**The Poems of Henry Van Dyke eBook**

**The Poems of Henry Van Dyke by Henry van Dyke**

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

**Contents**

**Table of Contents**

|  |
| --- |
| Table of Contents |
| Section | Page |
|  |
| Start of eBook | 1 |
| SONGS OUT OF DOORS | 1 |
| NARRATIVE POEMS | 1 |
| HEARTH AND ALTAR | 1 |
| PRO PATRIA | 1 |
| IN PRAISE OF POETS | 2 |
| THE HOUSE OF RIMMON | 2 |
| APPENDIX | 2 |
| Index of First Lines | 2 |
| EARLY VERSES | 2 |
| DULCIORA | 3 |
| THREE ALPINE SONNETS | 3 |
| I | 3 |
| II | 3 |
| III | 4 |
| MATINS | 4 |
| IF ALL THE SKIES | 5 |
| WINGS OF A DOVE | 5 |
| I | 5 |
| II | 5 |
| THE FALL OF THE LEAVES | 5 |
| I | 5 |
| II | 5 |
| III | 6 |
| A SNOW-SONG | 6 |
| ROSLIN AND HAWTHORNDEN | 6 |
| SONGS OUT OF DOORS | 6 |
| WHEN TULIPS BLOOM | 6 |
| I | 6 |
| II | 7 |
| III | 7 |
| IV | 7 |
| THE WHIP-POOR-WILL | 7 |
| THE LILY OF YORROW | 8 |
| THE VEERY | 9 |
| THE SONG-SPARROW | 9 |
| THE MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT | 10 |
| A NOVEMBER DAISY | 10 |
| THE ANGLER’S REVEILLE | 11 |
| THE RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET | 12 |
| I | 12 |
| II | 12 |
| III | 12 |
| SCHOOL | 13 |
| INDIAN SUMMER | 13 |
| SPRING IN THE NORTH | 13 |
| I | 13 |
| II | 14 |
| III | 14 |
| A NOON SONG | 15 |
| LIGHT BETWEEN THE TREES | 15 |
| THE HERMIT THRUSH | 16 |
| TURN O’ THE TIDE | 16 |
| SIERRA MADRE | 17 |
| THE GRAND CANYON | 17 |
| THE HEAVENLY HILLS OF HOLLAND | 20 |
| FLOOD-TIDE OF FLOWERS | 20 |
| ODE | 20 |
| I | 20 |
| II | 21 |
| III | 21 |
| IV | 21 |
| V | 21 |
| VI | 22 |
| VII | 22 |
| NARRATIVE POEMS | 23 |
| A LEGEND ON A NEW SAYING OF JESUS | 23 |
| THE TOILING OF FELIX | 23 |
| I | 23 |
| II | 24 |
| III | 28 |
| VERA | 29 |
| I | 29 |
| II | 32 |
| III | 34 |
| ANOTHER CHANCE | 36 |
| A LEGEND OF SERVICE | 38 |
| THE WHITE BEES | 40 |
| I | 40 |
| II | 40 |
| III | 42 |
| NEW YEAR’S EVE | 43 |
| I | 43 |
| II | 43 |
| III | 44 |
| THE VAIN KING | 45 |
| THE FOOLISH FIR-TREE | 47 |
| A SEAMAN’S TALE OF THE SEA | 49 |
| THE STANDARD-BEARER | 51 |
| I | 51 |
| II | 51 |
| THE PROUD LADY | 51 |
| LYRICS OF LABOUR AND ROMANCE | 52 |
| THE THREE BEST THINGS | 53 |
| I | 53 |
| II | 53 |
| III | 53 |
| RELIANCE | 53 |
| THE CHILD IN THE GARDEN | 54 |
| THE ECHO IN THE HEART | 54 |
| LOVE IN A LOOK | 55 |
| A LOVER’S ENVY | 56 |
| THE GENTLE TRAVELLER | 57 |
| DAY AND NIGHT | 57 |
| ARRIVAL | 58 |
| THE BLACK BIRDS | 58 |
| I | 58 |
| II | 59 |
| III | 59 |
| IV | 59 |
| AN HOUR | 60 |
| LOVE’S NEARNESS | 60 |
| TWO SONGS OF HEINE | 61 |
| I | 61 |
| II | 61 |
| EIGHT ECHOES FROM THE POEMS OF AUGUSTE ANGELLIER | 61 |
| I | 61 |
| II | 61 |
| III | 62 |
| IV | 62 |
| V | 62 |
| VI | 63 |
| VII | 63 |
| VIII | 64 |
| RAPPEL D’AMOUR | 64 |
| SONGS OF HEARTH AND ALTAR | 66 |
| A SLUMBER-SONG FOR THE FISHERMAN’S CHILD | 66 |
| A MOTHER’S BIRTHDAY | 67 |
| RENDEZVOUS | 67 |
| PEACE | 68 |
| THE BARGAIN | 69 |
| I | 69 |
| II | 69 |
| BITTER-SWEET | 69 |
| TO THE MUSIC OF BEETHOVEN’S NINTH SYMPHONY | 70 |
| SONG OF A PILGRIM-SOUL | 70 |
| I | 70 |
| II | 71 |
| THREE PRAYERS FOR SLEEP AND WAKING | 72 |
| I | 72 |
| II | 72 |
| III | 72 |
| PORTRAIT AND REALITY | 72 |
| HIDE AND SEEK | 73 |
| I | 73 |
| II | 73 |
| AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN | 73 |
| THE MESSAGE | 74 |
| DULCIS MEMORIA | 74 |
| THE WINDOW | 75 |
| CHRISTMAS TEARS | 75 |
| DOROTHEA | 75 |
| EPIGRAMS, GREETINGS, AND INSCRIPTIONS | 76 |
| IN HER GARDEN OF YADDO | 76 |
| IN HER TOWER OF YADDO | 76 |
| FOR THE FRIENDS AT HURSTMONT | 76 |
| THE HEARTH | 76 |
| THE DIAL | 76 |
| FOR BAYARD AND HELEN STOCKTON | 77 |
| FOR THE CLASS OF 1904 | 77 |
| TO MARK TWAIN | 77 |
| I | 77 |
| II | 77 |
| STARS AND THE SOUL | 77 |
| TO JULIA MARLOWE | 78 |
| TO JOSEPH JEFFERSON | 78 |
| THE MOCKING-BIRD | 78 |
| PAN LEARNS MUSIC | 78 |
| THE SHEPHERD OF NYMPHS | 78 |
| I | 79 |
| II | 79 |
| III | 79 |
| IV | 79 |
| V | 79 |
| VI | 79 |
| ONE WORLD | 79 |
| THE PRISON AND THE ANGEL | 80 |
| LOVE AND LIGHT | 80 |
| FOUR THINGS | 80 |
| INSCRIPTION FOR A TOMB IN ENGLAND | 80 |
| THE TALISMAN | 80 |
| THORN AND ROSE | 80 |
| PRO PATRIA | 82 |
| AMERICA | 82 |
| THE ANCESTRAL DWELLINGS | 82 |
| HUDSON’S LAST VOYAGE | 83 |
| SEA-GULLS OF MANHATTAN | 86 |
| A BALLAD OF CLAREMONT HILL | 86 |
| URBS CORONATA | 87 |
| MERCY FOR ARMENIA | 88 |
| I | 88 |
| II | 88 |
| SICILY, DECEMBER, 1908 | 88 |
| NATIONAL MONUMENTS | 89 |
| THE MONUMENT OF FRANCIS MAKEMIE | 89 |
| THE STATUE OF SHERMAN BY ST. GAUDENS | 89 |
| THE BUILDERS | 90 |
| I | 90 |
| II | 90 |
| III | 91 |
| IV | 91 |
| V | 91 |
| VI | 91 |
| VII | 92 |
| VIII | 92 |
| IX | 93 |
| X | 94 |
| XI | 94 |
| XII | 95 |
| ODE FOR THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL | 95 |
| I | 95 |
| II | 95 |
| III | 96 |
| IV | 96 |
| V | 97 |
| VI | 97 |
| I | 97 |
| II | 99 |
| III | 100 |
| IV | 101 |
| WHO FOLLOW THE FLAG | 102 |
| HARVARD UNIVERSITY | 102 |
| I | 102 |
| II | 103 |
| III | 103 |
| IV | 104 |
| V | 104 |
| VI | 105 |
| VII | 106 |
| PEACE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC | 107 |
| THE RED FLOWER | 107 |
| A SCRAP OF PAPER | 108 |
| STAND FAST | 108 |
| LIGHTS OUT | 108 |
| REMARKS ABOUT KINGS | 109 |
| MIGHT AND RIGHT | 109 |
| THE PRICE OF PEACE | 109 |
| STORM-MUSIC | 109 |
| THE BELLS OF MALINES | 110 |
| JEANNE D’ARC RETURNS [2] | 111 |
| THE NAME OF FRANCE | 111 |
| AMERICA’S PROSPERITY | 112 |
| THE GLORY OF SHIPS | 112 |
| MARE LIBERUM | 113 |
| I | 113 |
| II | 113 |
| III | 113 |
| IV | 113 |
| THE OXFORD THRUSHES | 114 |
| HOMEWARD BOUND | 114 |
| THE WINDS OF WAR-NEWS | 115 |
| RIGHTEOUS WRATH | 115 |
| THE PEACEFUL WARRIOR | 116 |
| FROM GLORY UNTO GLORY | 116 |
| BRITAIN, FRANCE, AMERICA | 116 |
| THE RED CROSS | 117 |
| EASTER ROAD | 117 |
| AMERICA’S WELCOME HOME | 117 |
| THE SURRENDER OF THE GERMAN FLEET | 118 |
| GOLDEN STARS | 118 |
| I | 118 |
| II | 119 |
| III | 119 |
| IV | 119 |
| V | 119 |
| VI | 120 |
| VII | 120 |
| IN THE BLUE HEAVEN | 120 |
| A SHRINE IN THE PANTHEON | 121 |
| IN PRAISE OF POETS | 121 |
| MILTON | 121 |
| I | 122 |
| II | 122 |
| III | 122 |
| WORDSWORTH | 122 |
| KEATS | 123 |
| SHELLEY | 123 |
| ROBERT BROWNING | 123 |
| TENNYSON | 123 |
| VICTOR HUGO | 124 |
| LONGFELLOW | 125 |
| THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH | 126 |
| I | 126 |
| II | 126 |
| EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN | 127 |
| TO JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY | 127 |
| RICHARD WATSON GILDER | 127 |
| THE VALLEY OF VAIN VERSES | 128 |
| MUSIC | 128 |
| I | 128 |
| II | 128 |
| III | 129 |
| IV | 129 |
| V | 129 |
| VI | 130 |
| VII | 131 |
| VIII | 131 |
| IX | 133 |
| X | 133 |
| MASTER OF MUSIC | 134 |
| THE PIPES O’ PAN | 134 |
| TO A YOUNG GIRL SINGING | 134 |
| THE OLD FLUTE | 135 |
| THE FIRST BIRD O’ SPRING | 135 |
| THE HOUSE OF RIMMON | 136 |
| DRAMATIS PERSONAE | 136 |
| ACT I | 136 |
| SCENE II | 141 |
| ACT II | 148 |
| ACT III | 152 |
| SCENE I | 152 |
| SCENE II [3] | 157 |
| ACT IV | 158 |
| SCENE II | 161 |
| APPENDIX | 166 |
| THE LITTLE-NECK CLAM | 166 |
| I | 166 |
| II | 166 |
| III | 167 |
| IV | 167 |
| V | 167 |
| A FAIRY TALE | 167 |
| THE BALLAD OF THE SOLEMN ASS | 168 |
| A BALLAD OF SANTA CLAUS | 169 |
| ARS AGRICOLARIS | 170 |
| ANGLER’S FIRESIDE SONG | 172 |
| HOW SPRING COMES TO SHASTA JIM | 172 |
| A BUNCH OF TROUT-FLIES | 173 |
| INDEX OF FIRST LINES | 174 |

**Page 1**

**SONGS OUT OF DOORS**

**LATER POEMS**

  When Tulips Bloom
  The Whip-Poor-Will
  The Lily of Yorrow
  The Veery
  The Song-Sparrow
  The Maryland Yellow-Throat
  A November Daisy
  The Angler’s Reveille
  The Ruby-Crowned Kinglet
  School
  Indian Summer
  Spring in the North
  Spring in the South
  A Noon Song
  Light Between the Trees
  The Hermit Thrush
  Turn o’ the Tide
  Sierra Madre
  The Grand Canyon
  The Heavenly Hills of Holland
  Flood-Tide of Flowers
  God of the Open Air

**NARRATIVE POEMS**

  The Toiling of Felix
  Vera
  Another Chance
  A Legend of Service
  The White Bees
  New Year’s Eve
  The Vain King
  The Foolish Fir-Tree
  “Gran’ Boule”
  Heroes of the “Titanic”
  The Standard-Bearer
  The Proud Lady

**LABOUR AND ROMANCE**

  A Mile with Me
  The Three Best Things
  Reliance
  Doors of Daring
  The Child in the Garden
  Love’s Reason
  The Echo in the Heart
  “Undine”
  “Rencontre”
  Love in a Look
  My April Lady
  A Lover’s Envy
  Fire-Fly City
  The Gentle Traveller
  Nepenthe
  Day and Night
  Hesper
  Arrival
  Departure
  The Black Birds
  Without Disguise
  An Hour
  “Rappelle-Toi”
  Love’s Nearness
  Two Songs of Heine
  Eight Echoes from the Poems of Auguste Angellier
  Rappel d’Amour
  The River of Dreams

