good night to those who taught us here
When all around was fresh and young!—
The quick command in accents clear,
The patient heart, the silver tongue.

Here learned we many a wholesome truth.
Here many false ambitions died.
Good night to Alma Mater's youth!
Good morning to her day of pride!

EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS

One of the strongest characteristics of the genius of the volume is its versatility; his muse goes "from grave to gay, from lively to severe" almost without effort. Some of the poems sparkle with a lively wit; others express the pathos of deep and earnest feeling.—*Portland Advertiser*.

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The noble verses celebrating the invention of the telegraph have the musical boldness of Swinburne.—*Buffalo Courier*.

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