**HEARTH AND ALTAR**

  A Home Song
  “Little Boatie”
  A Mother’s Birthday
  Transformation
  Rendezvous
  Gratitude
  Peace
  Santa Christina
  The Bargain
  To the Child Jesus
  Bitter-Sweet
  Hymn of Joy
  Song of a Pilgrim-Soul
  Ode to Peace
  Three Prayers for Sleep and Waking
  Portrait and Reality
  The Wind of Sorrow
  Hide and Seek
  Autumn in the Garden
  The Message
  Dulcis Memoria
  The Window
  Christmas Tears
  Dorothea, 1888-1912

**EPIGRAMS, GREETINGS, AND INSCRIPTIONS**

  For Katrina’s Sun-Dial
  For Katrina’s Window
  For the Friends at Hurstmont
  The Sun-Dial at Morven
  The Sun-Dial at Wells College
  To Mark Twain
  Stars and the Soul
  To Julia Marlowe
  To Joseph Jefferson
  The Mocking-Bird
  The Empty Quatrain
  Pan Learns Music
  The Shepherd of Nymphs
  Echoes from the Greek Anthology
  One World
  Joy and Duty
  The Prison and the Angel
  The Way
  Love and Light
  *Facta non Verba*
  Four Things
  The Great River
  Inscription for a Tomb in England
  The Talisman
  Thorn and Rose
  “The Signs”

**PRO PATRIA**

**Page 2**

  Patria
  America
  The Ancestral Dwellings
  Hudson’s Last Voyage
  Sea-Gulls of Manhattan
  A Ballad of Claremont Hill
  Urbs Coronata
  Mercy for Armenia
  Sicily, December, 1908
  “Come Back Again, Jeanne d’Arc”
  National Monuments
  The Monument of Francis Makemie
  The Statue of Sherman by St. Gaudens
  “America for Me”
  The Builders
  Spirit of the Everlasting Boy
  Texas
  Who Follow the Flag
  Stain not the Sky
  Peace-Hymn of the Republic

**THE RED FLOWER AND GOLDEN STARS**

  The Red Flower
  A Scrap of Paper
  Stand Fast
  Lights Out
  Remarks About Kings
  Might and Right
  The Price of Peace
  Storm-Music
  The Bells of Malines
  Jeanne d’Arc Returns
  The Name of France
  America’s Prosperity
  The Glory of Ships
  Mare Liberum
  “Liberty Enlightening the World”
  The Oxford Thrushes
  Homeward Bound
  The Winds of War-News
  Righteous Wrath
  The Peaceful Warrior
  From Glory Unto Glory
  Britain, France, America
  The Red Cross
  Easter Road
  America’s Welcome Home
  The Surrender of the German Fleet
  Golden Stars
  In the Blue Heaven
  A Shrine in the Pantheon

**IN PRAISE OF POETS**

  Mother Earth
  Milton
  Wordsworth
  Keats
  Shelley
  Robert Browning
  Tennyson
  “In Memoriam”
  Victor Hugo
  Longfellow
  Thomas Bailey Aldrich
  Edmund Clarence Stedman
  To James Whitcomb Riley
  Richard Watson Gilder
  The Valley of Vain Verses

**MUSIC**

  Music
  Master of Music
  The Pipes o’ Pan
  To a Young Girl Singing
  The Old Flute
  The First Bird o’ Spring

**THE HOUSE OF RIMMON**

**A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS**

  The House of Rimmon
  Dramatis Personae

**APPENDIX**

**CARMINA FESTIVA**

  The Little-Neck Clam
  A Fairy Tale
  The Ballad of the Solemn Ass
  A Ballad of Santa Claus
  Ars Agricolaris
  Angler’s Fireside Song
  How Spring Comes to Shasta Jim
  A Bunch of Trout-Flies

**Index of First Lines**

**SONGS OUT OF DOORS**

**EARLY VERSES**

**THE AFTER-ECHO**

  How long the echoes love to play
    Around the shore of silence, as a wave
    Retreating circles down the sand!
    One after one, with sweet delay,
  The mellow sounds that cliff and island gave,
    Have lingered in the crescent bay,
    Until, by lightest breezes fanned,
  They float far off beyond the dying day
        And

**Page 3**

leave it still as death.
          But hark,—­
        Another singing breath
      Comes from the edge of dark;
        A note as clear and slow
      As falls from some enchanted bell,
      Or spirit, passing from the world below,
        That whispers back, Farewell.

        So in the heart,
      When, fading slowly down the past,
        Fond memories depart,
      And each that leaves it seems the last;
      Long after all the rest are flown,
      Returns a solitary tone,—­
      The after-echo of departed years,—­
      And touches all the soul to tears.

1871.

**DULCIORA**

  A tear that trembles for a little while
  Upon the trembling eyelid, till the world
  Wavers within its circle like a dream,
  Holds more of meaning in its narrow orb
  Than all the distant landscape that it blurs.

  A smile that hovers round a mouth beloved,
  Like the faint pulsing of the Northern Light,
  And grows in silence to an amber dawn
  Born in the sweetest depths of trustful eyes,
  Is dearer to the soul than sun or star.

  A joy that falls into the hollow heart
  From some far-lifted height of love unseen,
  Unknown, makes a more perfect melody
  Than hidden brooks that murmur in the dusk,
  Or fall athwart the cliff with wavering gleam.

  Ah, not for their own sake are earth and sky
  And the fair ministries of Nature dear,
  But as they set themselves unto the tune
  That fills our life; as light mysterious
  Flows from within and glorifies the world.

  For so a common wayside blossom, touched
  With tender thought, assumes a grace more sweet
  Than crowns the royal lily of the South;
  And so a well-remembered perfume seems
  The breath of one who breathes in Paradise.

1872.

**THREE ALPINE SONNETS**

**I**

**THE GLACIER**

  At dawn in silence moves the mighty stream,
    The silver-crested waves no murmur make;
    But far away the avalanches wake
  The rumbling echoes, dull as in a dream;
  Their momentary thunders, dying, seem
    To fall into the stillness, flake by flake,
    And leave the hollow air with naught to break
  The frozen spell of solitude supreme.

  At noon unnumbered rills begin to spring
    Beneath the burning sun, and all the walls
  Of all the ocean-blue crevasses ring
    With liquid lyrics of their waterfalls;
  As if a poet’s heart had felt the glow
  Of sovereign love, and song began to flow.

Zermatt, 1872.

**II**

**THE SNOW-FIELD**

**Page 4**

  White Death had laid his pall upon the plain,
    And crowned the mountain-peaks like monarchs dead;
    The vault of heaven was glaring overhead
  With pitiless light that filled my eyes with pain;
  And while I vainly longed, and looked in vain
    For sign or trace of life, my spirit said,
    “Shall any living thing that dares to tread
  This royal lair of Death escape again?”

  But even then I saw before my feet
    A line of pointed footprints in the snow:
    Some roving chamois, but an hour ago,
  Had passed this way along his journey fleet,
  And left a message from a friend unknown
  To cheer my pilgrim-heart, no more alone.

Zermatt, 1872.

**III**

**MOVING BELLS**

  I love the hour that comes, with dusky hair
    And dewy feet, along the Alpine dells,
    To lead the cattle forth.  A thousand bells
  Go chiming after her across the fair
  And flowery uplands, while the rosy flare
    Of sunset on the snowy mountain dwells,
    And valleys darken, and the drowsy spells
  Of peace are woven through the purple air.

  Dear is the magic of this hour:  she seems
    To walk before the dark by falling rills,
  And lend a sweeter song to hidden streams;
    She opens all the doors of night, and fills
  With moving bells the music of my dreams,
    That wander far among the sleeping hills.

Gstaad, August, 1909.

**MATINS**

  Flowers rejoice when night is done,
  Lift their heads to greet the sun;
  Sweetest looks and odours raise,
  In a silent hymn of praise.

  So my heart would turn away
  From the darkness to the day;
  Lying open in God’s sight
  Like a flower in the light.

**THE PARTING AND THE COMING GUEST**

  Who watched the worn-out Winter die?
    Who, peering through the window-pane
    At nightfall, under sleet and rain
  Saw the old graybeard totter by?
  Who listened to his parting sigh,
    The sobbing of his feeble breath,
    His whispered colloquy with Death,
    And when his all of life was done
  Stood near to bid a last good-bye?
    Of all his former friends not one
  Saw the forsaken Winter die.

  Who welcomed in the maiden Spring?
    Who heard her footfall, swift and light
    As fairy-dancing in the night?
  Who guessed what happy dawn would bring
  The flutter of her bluebird’s wing,
  The blossom of her mayflower-face
    To brighten every shady place?
    One morning, down the village street,
  “Oh, here am I,” we heard her sing,—­
    And none had been awake to greet
  The coming of the maiden Spring.

**Page 5**

  But look, her violet eyes are wet
    With bright, unfallen, dewy tears;
    And in her song my fancy hears
  A note of sorrow trembling yet.
  Perhaps, beyond the town, she met
    Old Winter as he limped away
    To die forlorn, and let him lay
    His weary head upon her knee,
    And kissed his forehead with regret
    For one so gray and lonely,—­see,
  Her eyes with tender tears are wet.

  And so, by night, while we were all at rest,
  I think the coming sped the parting guest.

1873.

**IF ALL THE SKIES**

**If all the skies were sunshine, Our faces would be fain To feel once more upon them The cooling plash of rain.**

  If all the world were music,
    Our hearts would often long
  For one sweet strain of silence.
    To break the endless song.

  If life were always merry,
    Our souls would seek relief,
  And rest from weary laughter
    In the quiet arms of grief.

**WINGS OF A DOVE**

**I**

At sunset, when the rosy light was dying
Far down the pathway of the west,
I saw a lonely dove in silence flying,
To be at rest.

Pilgrim of air, I cried, could I but borrow
Thy wandering wings, thy freedom blest,
I’d fly away from every careful sorrow,
And find my rest.

**II**

But when the filmy veil of dusk was falling,
Home flew the dove to seek his nest,
Deep in the forest where his mate was calling
To love and rest.

Peace, heart of mine! no longer sigh to wander;
Lose not thy life in barren quest.
There are no happy islands over yonder;
Come home and rest.

1874.

**THE FALL OF THE LEAVES**

**I**

  In warlike pomp, with banners flowing,
    The regiments of autumn stood:
  I saw their gold and scarlet glowing
    From every hillside, every wood.

  Above the sea the clouds were keeping
    Their secret leaguer, gray and still;
  They sent their misty vanguard creeping
    With muffled step from hill to hill.

  All day the sullen armies drifted
    Athwart the sky with slanting rain;
  At sunset for a space they lifted,
    With dusk they settled down again.

**II**

  At dark the winds began to blow
  With mutterings distant, low;
    From sea and sky they called their strength
      Till with an angry, broken roar,
      Like billows on an unseen shore,
  Their fury burst at length.

  I heard through the night
    The rush and the clamour;
  The pulse of the fight
    Like blows of Thor’s hammer;
  The pattering flight
  Of the leaves, and the anguished
  Moan of the forest vanquished.

**Page 6**

  At daybreak came a gusty song:
  “Shout! the winds are strong.
  The little people of the leaves are fled.
  Shout!  The Autumn is dead!”

**III**

  The storm is ended!  The impartial sun
  Laughs down upon the battle lost and won,
  And crowns the triumph of the cloudy host
  In rolling lines retreating to the coast.

  But we, fond lovers of the woodland shade,
  And grateful friends of every fallen leaf,
  Forget the glories of the cloud-parade,
  And walk the ruined woods in quiet grief.

  For ever so our thoughtful hearts repeat
  On fields of triumph dirges of defeat;
  And still we turn on gala-days to tread
  Among the rustling memories of the dead.

1874.

**A SNOW-SONG**

  Does the snow fall at sea?
    Yes, when the north winds blow,
    When the wild clouds fly low,
    Out of each gloomy wing,
    Silently glimmering,
    Over the stormy sea
      Falleth the snow.

  Does the snow hide the sea?
    Nay, on the tossing plains
    Never a flake remains;
    Drift never resteth there;
    Vanishing everywhere,
    Into the hungry sea
      Falleth the snow.

  What means the snow at sea?
    Whirled in the veering blast,
    Thickly the flakes drive past;
    Each like a childish ghost
    Wavers, and then is lost;
    In the forgetful sea
      Fadeth the snow.

1875.

**ROSLIN AND HAWTHORNDEN**

  Fair Roslin Chapel, how divine
  The art that reared thy costly shrine!
  Thy carven columns must have grown
  By magic, like a dream in stone.

  Yet not within thy storied wall
  Would I in adoration fall,
  So gladly as within the glen
  That leads to lovely Hawthornden.

  A long-drawn aisle, with roof of green
  And vine-clad pillars, while between,
  The Esk runs murmuring on its way,
  In living music night and day.

  Within the temple of this wood
  The martyrs of the covenant stood,
  And rolled the psalm, and poured the prayer,
  From Nature’s solemn altar-stair.

Edinburgh, 1877.

**SONGS OUT OF DOORS**

**LATER POEMS**

**WHEN TULIPS BLOOM**

**I**

  When tulips bloom in Union Square,
  And timid breaths of vernal air
    Go wandering down the dusty town,
  Like children lost in Vanity Fair;

  When every long, unlovely row
  Of westward houses stands aglow,
    And leads the eyes to sunset skies
  Beyond the hills where green trees grow;

**Page 7**

  Then weary seems the street parade,
  And weary books, and weary trade:
    I’m only wishing to go a-fishing;
  For this the month of May was made.

**II**

  I guess the pussy-willows now
  Are creeping out on every bough
    Along the brook; and robins look
  For early worms behind the plough.

  The thistle-birds have changed their dun,
  For yellow coats, to match the sun;
    And in the same array of flame
  The Dandelion Show’s begun.

  The flocks of young anemones
  Are dancing round the budding trees:
    Who can help wishing to go a-fishing
  In days as full of joy as these?

**III**

  I think the meadow-lark’s clear sound
  Leaks upward slowly from the ground,
    While on the wing the bluebirds ring
  Their wedding-bells to woods around.

  The flirting chewink calls his dear
  Behind the bush; and very near,
    Where water flows, where green grass grows,
  Song-sparrows gently sing, “Good cheer.”

  And, best of all, through twilight’s calm
  The hermit-thrush repeats his psalm.
    How much I’m wishing to go a-fishing
  In days so sweet with music’s balm!

**IV**

  ’Tis not a proud desire of mine;
  I ask for nothing superfine;
    No heavy weight, no salmon great,
  To break the record, or my line.

  Only an idle little stream,
  Whose amber waters softly gleam,
    Where I may wade through woodland shade,
  And cast the fly, and loaf, and dream:

  Only a trout or two, to dart
  From foaming pools, and try my art:
    ’Tis all I’m wishing—­old-fashioned fishing,
  And just a day on Nature’s heart.

1894.

**THE WHIP-POOR-WILL**

  Do you remember, father,—­
    It seems so long ago,—­
  The day we fished together
    Along the Pocono?
  At dusk I waited for you,
    Beside the lumber-mill,
  And there I heard a hidden bird
    That chanted, “whip-poor-will,”
    “*Whippoorwill!* *whippoorwill!*”
    Sad and shrill,—­“*whippoorwill!*”

  The place was all deserted;
    The mill-wheel hung at rest;
  The lonely star of evening
    Was throbbing in the west;
  The veil of night was falling;
    The winds were folded still;
  And everywhere the trembling air
    Re-echoed “whip-poor-will!”
    “*Whippoorwill!* *whippoorwill!*”
    Sad and shrill,—­“*whippoorwill!*”

  You seemed so long in coming,
    I felt so much alone;
  The wide, dark world was round me,
    And life was all unknown;
  The hand of sorrow touched me,
    And made my senses thrill
  With all the pain that haunts the strain
    Of mournful whip-poor-will.
    “*Whippoorwill!* *whippoorwill!*”
    Sad and shrill,—­“*whippoorwill!*”

**Page 8**

  What knew I then of trouble?
    An idle little lad,
  I had not learned the lessons
    That make men wise and sad.
  I dreamed of grief and parting,
    And something seemed to fill
  My heart with tears, while in my ears
    Resounded “whip-poor-will.”
    “*Whippoorwill!* *whippoorwill!*”
    Sad and shrill,—­“*whippoorwill!*”

  ’Twas but a cloud of sadness,
    That lightly passed away;
  But I have learned the meaning
    Of sorrow, since that day.
  For nevermore at twilight,
    Beside the silent mill,
  I’ll wait for you, in the falling dew,
    And hear the whip-poor-will.
    “*Whippoorwill!* *whippoorwill!*”
    Sad and shrill,—­“*whippoorwill!*”

  But if you still remember
    In that fair land of light,
  The pains and fears that touch us
    Along this edge of night,
  I think all earthly grieving,
    And all our mortal ill,
  To you must seem like a sad boy’s dream.
    Who hears the whip-poor-will.
    “*Whippoorwill!* *whippoorwill!*”
    A passing thrill,—­“*whippoorwill!*”

1894.

**THE LILY OF YORROW**

Deep in the heart of the forest the lily of Yorrow is growing;
Blue is its cup as the sky, and with mystical odour o’erflowing;
Faintly it falls through the shadowy glades when the south wind is

                    blowing.

Sweet are the primroses pale and the violets after a shower;
Sweet are the borders of pinks and the blossoming grapes on the bower;
Sweeter by far is the breath of that far-away woodland flower.

Searching and strange in its sweetness, it steals like a perfume
enchanted
Under the arch of the forest, and all who perceive it are haunted,
Seeking and seeking for ever, till sight of the lily is granted.

Who can describe how it grows, with its chalice of lazuli leaning
Over a crystalline spring, where the ferns and the mosses are greening?
Who can imagine its beauty, or utter the depth of its meaning?

Calm of the journeying stars, and repose of the mountains olden,
Joy of the swift-running rivers, and glory of sunsets golden,
Secrets that cannot be told in the heart of the flower are holden.

  Surely to see it is peace and the crown of a life-long endeavour;
  Surely to pluck it is gladness,—­but they who have found it can never
  Tell of the gladness and peace:  they are hid from our vision for ever.

  ’Twas but a moment ago that a comrade was walking near me:
  Turning aside from the pathway he murmured a greeting to cheer me,—­
  Then he was lost in the shade, and I called but he did not hear me.

  Why should I dream he is dead, and bewail him with passionate sorrow?
  Surely I know there is gladness in finding the lily of Yorrow:
  He has discovered it first, and perhaps I shall find it to-morrow.

**Page 9**

1894.

**THE VEERY**

  The moonbeams over Arno’s vale in silver flood were pouring,
  When first I heard the nightingale a long-lost love deploring.
  So passionate, so full of pain, it sounded strange and eerie;
  I longed to hear a simpler strain,—­the wood-notes of the veery.

  The laverock sings a bonny lay above the Scottish heather;
  It sprinkles down from far away like light and love together;
  He drops the golden notes to greet his brooding mate, his dearie;
  I only know one song more sweet,—­the vespers of the veery.

  In English gardens, green and bright and full of fruity treasure,
  I heard the blackbird with delight repeat his merry measure:
  The ballad was a pleasant one, the tune was loud and cheery,
  And yet, with every setting sun, I listened for the veery.

  But far away, and far away, the tawny thrush is singing;
  New England woods, at close of day, with that clear chant are ringing:
  And when my light of life is low, and heart and flesh are weary,
  I fain would hear, before I go, the wood-notes of the veery.

1895.

**THE SONG-SPARROW**

  There is a bird I know so well,
    It seems as if he must have sung
    Beside my crib when I was young;
  Before I knew the way to spell
    The name of even the smallest bird,
    His gentle-joyful song I heard.
  Now see if you can tell, my dear.
  What bird it is that, every year,
  Sings “*Sweet—­sweet—­sweet—­very merry cheer.*”

  He comes in March, when winds are strong,
    And snow returns to hide the earth;
    But still he warms his heart with mirth,
  And waits for May.  He lingers long
    While flowers fade; and every day
    Repeats his small, contented lay;
  As if to say, we need not fear
  The season’s change, if love is here
  With “*Sweet—­sweet—­sweet—­very merry cheer.*”

  He does not wear a Joseph’s-coat
    Of many colours, smart and gay;
    His suit is Quaker brown and gray,
  With darker patches at his throat.
    And yet of all the well-dressed throng
    Not one can sing so brave a song.
  It makes the pride of looks appear
  A vain and foolish thing, to hear
  His “*Sweet—­sweet—­sweet—­very merry cheer.*”

  A lofty place he does not love,
    But sits by choice, and well at ease,
    In hedges, and in little trees
  That stretch their slender arms above
    The meadow-brook; and there he sings
    Till all the field with pleasure rings;
  And so he tells in every ear,
  That lowly homes to heaven are near
  In “*Sweet—­sweet—­sweet—­very merry cheer.*”

**Page 10**

  I like the tune, I like the words;
    They seem so true, so free from art,
    So friendly, and so full of heart,
  That if but one of all the birds
    Could be my comrade everywhere,
    My little brother of the air,
  I’d choose the song-sparrow, my dear,
  Because he’d bless me, every year,
  With “*Sweet—­sweet—­sweet—­very merry cheer.*”

1895.

**THE MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT**

  When May bedecks the naked trees
  With tassels and embroideries,
  And many blue-eyed violets beam
  Along the edges of the stream,
  I hear a voice that seems to say,
  Now near at hand, now far away,
    “*Witchery—­witchery—­witchery.*”

  An incantation so serene,
  So innocent, befits the scene:
  There’s magic in that small bird’s note—­
  See, there he flits—­the Yellow-throat;
  A living sunbeam, tipped with wings,
  A spark of light that shines and sings
    “*Witchery—­witchery—­witchery.*”

  You prophet with a pleasant name,
  If out of Mary-land you came,
  You know the way that thither goes
  Where Mary’s lovely garden grows:
  Fly swiftly back to her, I pray,
  And try to call her down this way,
    “*Witchery—­witchery—­witchery!*”

  Tell her to leave her cockle-shells,
  And all her little silver bells
  That blossom into melody,
  And all her maids less fair than she.
  She does not need these pretty things,
  For everywhere she comes, she brings
    “*Witchery—­witchery—­witchery!*”

  The woods are greening overhead,
  And flowers adorn each mossy bed;
  The waters babble as they run—­
  One thing is lacking, only one:
  If Mary were but here to-day,
  I would believe your charming lay,
    “*Witchery—­witchery—­witchery!*”

  Along the shady road I look—­
  Who’s coming now across the brook?
  A woodland maid, all robed in white—­
  The leaves dance round her with delight,
  The stream laughs out beneath her feet—­
  Sing, merry bird, the charm’s complete,
    “*Witchery—­witchery—­witchery!*”

1895.

**A NOVEMBER DAISY**

  Afterthought of summer’s bloom!
  Late arrival at the feast,
  Coming when the songs have ceased
  And the merry guests departed,
  Leaving but an empty room,
  Silence, solitude, and gloom,—­
  Are you lonely, heavy-hearted;
  You, the last of all your kind,
  Nodding in the autumn-wind;
  Now that all your friends are flown,
  Blooming late and all alone?

  Nay, I wrong you, little flower,
  Reading mournful mood of mine
  In your looks, that give no sign
  Of a spirit dark and cheerless!
  You possess the heavenly power
  That rejoices in the hour.
  Glad, contented, free, and fearless,
  Lift a sunny face to heaven
  When a sunny day is given!
  Make a summer of your own,
  Blooming late and all alone!

**Page 11**

  Once the daisies gold and white
  Sea-like through the meadow rolled:
  Once my heart could hardly hold
  All its pleasures.  I remember,
  In the flood of youth’s delight
  Separate joys were lost to sight.
  That was summer!  Now November
  Sets the perfect flower apart;
  Gives each blossom of the heart
  Meaning, beauty, grace unknown,—­
  Blooming late and all alone.

November, 1899.

**THE ANGLER’S REVEILLE**

What time the rose of dawn is laid across the lips of night,
And all the little watchman-stars have fallen asleep in light,
’Tis then a merry wind awakes, and runs from tree to tree,
And borrows words from all the birds to sound the reveille.

This is the carol the Robin throws
Over the edge of the valley;
Listen how boldly it flows,
Sally on sally:  *Tirra-lirra,
Early morn,
New born!
Day is near,
Clear, clear.
Down the river
All a-quiver,
Fish are breaking;
Time for waking,
Tup, tup, tup!
Do you hear?
All clear—­
Wake up!*

The phantom flood of dreams has ebbed and vanished with the dark,
And like a dove the heart forsakes the prison of the ark;
Now forth she fares thro’ friendly woods and diamond-fields of dew,
While every voice cries out “Rejoice!” as if the world were new.

This is the ballad the Bluebird sings,
Unto his mate replying,
Shaking the tune from his wings
While he is flying:  *Surely, surely, surely,
Life is dear
Even here.
Blue above,
You to love,
Purely, purely, purely.*

There’s wild azalea on the hill, and iris down the dell,
And just one spray of lilac still abloom beside the well;
The columbine adorns the rocks, the laurel buds grow pink,
Along the stream white arums gleam, and violets bend to drink.

This is the song of the Yellow-throat,
Fluttering gaily beside you;
Hear how each voluble note
Offers to guide you:  *Which way, sir?
I say, sir,
Let me teach you,
I beseech you!
Are you wishing
Jolly fishing?
This way, sir!
I’ll teach you.*

Then come, my friend, forget your foes and leave your fears behind,
And wander forth to try your luck, with cheerful, quiet mind;
For be your fortune great or small, you take what God will give,
And all the day your heart will say, “’Tis luck enough to live.”

This is the song the Brown Thrush flings
Out of his thicket of roses;
Hark how it bubbles and rings,
Mark how it closes:  *Luck, luck,
What luck?
Good enough for me,
I’m alive, you see!
Sun shining,
No repining;
Never borrow
Idle sorrow;
Drop it!
Cover it up!
Hold your cup!
Joy will fill it,
Don’t spill it,
Steady, be ready,
Good luck!*

**Page 12**

1899.

**THE RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET**

**I**

Where’s your kingdom, little king?
Where the land you call your own,
Where your palace and your throne?
Fluttering lightly on the wing
Through the blossom-world of May,
Whither lies your royal way,
Little king?

*Far to northward lies a land
Where the trees together stand
Closely as the blades of wheat
When the summer is complete.
Rolling like an ocean wide
Over vale and mountainside,
Balsam, hemlock, spruce and pine,—­
All those mighty trees are mine.
There’s a river flowing free,—­
All its waves belong to me.
There’s a lake so clear and bright
Stars shine out of it all night;
Rowan-berries round it spread
Like a belt of coral red.
Never royal garden planned
Fair as my Canadian land!
There I build my summer nest,
There I reign and there I rest,
While from dawn to dark I sing,
Happy kingdom!  Lucky king!*

**II**

Back again, my little king!
Is your happy kingdom lost
To the rebel knave, Jack Frost?
Have you felt the snow-flakes sting?
Houseless, homeless in October,
Whither now?  Your plight is sober,
Exiled king!

*Far to southward lie the regions
Where my loyal flower-legions
Hold possession of the year,
Filling every month with cheer.
Christmas wakes the winter rose;
New Year daffodils unclose;
Yellow jasmine through the wood
Flows in February flood,
Dropping from the tallest trees
Golden streams that never freeze.
Thither now I take my flight
Down the pathway of the night,
Till I see the southern moon
Glisten on the broad lagoon,
Where the cypress’ dusky green,
And the dark magnolia’s sheen,
Weave a shelter round my home.
There the snow-storms never come;
There the bannered mosses gray
Like a curtain gently sway,
Hanging low on every side
Round the covert where I bide,
Till the March azalea glows,
Royal red and heavenly rose,
Through the Carolina glade
Where my winter home is made.
There I hold my southern court,
Full of merriment and sport:
There I take my ease and sing,
Happy kingdom!  Lucky king!*

**III**

Little boaster, vagrant king,
Neither north nor south is yours,
You’ve no kingdom that endures!
Wandering every fall and spring,
With your ruby crown so slender,
Are you only a Pretender,
Landless king?

*Never king by right divine
Ruled a richer realm than mine!
What are lands and golden crowns,
Armies, fortresses and towns,
Jewels, sceptres, robes and rings,—­
What are these to song and wings?
Everywhere that I can fly,
There I own the earth and sky;
Everywhere that I can sing.
There I’m happy as a king.*

**Page 13**

1900.

**SCHOOL**

  I put my heart to school
  In the world where men grow wise:
  “Go out,” I said, “and learn the rule;
  Come back when you win a prize.”

  My heart came back again:
  “Now where is the prize?” I cried.—­
  “The rule was false, and the prize was pain,
  And the teacher’s name was Pride.”

  I put my heart to school
  In the woods where veeries sing
  And brooks run clear and cool,
  In the fields where wild flowers spring.

  “And why do you stay so long
  My heart, and where do you roam?”
  The answer came with a laugh and a song,—­
  “I find this school is home.”

April, 1901.

**INDIAN SUMMER**

  A silken curtain veils the skies,
  And half conceals from pensive eyes
    The bronzing tokens of the fall;
  A calmness broods upon the hills,
  And summer’s parting dream distils
    A charm of silence over all.

  The stacks of corn, in brown array,
  Stand waiting through the tranquil day,
    Like tattered wigwams on the plain;
  The tribes that find a shelter there
  Are phantom peoples, forms of air,
    And ghosts of vanished joy and pain.

  At evening when the crimson crest
  Of sunset passes down the West,
    I hear the whispering host returning;
  On far-off fields, by elm and oak,
  I see the lights, I smell the smoke,—­
    The Camp-fires of the Past are burning.

*Tertius and Henry van Dyke.*

November, 1903.

**SPRING IN THE NORTH**

**I**

  Ah, who will tell me, in these leaden days,
  Why the sweet Spring delays,
  And where she hides,—­the dear desire
    Of every heart that longs
  For bloom, and fragrance, and the ruby fire
  Of maple-buds along the misty hills,
  And that immortal call which fills
    The waiting wood with songs?
  The snow-drops came so long ago,
    It seemed that Spring was near!
    But then returned the snow
  With biting winds, and earth grew sere,
    And sullen clouds drooped low
  To veil the sadness of a hope deferred:
  Then rain, rain, rain, incessant rain
    Beat on the window-pane,
  Through which I watched the solitary bird
  That braved the tempest, buffeted and tossed
  With rumpled feathers down the wind again.
    Oh, were the seeds all lost
  When winter laid the wild flowers in their tomb?
    I searched the woods in vain
  For blue hepaticas, and trilliums white,
  And trailing arbutus, the Spring’s delight,
  Starring the withered leaves with rosy bloom.
    But every night the frost
  To all my longing spoke a silent nay,
  And told me Spring was far away.
  Even the robins were too cold to sing,
  Except a broken and discouraged note,—­
  Only the tuneful sparrow, on whose throat
  Music has put her triple finger-print,
  Lifted his head and sang my heart a hint,—­
  “Wait, wait, wait! oh, wait a while for Spring!”

**Page 14**

**II**

  But now, Carina, what divine amends
  For all delay!  What sweetness treasured up,
    What wine of joy that blends
  A hundred flavours in a single cup,
  Is poured into this perfect day!
  For look, sweet heart, here are the early flowers
    That lingered on their way,
  Thronging in haste to kiss the feet of May,
  Entangled with the bloom of later hours,—­
  Anemones and cinque-foils, violets blue
  And white, and iris richly gleaming through
  The grasses of the meadow, and a blaze
  Of butter-cups and daisies in the field,
    Filling the air with praise,
  As if a chime of golden bells had pealed!
    The frozen songs within the breast
  Of silent birds that hid in leafless woods,
    Melt into rippling floods
    Of gladness unrepressed.
  Now oriole and bluebird, thrush and lark,
  Warbler and wren and vireo,
  Mingle their melody; the living spark
  Of Love has touched the fuel of desire,
  And every heart leaps up in singing fire.
    It seems as if the land
  Were breathing deep beneath the sun’s caress,
    Trembling with tenderness,
    While all the woods expand,
  In shimmering clouds of rose and gold and green,
  To veil a joy too sacred to be seen.

**III**

    Come, put your hand in mine,
  True love, long sought and found at last,
  And lead me deep into the Spring divine
    That makes amends for all the wintry past.
  For all the flowers and songs I feared to miss
      Arrive with you;
  And in the lingering pressure of your kiss
      My dreams come true;
  And in the promise of your generous eyes
      I read the mystic sign
      Of joy more perfect made
      Because so long delayed,
  And bliss enhanced by rapture of surprise.
  Ah, think not early love alone is strong;
  He loveth best whose heart has learned to wait:
  Dear messenger of Spring that tarried long,
  You’re doubly dear because you come so late.

**SPRING IN THE SOUTH**

  Now in the oak the sap of life is welling,
    Tho’ to the bough the rusty leafage clings;
  Now on the elm the misty buds are swelling;
    Every little pine-wood grows alive with wings;
  Blue-jays are fluttering, yodeling and crying,
    Meadow-larks sailing low above the faded grass,
  Red-birds whistling clear, silent robins flying,—­
    Who has waked the birds up?  What has come to pass?

  Last year’s cotton-plants, desolately bowing,
    Tremble in the March-wind, ragged and forlorn;
  Red are the hillsides of the early ploughing,
    Gray are the lowlands, waiting for the corn.
  Earth seems asleep, but she is only feigning;
    Deep in her bosom thrills a sweet unrest;
  Look where the jasmine lavishly is raining
    Jove’s golden shower into Danaee’s breast!

**Page 15**

  Now on the plum-tree a snowy bloom is sifted,
    Now on the peach-tree, the glory of the rose,
  Far o’er the hills a tender haze is drifted,
    Full to the brim the yellow river flows.
  Dark cypress boughs with vivid jewels glisten,
    Greener than emeralds shining in the sun.
  Whence comes the magic?  Listen, sweetheart, listen!
    The mocking-bird is singing:  Spring is begun.

  Hark, in his song no tremor of misgiving!
    All of his heart he pours into his lay,—­
  “Love, love, love, and pure delight of living:
    Winter is forgotten:  here’s a happy day!”
  Fair in your face I read the flowery presage,
    Snowy on your brow and rosy on your mouth:
  Sweet in your voice I hear the season’s message,—­
    Love, love, love, and Spring in the South!

1904.

**A NOON SONG**

  There are songs for the morning and songs for the night,
    For sunrise and sunset, the stars and the moon;
  But who will give praise to the fulness of light,
    And sing us a song of the glory of noon?
        Oh, the high noon, the clear noon,
          The noon with golden crest;
        When the blue sky burns, and the great sun turns
          With his face to the way of the west!

  How swiftly he rose in the dawn of his strength!
    How slowly he crept as the morning wore by!
  Ah, steep was the climbing that led him at length
    To the height of his throne in the wide summer sky.
        Oh, the long toil, the slow toil,
          The toil that may not rest,
        Till the sun looks down from his journey’s crown,
          To the wonderful way of the west!

  Then a quietness falls over meadow and hill,
    The wings of the wind in the forest are furled,
  The river runs softly, the birds are all still,
    The workers are resting all over the world.
        Oh, the good hour, the kind hour,
          The hour that calms the breast!
        Little inn half-way on the road of the day,
          Where it follows the turn to the west!

  There’s a plentiful feast in the maple-tree shade,
    The lilt of a song to an old-fashioned tune,
  The talk of a friend, or the kiss of a maid,
    To sweeten the cup that we drink to the noon.
        Oh, the deep noon, the full noon,
          Of all the day the best!
        When the blue sky burns, and the great sun turns
          To his home by the way of the west!

1906.

**LIGHT BETWEEN THE TREES**

  Long, long, long the trail
    Through the brooding forest-gloom,
  Down the shadowy, lonely vale
    Into silence, like a room
      Where the light of life has fled,
    And the jealous curtains close
    Round the passionless repose
      Of the silent dead.

**Page 16**

  Plod, plod, plod away,
    Step by step in mouldering moss;
  Thick branches bar the day
    Over languid streams that cross
      Softly, slowly, with a sound
    Like a smothered weeping,
    In their aimless creeping
      Through enchanted ground.

  “Yield, yield, yield thy quest,”
    Whispers through the woodland deep;
  “Come to me and be at rest;
    I am slumber, I am sleep.”
      Then the weary feet would fail,
    But the never-daunted will
    Urges “Forward, forward still!
      Press along the trail!”

  Breast, breast, breast the slope
    See, the path is growing steep.
  Hark! a little song of hope
    Where the stream begins to leap.
      Though the forest, far and wide,
    Still shuts out the bending blue,
    We shall finally win through,
      Cross the long divide.

  On, on, on we tramp!
    Will the journey never end?
  Over yonder lies the camp;
    Welcome waits us there, my friend.
      Can we reach it ere the night?
    Upward, upward, never fear!
    Look, the summit must be near;
      See the line of light!

  Red, red, red the shine
    Of the splendour in the west,
  Glowing through the ranks of pine,
    Clear along the mountain-crest!
    Long, long, long the trail
    Out of sorrow’s lonely vale;
      But at last the traveller sees
      Light between the trees!

March, 1904.

**THE HERMIT THRUSH**

  O wonderful!  How liquid clear
  The molten gold of that ethereal tone,
  Floating and falling through the wood alone,
  A hermit-hymn poured out for God to hear!

 *O holy, holy, holy!  Hyaline,
  Long light, low light, glory of eventide!
  Love far away, far up,—­up,—­love divine!
  Little love, too, for ever, ever near,
  Warm love, earth love, tender love of mine,
  In the leafy dark where you hide,
  You are mine,—­mine,—­mine!*

  Ah, my beloved, do you feel with me
  The hidden virtue of that melody,
  The rapture and the purity of love,
  The heavenly joy that can not find the word?
  Then, while we wait again to hear the bird,
  Come very near to me, and do not move,—­
  Now, hermit of the woodland, fill anew
  The cool, green cup of air with harmony,
  And we will drink the wine of love with you.

May, 1908.

**TURN O’ THE TIDE**

  The tide flows in to the harbour,—­
    The bold tide, the gold tide, the flood o’ the sunlit sea,—­
  And the little ships riding at anchor,
    Are swinging and slanting their prows to the ocean, panting
      To lift their wings to the wide wild air,
      And venture a voyage they know not where,—­
    To fly away and be free!

**Page 17**

  The tide runs out of the harbour,—­
    The low tide, the slow tide, the ebb o’ the moonlit bay,—­
  And the little ships rocking at anchor,
    Are rounding and turning their bows to the landward, yearning
      To breathe the breath of the sun-warmed strand,
      To rest in the lee of the high hill land,—­
  To hold their haven and stay!

  My heart goes round with the vessels,—­
    My wild heart, my child heart, in love with the sea and the land,—­
  And the turn o’ the tide passes through it,
    In rising and falling with mystical currents, calling
      At morn, to range where the far waves foam,
      At night, to a harbour in love’s true home,
    With the hearts that understand!

Seal Harbour, August 12, 1911.

**SIERRA MADRE**

  O Mother mountains! billowing far to the snow-lands,
    Robed in aerial amethyst, silver, and blue,
  Why do ye look so proudly down on the lowlands?
    What have their groves and gardens to do with you?

  Theirs is the languorous charm of the orange and myrtle,
    Theirs are the fruitage and fragrance of Eden of old,—­
  Broad-boughed oaks in the meadows fair and fertile,
    Dark-leaved orchards gleaming with globes of gold.

  You, in your solitude standing, lofty and lonely,
    Bear neither garden nor grove on your barren breasts;
  Rough is the rock-loving growth of your canyons, and only
    Storm-battered pines and fir-trees cling to your crests.

  Why are ye throned so high, and arrayed in splendour
    Richer than all the fields at your feet can claim?
  What is your right, ye rugged peaks, to the tender
    Queenly promise and pride of the mother-name?

  Answered the mountains, dim in the distance dreaming:
    “Ours are the forests that treasure the riches of rain;
  Ours are the secret springs and the rivulets gleaming
    Silverly down through the manifold bloom of the plain.

  “Vain were the toiling of men in the dust of the dry land,
    Vain were the ploughing and planting in waterless fields,
  Save for the life-giving currents we send from the sky-land,
    Save for the fruit our embrace with the storm-cloud yields.”

  O mother mountains, Madre Sierra, I love you!
    Rightly you reign o’er the vale that your bounty fills—­
  Kissed by the sun, or with big, bright stars above you,—­
    I murmur your name and lift up mine eyes to the hills.

Pasadena, March, 1913.

**THE GRAND CANYON**

**DAYBREAK**

  What makes the lingering Night so cling to thee?
  Thou vast, profound, primeval hiding-place
  Of ancient secrets,—­gray and ghostly gulf
  Cleft in the green of this high forest land,
  And crowded in the dark with giant forms!
  Art thou a grave, a prison, or a shrine?

**Page 18**

  A stillness deeper than the dearth of sound
  Broods over thee:  a living silence breathes
  Perpetual incense from thy dim abyss.
  The morning-stars that sang above the bower
  Of Eden, passing over thee, are dumb
  With trembling bright amazement; and the Dawn
  Steals through the glimmering pines with naked feet,
  Her hand upon her lips, to look on thee!
  She peers into thy depths with silent prayer
  For light, more light, to part thy purple veil.
  O Earth, swift-rolling Earth, reveal, reveal,—­
  Turn to the East, and show upon thy breast
  The mightiest marvel in the realm of Time!

  ’Tis done,—­the morning miracle of light,—­
  The resurrection of the world of hues
  That die with dark, and daily rise again
  With every rising of the splendid Sun!

  Be still, my heart!  Now Nature holds her breath
  To see the solar flood of radiance leap
  Across the chasm, and crown the western rim
  Of alabaster with a far-away
  Rampart of pearl, and flowing down by walls
  Of changeful opal, deepen into gold
  Of topaz, rosy gold of tourmaline,
  Crimson of garnet, green and gray of jade,
  Purple of amethyst, and ruby red,
  Beryl, and sard, and royal porphyry;
  Until the cataract of colour breaks
  Upon the blackness of the granite floor.

  How far below!  And all between is cleft
  And carved into a hundred curving miles
  Of unimagined architecture!  Tombs,
  Temples, and colonnades are neighboured there
  By fortresses that Titans might defend,
  And amphitheatres where Gods might strive.
  Cathedrals, buttressed with unnumbered tiers
  Of ruddy rock, lift to the sapphire sky
  A single spire of marble pure as snow;
  And huge aerial palaces arise
  Like mountains built of unconsuming flame.
  Along the weathered walls, or standing deep
  In riven valleys where no foot may tread,
  Are lonely pillars, and tall monuments
  Of perished aeons and forgotten things.
  My sight is baffled by the wide array
  Of countless forms:  my vision reels and swims
  Above them, like a bird in whirling winds.
  Yet no confusion fills the awful chasm;
  But spacious order and a sense of peace
  Brood over all.  For every shape that looms
  Majestic in the throng, is set apart
  From all the others by its far-flung shade,
  Blue, blue, as if a mountain-lake were there.

  How still it is!  Dear God, I hardly dare
  To breathe, for fear the fathomless abyss
  Will draw me down into eternal sleep.

  What force has formed this masterpiece of awe?
  What hands have wrought these wonders in the waste?
  O river, gleaming in the narrow rift
  Of gloom that cleaves the valley’s nether deep,—­
  Fierce Colorado, prisoned by thy toil,
  And blindly toiling still to reach the sea,—­

 **Page 19**

  Thy waters, gathered from the snows and springs
  Amid the Utah hills, have carved this road
  Of glory to the Californian Gulf.
  But now, O sunken stream, thy splendour lost,
  ’Twixt iron walls thou rollest turbid waves,
  Too far away to make their fury heard!

  At sight of thee, thou sullen labouring slave
  Of gravitation,—­yellow torrent poured
  From distant mountains by no will of thine,
  Through thrice a hundred centuries of slow
  Fallings and liftings of the crust of Earth,—­
  At sight of thee my spirit sinks and fails.
  Art thou alone the Maker?  Is the blind
  Unconscious power that drew thee dumbly down
  To cut this gash across the layered globe,
  The sole creative cause of all I see?
  Are force and matter all?  The rest a dream?

  Then is thy gorge a canyon of despair,
  A prison for the soul of man, a grave
  Of all his dearest daring hopes!  The world
  Wherein we live and move is meaningless,
  No spirit here to answer to our own!
  The stars without a guide:  The chance-born Earth
  Adrift in space, no Captain on the ship:
  Nothing in all the universe to prove
  Eternal wisdom and eternal love!
  And man, the latest accident of Time,—­
  Who thinks he loves, and longs to understand,
  Who vainly suffers, and in vain is brave,
  Who dupes his heart with immortality,—­
  Man is a living lie,—­a bitter jest
  Upon himself,—­a conscious grain of sand
  Lost in a desert of unconsciousness,
  Thirsting for God and mocked by his own thirst.

  Spirit of Beauty, mother of delight,
  Thou fairest offspring of Omnipotence
  Inhabiting this lofty lone abode,
  Speak to my heart again and set me free
  From all these doubts that darken earth and heaven!
  Who sent thee forth into the wilderness
  To bless and comfort all who see thy face?
  Who clad thee in this more than royal robe
  Of rainbows?  Who designed these jewelled thrones
  For thee, and wrought these glittering palaces?
  Who gave thee power upon the soul of man
  To lift him up through wonder into joy?
  God! let the radiant cliffs bear witness, God!
  Let all the shining pillars signal, God!
  He only, on the mystic loom of light.
  Hath woven webs of loveliness to clothe
  His most majestic works:  and He alone
  Hath delicately wrought the cactus-flower
  To star the desert floor with rosy bloom.

  O Beauty, handiwork of the Most High,
  Where’er thou art He tells his Love to man,
  And lo, the day breaks, and the shadows flee!

  Now, far beyond all language and all art
  In thy wild splendour, Canyon marvellous,
  The secret of thy stillness lies unveiled
  In wordless worship!  This is holy ground;
  Thou art no grave, no prison, but a shrine.
  Garden of Temples filled with Silent Praise,
  If God were blind thy Beauty could not be!

**Page 20**

February 24-26, 1913.

**THE HEAVENLY HILLS OF HOLLAND**

  The heavenly hills of Holland,—­
    How wondrously they rise
  Above the smooth green pastures
    Into the azure skies!
  With blue and purple hollows,
    With peaks of dazzling snow,
  Along the far horizon
    The clouds are marching slow.

  No mortal foot has trodden
    The summits of that range,
  Nor walked those mystic valleys
    Whose colours ever change;
  Yet we possess their beauty,
    And visit them in dreams,
  While ruddy gold of sunset
    From cliff and canyon gleams.

  In days of cloudless weather
    They melt into the light;
  When fog and mist surround us
    They’re hidden from our sight;
  But when returns a season
    Clear shining after rain,
  While the northwest wind is blowing,
    We see the hills again.

  The old Dutch painters loved them,
    Their pictures show them fair,—­
  Old Hobbema and Ruysdael,
    Van Goyen and Vermeer.
  Above the level landscape,
    Rich polders, long-armed mills,
  Canals and ancient cities,—­
    Float Holland’s heavenly hills.

The Hague, November, 1916.

**FLOOD-TIDE OF FLOWERS**

**IN HOLLAND**

  The laggard winter ebbed so slow
  With freezing rain and melting snow,
  It seemed as if the earth would stay
  Forever where the tide was low,
  In sodden green and watery gray.

  But now from depths beyond our sight,
  The tide is turning in the night,
  And floods of colour long concealed
  Come silent rising toward the light,
  Through garden bare and empty field.

  And first, along the sheltered nooks,
  The crocus runs in little brooks
  Of joyance, till by light made bold
  They show the gladness of their looks
  In shining pools of white and gold.

  The tiny scilla, sapphire blue,
  Is gently seeping in, to strew
  The earth with heaven; and sudden rills
  Of sunlit yellow, sweeping through,
  Spread into lakes of daffodils.

  The hyacinths, with fragrant heads,
  Have overflowed their sandy beds,
  And fill the earth with faint perfume,
  The breath that Spring around her sheds.
  And now the tulips break in bloom!

  A sea, a rainbow-tinted sea,
  A splendour and a mystery,
  Floods o’er the fields of faded gray:
  The roads are full of folks in glee,
  For lo,—­to-day is Easter Day!

April, 1916.

**ODE**

**GOD OF THE OPEN AIR**

**I**

**Page 21**

Thou who hast made thy dwelling fair
With flowers below, above with starry lights
And set thine altars everywhere,—­
On mountain heights,
In woodlands dim with many a dream,
In valleys bright with springs,
And on the curving capes of every stream:
Thou who hast taken to thyself the wings
Of morning, to abide
Upon the secret places of the sea,
And on far islands, where the tide
Visits the beauty of untrodden shores,
Waiting for worshippers to come to thee
In thy great out-of-doors!
To thee I turn, to thee I make my prayer,
God of the open air.

**II**

Seeking for thee, the heart of man
Lonely and longing ran,
In that first, solitary hour,
When the mysterious power
To know and love the wonder of the morn
Was breathed within him, and his soul was born;
And thou didst meet thy child,
Not in some hidden shrine,
But in the freedom of the garden wild,
And take his hand in thine,—­
There all day long in Paradise he walked,
And in the cool of evening with thee talked.

**III**

Lost, long ago, that garden bright and pure,
Lost, that calm day too perfect to endure,
And lost the child-like love that worshipped and was sure!
For men have dulled their eyes with sin,
And dimmed the light of heaven with doubt,
And built their temple walls to shut thee in,
And framed their iron creeds to shut thee out.
But not for thee the closing of the door,
O Spirit unconfined!
Thy ways are free
As is the wandering wind,
And thou hast wooed thy children, to restore
Their fellowship with thee,
In peace of soul and simpleness of mind.

**IV**

Joyful the heart that, when the flood rolled by,
Leaped up to see the rainbow in the sky;
And glad the pilgrim, in the lonely night,
For whom the hills of Haran, tier on tier,
Built up a secret stairway to the height
Where stars like angel eyes were shining clear.
From mountain-peaks, in many a land and age,
Disciples of the Persian seer
Have hailed the rising sun and worshipped thee;
And wayworn followers of the Indian sage
Have found the peace of God beneath a spreading tree.

**V**

    But One, but One,—­ah, Son most dear,
  And perfect image of the Love Unseen,—­
    Walked every day in pastures green,
  And all his life the quiet waters by,
  Reading their beauty with a tranquil eye.
  To him the desert was a place prepared
        For weary hearts to rest;
    The hillside was a temple blest;
    The grassy vale a banquet-room
  Where he could feed and comfort many a guest.
        With him the lily shared
  The vital joy that breathes itself in

**Page 22**

bloom;
  And every bird that sang beside the nest
  Told of the love that broods o’er every living thing.
      He watched the shepherd bring
  His flock at sundown to the welcome fold,
    The fisherman at daybreak fling
  His net across the waters gray and cold,
  And all day long the patient reaper swing
  His curving sickle through the harvest-gold.
  So through the world the foot-path way he trod,
  Breathing the air of heaven in every breath;
  And in the evening sacrifice of death
  Beneath the open sky he gave his soul to God.
  Him will I trust, and for my Master take;
  Him will I follow; and for his dear sake,
          God of the open air,
        To thee I make my prayer.

**VI**

  From the prison of anxious thought that greed has builded,
  From the fetters that envy has wrought and pride has gilded,
  From the noise of the crowded ways and the fierce confusion,
  From the folly that wastes its days in a world of illusion,
  (Ah, but the life is lost that frets and languishes there!)
  I would escape and be free in the joy of the open air.

  By the breadth of the blue that shines in silence o’er me,
  By the length of the mountain-lines that stretch before me,
  By the height of the cloud that sails, with rest in motion,
  Over the plains and the vales to the measureless ocean,
  (Oh, how the sight of the greater things enlarges the eyes!)
  Draw me away from myself to the peace of the hills and skies.

  While the tremulous leafy haze on the woodland is spreading,
  And the bloom on the meadow betrays where May has been treading;
  While the birds on the branches above, and the brooks flowing under,
  Are singing together of love in a world full of wonder,
  (Lo, in the magic of Springtime, dreams are changed into truth!)
  Quicken my heart, and restore the beautiful hopes of youth.

  By the faith that the wild-flowers show when they bloom unbidden,
  By the calm of the river’s flow to a goal that is hidden,
  By the strength of the tree that clings to its deep foundation,
  By the courage of birds’ light wings on the long migration,
  (Wonderful spirit of trust that abides in Nature’s breast!)
  Teach me how to confide, and live my life, and rest.

For the comforting warmth of the sun that my body embraces,
For the cool of the waters that run through the shadowy places,
For the balm of the breezes that brush my face with their fingers,
For the vesper-hymn of the thrush when the twilight lingers,
For the long breath, the deep breath, the breath of a heart without
care,—­
I will give thanks and adore thee, God of the open air!

**VII**

**Page 23**

These are the gifts I ask
Of thee, Spirit serene:
Strength for the daily task,
Courage to face the road,
Good cheer to help me bear the traveller’s load,
And, for the hours of rest that come between,
An inward joy in all things heard and seen.
These are the sins I fain
Would have thee take away:
Malice, and cold disdain,
Hot anger, sullen hate,
Scorn of the lowly, envy of the great,
And discontent that casts a shadow gray
On all the brightness of the common day.
These are the things I prize
And hold of dearest worth:
Light of the sapphire skies,
Peace of the silent hills,
Shelter of forests, comfort of the grass,
Music of birds, murmur of little rills,
Shadows of cloud that swiftly pass,
And, after showers,
The smell of flowers
And of the good brown earth,—­
And best of all, along the way, friendship and mirth.
So let me keep
These treasures of the humble heart
In true possession, owning them by love;
And when at last I can no longer move
Among them freely, but must part
From the green fields and from the waters clear,
Let me not creep
Into some darkened room and hide
From all that makes the world so bright and dear;
But throw the windows wide
To welcome in the light;
And while I clasp a well-beloved hand,
Let me once more have sight
Of the deep sky and the far-smiling land,—­
Then gently fall on sleep,
And breathe my body back to Nature’s care,
My spirit out to thee, God of the open air.

1904.

**NARRATIVE POEMS**

**THE TOILING OF FELIX**

**A LEGEND ON A NEW SAYING OF JESUS**

In the rubbish heaps of the ancient city of Oxyrhynchus, near the River Nile, a party of English explorers, in the winter of 1897, discovered a fragment of a papyrus book, written in the second or third century, and hitherto unknown.  This single leaf contained parts of seven short sentences of Christ, each introduced by the words, “Jesus says.”  It is to the fifth of these Sayings of Jesus that the following poem refers.

**THE TOILING OF FELIX**

**I**

**PRELUDE**

        Hear a word that Jesus spake
          Nineteen hundred years ago,
          Where the crimson lilies blow
        Round the blue Tiberian lake:
        There the bread of life He brake,
          Through the fields of harvest walking
          With His lowly comrades, talking
          Of the secret thoughts that feed
          Weary souls in time of need.
        Art thou hungry?  Come and take;
        Hear the word that Jesus spake!
  ’Tis the sacrament of labour, bread and wine divinely blest;
  Friendship’s food and sweet refreshment, strength and courage, joy and
            rest.

**Page 24**

But this word the Master said
Long ago and far away,
Silent and forgotten lay
Buried with the silent dead,
Where the sands of Egypt spread
Sea-like, tawny billows heaping
Over ancient cities sleeping,
While the River Nile between
Rolls its summer flood of green
Rolls its autumn flood of red:
There the word the Master said,
Written on a frail papyrus, wrinkled, scorched by fire, and torn,
Hidden by God’s hand was waiting for its resurrection morn.

        Now at last the buried word
          By the delving spade is found,
          Sleeping in the quiet ground.
        Now the call of life is heard:
        Rise again, and like a bird,
          Fly abroad on wings of gladness
          Through the darkness and the sadness,
          Of the toiling age, and sing
          Sweeter than the voice of Spring,
        Till the hearts of men are stirred
        By the music of the word,—­
  Gospel for the heavy-laden, answer to the labourer’s cry:
  “*Raise the stone, and thou shall find me; cleave the wood and there
            am I.*”

**II**

**LEGEND**

Brother-men who look for Jesus, long to see Him close and clear,
Hearken to the tale of Felix, how he found the Master near.

Born in Egypt, ’neath the shadow of the crumbling gods of night,
He forsook the ancient darkness, turned his young heart toward the Light.

  Seeking Christ, in vain he waited for the vision of the Lord;
  Vainly pondered many volumes where the creeds of men were stored;

  Vainly shut himself in silence, keeping vigil night and day;
  Vainly haunted shrines and churches where the Christians came to pray.

  One by one he dropped the duties of the common life of care,
  Broke the human ties that bound him, laid his spirit waste and bare,

  Hoping that the Lord would enter that deserted dwelling-place,
  And reward the loss of all things with the vision of His face.

  Still the blessed vision tarried; still the light was unrevealed;
  Still the Master, dim and distant, kept His countenance concealed.

  Fainter grew the hope of finding, wearier grew the fruitless quest;
  Prayer and penitence and fasting gave no comfort, brought no rest.

  Lingering in the darkened temple, ere the lamp of faith went out,
  Felix knelt before the altar, lonely, sad, and full of doubt.

  “Hear me, O my Lord and Master,” from the altar-step he cried,
  “Let my one desire be granted, let my hope be satisfied!

  “Only once I long to see Thee, in the fulness of Thy grace:
  Break the clouds that now enfold Thee, with the sunrise of Thy face!

  “All that men desire and treasure have I counted loss for Thee;
  Every hope have I forsaken, save this one, my Lord to see.

**Page 25**

  “Loosed the sacred bands of friendship, solitary stands my heart;
  Thou shalt be my sole companion when I see Thee as Thou art.

  “From Thy distant throne in glory, flash upon my inward sight,
  Fill the midnight of my spirit with the splendour of Thy light.

“All Thine other gifts and blessings, common mercies, I disown;
Separated from my brothers, I would see Thy face alone.

“I have watched and I have waited as one waiteth for the morn:
Still the veil is never lifted, still Thou leavest me forlorn.

“Now I seek Thee in the desert, where the holy hermits dwell;
There, beside the saint Serapion, I will find a lonely cell.

“There at last Thou wilt be gracious; there Thy presence,
long-concealed,
In the solitude and silence to my heart shall be revealed.

“Thou wilt come, at dawn or twilight, o’er the rolling waves of sand;
I shall see Thee close beside me, I shall touch Thy pierced hand.

“Lo, Thy pilgrim kneels before Thee; bless my journey with a word;
Tell me now that if I follow, I shall find Thee, O my Lord!”

Felix listened:  through the darkness, like a murmur of the wind,
Came a gentle sound of stillness:  “Never faint, and thou shalt find.”

  Long and toilsome was his journey through the heavy land of heat,
  Egypt’s blazing sun above him, blistering sand beneath his feet.

  Patiently he plodded onward, from the pathway never erred,
  Till he reached the river-headland called the Mountain of the Bird.

There the tribes of air assemble, once a year, their noisy flock,
Then, departing, leave a sentinel perched upon the highest rock.

Far away, on joyful pinions, over land and sea they fly;
But the watcher on the summit lonely stands against the sky.

There the eremite Serapion in a cave had made his bed;
There the faithful bands of pilgrims sought his blessing, brought him
bread.

Month by month, in deep seclusion, hidden in the rocky cleft,
Dwelt the hermit, fasting, praying; once a year the cave he left.

On that day a happy pilgrim, chosen out of all the band,
Won a special sign of favour from the holy hermit’s hand.

Underneath the narrow window, at the doorway closely sealed,
While the afterglow of sunset deepened round him, Felix kneeled.

  “Man of God, of men most holy, thou whose gifts cannot be priced!
  Grant me thy most precious guerdon; tell me how to find the Christ.”

  Breathless, Felix bent and listened, but no answering voice he heard;
  Darkness folded, dumb and deathlike, round the Mountain of the Bird.

  Then he said, “The saint is silent; he would teach my soul to wait:
  I will tarry here in patience, like a beggar at his gate.”

  Near the dwelling of the hermit Felix found a rude abode,
  In a shallow tomb deserted, close beside the pilgrim-road.

**Page 26**

  So the faithful pilgrims saw him waiting there without complaint,—­
  Soon they learned to call him holy, fed him as they fed the saint.

  Day by day he watched the sunrise flood the distant plain with gold,
  While the River Nile beneath him, silvery coiling, sea-ward rolled.

  Night by night he saw the planets range their glittering court on high,
  Saw the moon, with queenly motion, mount her throne and rule the sky.

  Morn advanced and midnight fled, in visionary pomp attired;
  Never morn and never midnight brought the vision long-desired.

  Now at last the day is dawning when Serapion makes his gift;
  Felix kneels before the threshold, hardly dares his eyes to lift.

Now the cavern door uncloses, now the saint above him stands,
Blesses him without a word, and leaves a token in his hands.

’Tis the guerdon of thy waiting!  Look, thou happy pilgrim, look!
Nothing but a tattered fragment of an old papyrus book.

Read! perchance the clue to guide thee hidden in the words may lie:
“*Raise the stone, and thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there
am I.*”

Can it be the mighty Master spake such simple words as these?
Can it be that men must seek Him at their toil ’mid rocks and trees?

Disappointed, heavy-hearted, from the Mountain of the Bird
Felix mournfully descended, questioning the Master’s word.

Not for him a sacred dwelling, far above the haunts of men:
He must turn his footsteps backward to the common life again.

  From a quarry near the river, hollowed out amid the hills,
  Rose the clattering voice of labour, clanking hammers, clinking drills.

Dust, and noise, and hot confusion made a Babel of the spot:
There, among the lowliest workers, Felix sought and found his lot.

Now he swung the ponderous mallet, smote the iron in the rock—­
Muscles quivering, tingling, throbbing—­blow on blow and shock on shock;

Now he drove the willow wedges, wet them till they swelled and split,
With their silent strength, the fragment, sent it thundering down the
pit.

Now the groaning tackle raised it; now the rollers made it slide;
Harnessed men, like beasts of burden, drew it to the river-side.

Now the palm-trees must be riven, massive timbers hewn and dressed;
Rafts to bear the stones in safety on the rushing river’s breast.

Axe and auger, saw and chisel, wrought the will of man in wood:
’Mid the many-handed labour Felix toiled, and found it good.

  Every day the blood ran fleeter through his limbs and round his heart;
  Every night he slept the sweeter, knowing he had done his part.

  Dreams of solitary saintship faded from him; but, instead,
  Came a sense of daily comfort in the toil for daily bread.

  Far away, across the river, gleamed the white walls of the town
  Whither all the stones and timbers day by day were floated down.

**Page 27**

  There the workman saw his labour taking form and bearing fruit,
  Like a tree with splendid branches rising from a humble root.

  Looking at the distant city, temples, houses, domes, and towers,
  Felix cried in exultation:  “All that mighty work is ours.

  “Every toiler in the quarry, every builder on the shore,
  Every chopper in the palm-grove, every raftsman at the oar,

  “Hewing wood and drawing water, splitting stones and cleaving sod,
  All the dusty ranks of labour, in the regiment of God,

  “March together toward His triumph, do the task His hands prepare:
  Honest toil is holy service; faithful work is praise and prayer.”

While he bore the heat and burden Felix felt the sense of rest
Flowing softly like a fountain, deep within his weary breast;

Felt the brotherhood of labour, rising round him like a tide,
Overflow his heart and join him to the workers at his side.

Oft he cheered them with his singing at the breaking of the light,
Told them tales of Christ at noonday, taught them words of prayer at
night.

Once he bent above a comrade fainting in the mid-day heat,
Sheltered him with woven palm-leaves, gave him water, cool and sweet.

Then it seemed, for one swift moment, secret radiance filled the place;
Underneath the green palm-branches flashed a look of Jesus’ face.

Once again, a raftsman, slipping, plunged beneath the stream and sank;
Swiftly Felix leaped to rescue, caught him, drew him toward the bank—­

  Battling with the cruel river, using all his strength to save—­
  Did he dream? or was there One beside him walking on the wave?

  Now at last the work was ended, grove deserted, quarry stilled;
  Felix journeyed to the city that his hands had helped to build.

  In the darkness of the temple, at the closing hour of day,
  As of old he sought the altar, as of old he knelt to pray:

  “Hear me, O Thou hidden Master!  Thou hast sent a word to me;
  It is written—­Thy commandment—­I have kept it faithfully.

  “Thou hast bid me leave the visions of the solitary life,
  Bear my part in human labour, take my share in human strife.

  “I have done Thy bidding, Master; raised the rock and felled the tree,
  Swung the axe and plied the hammer, working every day for Thee.

  “Once it seemed I saw Thy presence through the bending palm-leaves gleam;
  Once upon the flowing water—­Nay, I know not; ’twas a dream!

  “This I know:  Thou hast been near me:  more than this I dare not ask.
  Though I see Thee not, I love Thee.  Let me do Thy humblest task!”

  Through the dimness of the temple slowly dawned a mystic light;
  There the Master stood in glory, manifest to mortal sight:

  Hands that bore the mark of labour, brow that bore the print of care;
  Hands of power, divinely tender; brow of light, divinely fair.

**Page 28**

  “Hearken, good and faithful servant, true disciple, loyal friend!
  Thou hast followed me and found me; I will keep thee to the end.

  “Well I know thy toil and trouble; often weary, fainting, worn,
  I have lived the life of labour, heavy burdens I have borne.

  “Never in a prince’s palace have I slept on golden bed,
  Never in a hermit’s cavern have I eaten unearned bread.

  “Born within a lowly stable, where the cattle round me stood,
  Trained a carpenter in Nazareth, I have toiled, and found it good.

  “They who tread the path of labour follow where my feet have trod;
  They who work without complaining do the holy will of God.

  “Where the many toil together, there am I among my own;
  Where the tired workman sleepeth, there am I with him alone.

  “I, the peace that passeth knowledge, dwell amid the daily strife;
  I, the bread of heaven, am broken in the sacrament of life.

“Every task, however simple, sets the soul that does it free;
Every deed of love and mercy, done to man, is done to me.

“Thou hast learned the open secret; thou hast come to me for rest;
With thy burden, in thy labour, thou art Felix, doubly blest.

“Nevermore thou needest seek me; I am with thee everywhere; *Raise the stone, and thou shall find me; cleave the wood, and
I am there.*”

**III**

**ENVOY**

The legend of Felix is ended, the toiling of Felix is done;
The Master has paid him his wages, the goal of his journey is won;
He rests, but he never is idle; a thousand years pass like a day,
In the glad surprise of that Paradise where work is sweeter than play.

  Yet often the King of that country comes out from His tireless host,
  And walks in this world of the weary as if He loved it the most;
  For here in the dusty confusion, with eyes that are heavy and dim,
  He meets again the labouring men who are looking and longing for Him.

He cancels the curse of Eden, and brings them a blessing instead:
Blessed are they that labour, for Jesus partakes of their bread.
He puts His hand to their burdens, He enters their homes at night:
Who does his best shall have as a guest the Master of life and light.

And courage will come with His presence, and patience return at His
touch,
And manifold sins be forgiven to those who love Him much;
The cries of envy and anger will change to the songs of cheer,
The toiling age will forget its rage when the Prince of Peace draws near.

This is the gospel of labour, ring it, ye bells of the kirk!
The Lord of Love came down from above, to live with the men who work.
This is the rose that He planted, here in the thorn-curst soil:
Heaven is blest with perfect rest, but the blessing of Earth is toil.

**Page 29**

1898.

**VERA**

**I**

  A silent world,—­yet full of vital joy
  Uttered in rhythmic movements manifold,
  And sunbeams flashing on the face of things
  Like sudden smilings of divine delight,—­
  A world of many sorrows too, revealed
  In fading flowers and withering leaves and dark
  Tear-laden clouds, and tearless, clinging mists
  That hung above the earth too sad to weep,—­
  A world of fluent change, and changeless flow,
  And infinite suggestion of new thought,
  Reflected in the crystal of the heart,—­
  A world of many meanings but no words,
  A silent world was Vera’s home.
                                  For her
  The inner doors of sound were closely sealed
  The outer portals, delicate as shells
  Suffused with faintest rose of far-off morn,
  Like underglow of daybreak in the sea,—­
  The ear-gates of the garden of her soul,
  Shaded by drooping tendrils of brown hair,—­
  Waited in vain for messengers to pass,
  And thread the labyrinth with flying feet,
  And swiftly knock upon the inmost door,
  And enter in, and speak the mystic word.
  But through those gates no message ever came.
  Only with eyes did she behold and see,—­
  With eyes as luminous and bright and brown
  As waters of a woodland river,—­eyes
  That questioned so they almost seemed to speak,
  And answered so they almost seemed to hear,—­
  Only with wondering eyes did she behold
  The silent splendour of a living world.

She saw the great wind ranging freely down
Interminable archways of the wood,
While tossing boughs and bending tree-tops hailed
His coming:  but no sea-toned voice of pines,
No roaring of the oaks, no silvery song
Of poplars or of birches, followed him.
He passed; they waved their arms and clapped their hands;
There was no sound.
The torrents from the hills
Leaped down their rocky pathways, like wild steeds
Breaking the yoke and shaking manes of foam.
The lowland brooks coiled smoothly through the fields,
And softly spread themselves in glistening lakes
Whose ripples merrily danced among the reeds.
The standing waves that ever keep their place
In the swift rapids, curled upon themselves,
And seemed about to break and never broke;
And all the wandering waves that fill the sea
Came buffeting in along the stony shore,
Or plunging in along the level sands,
Or creeping in along the winding creeks
And inlets.  Yet from all the ceaseless flow
And turmoil of the restless element
Came neither song of joy nor sob of grief;
For there were many waters, but no voice.

**Page 30**

  Silent the actors all on Nature’s stage
  Performed their parts before her watchful eyes,
  Coming and going, making war and love,
  Working and playing, all without a sound.
  The oxen drew their load with swaying necks;
  The cows came sauntering home along the lane;
  The nodding sheep were led from field to fold
  In mute obedience.  Down the woodland track
  The hounds with panting sides and lolling tongues
  Pursued their flying prey in noiseless haste.
  The birds, the most alive of living things,
  Mated, and built their nests, and reared their young,
  And swam the flood of air like tiny ships
  Rising and falling over unseen waves,
  And, gathering in great navies, bore away
  To North or South, without a note of song.

  All these were Vera’s playmates; and she loved
  To watch them, wondering oftentimes how well
  They knew their parts, and how the drama moved
  So swiftly, smoothly on from scene to scene
  Without confusion.  But she sometimes dreamed
  There must be something hidden in the play
  Unknown to her, an utterance of life
  More clear than action and more deep than looks.
  And this she felt most deeply when she watched
  Her human comrades and the throngs of men,
  Who met and parted oft with moving lips
  That had a meaning more than she could see.
  She saw a lover bend above a maid,
  With moving lips; and though he touched her not
  A sudden rose of joy bloomed in her face.
  She saw a hater stand before his foe
  And move his lips; whereat the other shrank
  As if he had been smitten on the mouth.
  She saw the regiments of toiling men
  Marshalled in ranks and led by moving lips.
  And once she saw a sight more strange than all:
  A crowd of people sitting charmed and still
  Around a little company of men
  Who touched their hands in measured, rhythmic time
  To curious instruments; a woman stood
  Among them, with bright eyes and heaving breast,
  And lifted up her face and moved her lips.
  Then Vera wondered at the idle play,
  But when she looked around, she saw the glow
  Of deep delight on every face, as if
  Some visitor from a celestial world
  Had brought glad tidings.  But to her alone
  No angel entered, for the choir of sound
  Was vacant in the temple of her soul,
  And worship lacked her golden crown of song.

  So when by vision baffled and perplexed
  She saw that all the world could not be seen,
  And knew she could not know the whole of life
  Unless a hidden gate should be unsealed,
  She felt imprisoned.  In her heart there grew
  The bitter creeping plant of discontent,
  The plant that only grows in prison soil,
  Whose root is hunger and whose fruit is pain.
  The springs of still delight and tranquil joy
  Were drained as dry as desert dust to

**Page 31**

feed
  That never-flowering vine, whose tendrils clung
  With strangling touch around the bloom of life
  And made it wither.  Vera could not rest
  Within the limits of her silent world;
  Along its dumb and desolate paths she roamed
  A captive, looking sadly for escape.

  Now in those distant days, and in that land
  Remote, there lived a Master wonderful,
  Who knew the secret of all life, and could,
  With gentle touches and with potent words,
  Open all gates that ever had been sealed,
  And loose all prisoners whom Fate had bound.
  Obscure he dwelt, not in the wilderness,
  But in a hut among the throngs of men,
  Concealed by meekness and simplicity.
  And ever as he walked the city streets,
  Or sat in quietude beside the sea,
  Or trod the hillsides and the harvest fields,
  The multitude passed by and knew him not.
  But there were some who knew, and turned to him
  For help; and unto all who asked, he gave.
  Thus Vera came, and found him in the field,
  And knew him by the pity in his face.
  She knelt to him and held him by one hand,
  And laid the other hand upon her lips
  In mute entreaty.  Then she lifted up
  The coils of hair that hung about her neck,
  And bared the beauty of the gates of sound,—­
  Those virgin gates through which no voice had passed,—­
  She made them bare before the Master’s sight,
  And looked into the kindness of his face
  With eyes that spoke of all her prisoned pain,
  And told her great desire without a word.

  The Master waited long in silent thought,
  As one reluctant to bestow a gift,
  Not for the sake of holding back the thing
  Entreated, but because he surely knew
  Of something better that he fain would give
  If only she would ask it.  Then he stooped
  To Vera, smiling, touched her ears and spoke:
  “Open, fair gates, and you, reluctant doors,
  Within the ivory labyrinth of the ear,
  Let fall the bar of silence and unfold!
  Enter, you voices of all living things,
  Enter the garden sealed,—­but softly, slowly,
  Not with a noise confused and broken tumult,—­
  Come in an order sweet as I command you,
  And bring the double gift of speech and hearing.”

  Vera began to hear.  At first the wind
  Breathed a low prelude of the birth of sound,
  As if an organ far away were touched
  By unseen fingers; then the little stream
  That hurried down the hillside, swept the harp
  Of music into merry, tinkling notes;
  And then the lark that poised above her head
  On wings a-quiver, overflowed the air
  With showers of song; and one by one the tones
  Of all things living, in an order sweet,
  Without confusion and with deepening power,
  Entered the garden sealed.  And last of all
  The Master’s voice, the human voice divine,
  Passed through the gates and called her by her name,
  And Vera heard.

**Page 32**

**II**

                  What rapture of new life
  Must come to one for whom a silent world
  Is suddenly made vocal, and whose heart
  By the same magic is awaked at once,
  Without the learner’s toil and long delay,
  Out of a night of dumbly moving dreams,
  Into a day that overflows with music!
  This joy was Vera’s; and to her it seemed
  As if a new creative morn had risen
  Upon the earth, and after the full week
  When living things unfolded silently,
  And after the long, quiet Sabbath day,
  When all was still, another day had dawned,
  And through the calm expectancy of heaven
  A secret voice had said, “Let all things speak.”
  The world responded with an instant joy;
  And all the unseen avenues of sound
  Were thronged with varying forms of viewless life.

  To every living thing a voice was given
  Distinct and personal.  The forest trees
  Were not more varied in their shades of green
  Than in their tones of speech; and every bird
  That nested in their branches had a song
  Unknown to other birds and all his own.
  The waters spoke a hundred dialects
  Of one great language; now with pattering fall
  Of raindrops on the glistening leaves, and now
  With steady roar of rivers rushing down
  To meet the sea, and now with rhythmic throb
  And measured tumult of tempestuous waves,
  And now with lingering lisp of creeping tides,—­
  The manifold discourse of many waters.
  But most of all the human voice was full
  Of infinite variety, and ranged
  Along the scale of life’s experience
  With changing tones, and notes both sweet and sad,
  All fitted to express some unseen thought,
  Some vital motion of the hidden heart.
  So Vera listened with her new-born sense
  To all the messengers that passed the gates,
  In measureless delight and utter trust,
  Believing that they brought a true report
  From every living thing of its true life,
  And hoping that at last they would make clear
  The mystery and the meaning of the world.

  But soon there came a trouble in her joy,
  A note discordant that dissolved the chord
  And broke the bliss of hearing into pain.
  Not from the harsher sounds and voices wild
  Of anger and of anguish, that reveal
  The secret strife in nature, and confess
  The touch of sorrow on the heart of life,—­
  From these her trouble came not.  For in these,
  However sad, she felt the note of truth,
  And truth, though sad, is always musical.
  The raging of the tempest-ridden sea,
  The crash of thunder, and the hollow moan
  Of winds complaining round the mountain-crags,
  The shrill and quavering cry of birds of prey,
  The fiercer roar of conflict-loving beasts,—­
  All these wild sounds are potent in their

**Page 33**

place
  Within life’s mighty symphony; the charm
  Of truth attunes them, and the hearing ear
  Finds pleasure in their rude sincerity.
  Even the broken and tumultuous noise
  That rises from great cities, where the heart
  Of human toil is beating heavily
  With ceaseless murmurs of the labouring pulse,
  Is not a discord; for it speaks to life
  Of life unfeigned, and full of hopes and fears,
  And touched through all the trouble of its notes
  With something real and therefore glorious.

  One voice alone of all that sound on earth,
  Is hateful to the soul, and full of pain,—­
  The voice of falsehood.  So when Vera heard
  This mocking voice, and knew that it was false;
  When first she learned that human lips can speak
  The thing that is not, and betray the ear
  Of simple trust with treachery of words;
  The joy of hearing withered in her heart.
  For now she felt that faithless messengers
  Could pass the open and unguarded gates
  Of sound, and bring a message all untrue,
  Or half a truth that makes the deadliest lie,
  Or idle babble, neither false nor true,
  But hollow to the heart, and meaningless.
  She heard the flattering voices of deceit,
  That mask the hidden purposes of men
  With fair attire of favourable words,
  And hide the evil in the guise of good:
  The voices vain and decorous and smooth,
  That fill the world with empty-hearted talk;
  The foolish voices, wandering and confused,
  That never clearly speak the thing they would,
  But ramble blindly round their true intent
  And tangle sense in hopeless coils of sound,—­
  All these she heard, and with a deep mistrust
  Began to doubt the value of her gift.
  It seemed as if the world, the living world,
  Sincere, and vast, and real, were still concealed,
  And she, within the prison of her soul,
  Still waiting silently to hear the voice
  Of perfect knowledge and of perfect peace.

So with the burden of her discontent
She turned to seek the Master once again,
And found him sitting in the market-place,
Half-hidden in the shadow of a porch,
Alone among the careless crowd.
She spoke:
“Thy gift was great, dear Master, and my heart
Has thanked thee many times because I hear
But I have learned that hearing is not all;
For underneath the speech of men, there flows
Another current of their hidden thoughts;
Behind the mask of language I perceive
The eyes of things unsaid.
Touch me again,
O Master, with thy liberating hand,
And free me from the bondage of deceit.
Open another gate, and let me hear
The secret thoughts and purposes of men;
For only thus my heart will be at rest,
And only thus, at last, I shall perceive
The mystery and the meaning of the world.”

**Page 34**

  The Master’s face was turned aside from her;
  His eyes looked far away, as if he saw
  Something beyond her sight; and yet she knew
  That he was listening; for her pleading voice
  No sooner ceased than he put forth his hand
  To touch her brow, and very gently spoke:
  “Thou seekest for thyself a wondrous gift,—­
  The opening of the second gate, a gift
  That many wise men have desired in vain:
  But some have found it,—­whether well or ill
  For their own peace, they have attained the power
  To hear unspoken thoughts of other men.
  And thou hast begged this gift?  Thou shalt receive,—­
  Not knowing what thou seekest,—­it is thine:
  The second gate is open!  Thou shalt hear
  All that men think and feel within their hearts:
  Thy prayer is granted, daughter, go thy way!
  But if thou findest sorrow on this path,
  Come back again,—­there is a path to peace.”

**III**

  Beyond our power of vision, poets say,
  There is another world of forms unseen,
  Yet visible to purer eyes than ours.
  And if the crystal of our sight were clear,
  We should behold the mountain-slopes of cloud,
  The moving meadows of the untilled sea,
  The groves of twilight and the dales of dawn,
  And every wide and lonely field of air,
  More populous than cities, crowded close
  With living creatures of all shapes and hues.
  But if that sight were ours, the things that now
  Engage our eyes would seem but dull and dim
  Beside the wonders of our new-found world,
  And we should be amazed and overwhelmed
  Not knowing how to use the plenitude
  Of vision.
              So in Vera’s soul, at first,
  The opening of the second gate of sound
  Let in confusion like a whirling flood.
  The murmur of a myriad-throated mob;
  The trampling of an army through a place
  Where echoes hide; the sudden, whistling flight
  Of an innumerable flock of birds
  Along the highway of the midnight sky;
  The many-whispered rustling of the reeds
  Beneath the passing feet of all the winds;
  The long-drawn, inarticulate, wailing cry
  Of million-pebbled beaches when the lash
  Of stormy waves is drawn across their back,—­
  All these were less bewildering than to hear
  What now she heard at once:  the tangled sound
  Of all that moves within the minds of men.
  For now there was no measured flow of words
  To mark the time; nor any interval
  Of silence to repose the listening ear.
  But through the dead of night, and through the calm
  Of weary noon-tide, through the solemn hush
  That fills the temple in the pause of praise,
  And through the breathless awe in rooms of death,
  She heard the ceaseless motion and the stir
  Of never-silent hearts, that fill the world
  With interwoven thoughts of good and ill,

 **Page 35**

  With mingled music of delight and grief,
  With songs of love, and bitter cries of hate,
  With hymns of faith, and dirges of despair,
  And murmurs deeper and more vague than all,—­
  Thoughts that are born and die without a name,
  Or rather, never die, but haunt the soul,
  With sad persistence, till a name is given.
  These Vera heard, at first with mind perplexed
  And half-benumbed by the disordered sound.
  But soon a clearer sense began to pierce
  The cloudy turmoil with discerning power.
  She learned to know the tones of human thought
  As plainly as she knew the tones of speech.
  She could divide the evil from the good,
  Interpreting the language of the mind,
  And tracing every feeling like a thread
  Within the mystic web the passions weave
  From heart to heart around the living world.

  But when at last the Master’s second gift
  Was perfected within her, and she heard
  And understood the secret thoughts of men,
  A sadness fell upon her, and the load
  Of insupportable knowledge pressed her down
  With weary wishes to know more, or less.
  For all she knew was like a broken word
  Inscribed upon the fragment of a ring;
  And all she heard was like a broken strain
  Preluding music that is never played.

  Then she remembered in her sad unrest
  The Master’s parting word,—­“a path to peace,”—­
  And turned again to seek him with her grief.
  She found him in a hollow of the hills,
  Beside a little spring that issued forth
  Beneath the rocks and filled a mossy cup
  With never-failing water.  There he sat,
  With waiting looks that welcomed her afar.
  “I know that thou hast heard, my child,” he said,
  “For all the wonder of the world of sound
  Is written in thy face.  But hast thou heard,
  Among the many voices, one of peace?
  And is thy heart that hears the secret thoughts,
  The hidden wishes and desires of men,
  Content with hearing?  Art thou satisfied?”
  “Nay, Master,” she replied, “thou knowest well
  That I am not at rest, nor have I heard
  The voice of perfect peace; but what I hear
  Brings me disquiet and a troubled mind.
  The evil voices in the souls of men,
  Voices of rage and cruelty and fear
  Have not dismayed me; for I have believed
  The voices of the good, the kind, the true,
  Are more in number and excel in strength.
  There is more love than hate, more hope than fear,
  In the deep throbbing of the human heart.
  But while I listen to the troubled sound,
  One thing torments me, and destroys my rest
  And presses me with dull, unceasing pain.
  For out of all the minds of all mankind,
  There rises evermore a questioning voice
  That asks the meaning of this mighty world
  And finds no answer,—­asks, and asks again,
  With patient pleading or with wild complaint,

 **Page 36**

  But wakens no response, except the sound
  Of other questions, wandering to and fro,
  From other souls in doubt.  And so this voice
  Persists above all others that I hear,
  And binds them up together into one,
  Until the mingled murmur of the world
  Sounds through the inner temple of my heart
  Like an eternal question, vainly asked
  By every human soul that thinks and feels.
  This is the heaviness that weighs me down,
  And this the pain that will not let me rest.
  Therefore, dear Master, shut the gates again,
  And let me live in silence as before!
  Or else,—­and if there is indeed a gate
  Unopened yet, through which I might receive
  An answer in the voice of perfect peace—­”

  She ceased; and in her upward faltering tone
  The question echoed.
                        Then the Master said:
  “There is another gate, not yet unclosed.
  For through the outer portal of the ear
  Only the outer voice of things may pass;
  And through the middle doorway of the mind
  Only the half-formed voice of human thoughts,
  Uncertain and perplexed with endless doubt;
  But through the inmost gate the spirit hears
  The voice of that great Spirit who is Life.
  Beneath the tones of living things He breathes
  A deeper tone than ever ear hath heard;
  And underneath the troubled thoughts of men
  He thinks forever, and His thought is peace.
  Behold, I touch thee once again, my child:
  The third and last of those three hidden gates
  That closed around thy soul and shut thee in,
  Is open now, and thou shalt truly hear.”

  Then Vera heard.  The spiritual gate
  Was opened softly as a full-blown flower
  Unfolds its heart to welcome in the dawn,
  And on her listening face there shone a light
  Of still amazement and completed joy
  In the full gift of hearing.
                                What she heard
  I cannot tell; nor could she ever tell
  In words; because all human words are vain.
  There is no speech nor language, to express
  The secret messages of God, that make
  Perpetual music in the hearing heart.
  Below the voice of waters, and above
  The wandering voice of winds, and underneath
  The song of birds, and all the varying tones
  Of living things that fill the world with sound,
  God spoke to her, and what she heard was peace.

  So when the Master questioned, “Dost thou hear?”
  She answered, “Yea, at last I hear.”  And then
  He asked her once again, “What hearest thou?
  What means the voice of Life?” She answered, “Love!
  For love is life, and they who do not love
  Are not alive.  But every soul that loves,
  Lives in the heart of God and hears Him speak.”

1898.

**ANOTHER CHANCE**

**A DRAMATIC LYRIC**

**Page 37**

  Come, give me back my life again, you heavy-handed Death!
  Uncrook your fingers from my throat, and let me draw my breath.
  You do me wrong to take me now—­too soon for me to die—­
  Ah, loose me from this clutching pain, and hear the reason why.

  I know I’ve had my forty years, and wasted every one;
  And yet, I tell you honestly, my life is just begun;
  I’ve walked the world like one asleep, a dreamer in a trance;
  But now you’ve gripped me wide awake—­I want another chance.

  My dreams were always beautiful, my thoughts were high and fine;
  No life was ever lived on earth to match those dreams of mine.
  And would you wreck them unfulfilled?  What folly, nay, what crime!
  You rob the world, you waste a soul; give me a little time.

  You’ll hear me?  Yes, I’m sure you will, my hope is not in vain:
  I feel the even pulse of peace, the sweet relief from pain;
  The black fog rolls away from me; I’m free once more to plan:
  Another chance is all I need to prove myself a man!

\* \* \* \* \*

  The world is full of warfare ’twixt the evil and the good;
  I watched the battle from afar as one who understood
  The shouting and confusion, the bloody, blundering fight—­
  How few there are that see it clear, how few that wage it right!

  The captains flushed with foolish pride, the soldiers pale with fear,
  The faltering flags, the feeble fire from ranks that swerve and veer,
  The wild mistakes, the dismal doubts, the coward hearts that flee—­
  The good cause needs a nobler knight to win the victory.

  A man whose soul is pure and strong, whose sword is bright and keen,
  Who knows the splendour of the fight and what its issues mean;
  Who never takes one step aside, nor halts, though hope be dim,
  But cleaves a pathway thro’ the strife, and bids men follow him.

  No blot upon his stainless shield, no weakness in his arm;
  No sign of trembling in his face to break his valour’s charm:
  A man like this could stay the flight and lead the wavering line;
  Ah, give me but a year of life—­I’ll make that glory mine!

\* \* \* \* \*

  Religion?  Yes, I know it well; I’ve heard its prayers and creeds,
  And seen men put them all to shame with poor, half-hearted deeds.
  They follow Christ, but far away; they wander and they doubt.
  I’ll serve him in a better way, and live his precepts out.

  You see, I waited just for this; I could not be content
  To own a feeble, faltering faith with human weakness blent.
  Too many runners in the race move slowly, stumble, fall;
  But I will run so straight and swift I shall outstrip them all.

  Oh, think what it will mean to men, amid their foolish strife,
  To see the clear, unshadowed light of one true Christian life,
  Without a touch of selfishness, without a taint of sin,—­
  With one short month of such a life a new world would begin!

**Page 38**

\* \* \* \* \*

  And love!—­I often dream of that—­the treasure of the earth;
  How little they who use the coin have realised its worth!
  ’Twill pay all debts, enrich all hearts, and make all joys secure.
  But love, to do its perfect work, must be sincere and pure.

  My heart is full of virgin gold.  I’ll pour it out and spend
  My hidden wealth with open hand on all who call me friend.
  Not one shall miss the kindly deed, the largess of relief,
  The generous fellowship of joy, the sympathy of grief.

  I’ll say the loyal, helpful things that make life sweet and fair,
  I’ll pay the gratitude I owe for human love and care.
  Perhaps I’ve been at fault sometimes—­I’ll ask to be forgiven,
  And make this little room of mine seem like a bit of heaven.

  For one by one I’ll call my friends to stand beside my bed;
  I’ll speak the true and tender words so often left unsaid;
  And every heart shall throb and glow, all coldness melt away
  Around my altar-fire of love—­ah, give me but one day!

\* \* \* \* \*

  What’s that?  I’ve had another day, and wasted it again?
  A priceless day in empty dreams, another chance in vain?
  Thou fool—­this night—­it’s very dark—­the last—­this choking breath—­
  One prayer—­have mercy on a dreamer’s soul—­God, this is death!

**A LEGEND OF SERVICE**

  It pleased the Lord of Angels (praise His name!)
  To hear, one day, report from those who came
  With pitying sorrow, or exultant joy,
  To tell of earthly tasks in His employ.
  For some were grieved because they saw how slow
  The stream of heavenly love on earth must flow;
  And some were glad because their eyes had seen,
  Along its banks, fresh flowers and living green.
  At last, before the whiteness of the throne
  The youngest angel, Asmiel, stood alone;
  Nor glad, nor sad, but full of earnest thought,
  And thus his tidings to the Master brought
  “Lord, in the city Lupon I have found
  Three servants of thy holy name, renowned
  Above their fellows.  One is very wise,
  With thoughts that ever range beyond the skies;
  And one is gifted with the golden speech
  That makes men gladly hear when he will teach;
  And one, with no rare gift or grace endued,
  Has won the people’s love by doing good.
  With three such saints Lupon is trebly blest;
  But, Lord, I fain would know, which loves Thee best?”
  Then spake the Lord of Angels, to whose look
  The hearts of all are like an open book:
  “In every soul the secret thought I read,
  And well I know who loves me best indeed.
  But every life has pages vacant still,
  Whereon a man may write the thing he will;
  Therefore I read the record, day by day,

 **Page 39**

  And wait for hearts untaught to learn my way.
  But thou shalt go to Lupon, to the three
  Who serve me there, and take this word from me:
  Tell each of them his Master bids him go
  Alone to Spiran’s huts, across the snow;
  There he shall find a certain task for me:
  But what, I do not tell to them nor thee.
  Give thou the message, make my word the test,
  And crown for me the one who loves me best.”
  Silent the angel stood, with folded hands,
  To take the imprint of his Lord’s commands;
  Then drew one breath, obedient and elate,
  And passed the self-same hour, through Lupon’s gate.

\* \* \* \* \*

  First to the Temple door he made his way;
  And there, because it was a holy-day,
  He saw the folk in thousands thronging, stirred
  By ardent thirst to hear the preacher’s word.
  Then, while the people whispered Bernol’s name,
  Through aisles that hushed behind him Bernol came;
  Strung to the keenest pitch of conscious might,
  With lips prepared and firm, and eyes alight.
  One moment at the pulpit step he knelt
  In silent prayer, and on his shoulder felt
  The angel’s hand:—­“The Master bids thee go
  Alone to Spiran’s huts, across the snow,
  To serve Him there.”  Then Bernol’s hidden face
  Went white as death, and for about the space
  Of ten slow heart-beats there was no reply;
  Till Bernol looked around and whispered, “*Why?*”
  But answer to his question came there none;
  The angel sighed, and with a sigh was gone.

\* \* \* \* \*

  Within the humble house where Malvin spent
  His studious years, on holy things intent,
  Sweet stillness reigned; and there the angel found
  The saintly sage immersed in thought profound,
  Weaving with patient toil and willing care
  A web of wisdom, wonderful and fair:
  A seamless robe for Truth’s great bridal meet,
  And needing but one thread to be complete.
  Then Asmiel touched his hand, and broke the thread
  Of fine-spun thought, and very gently said,
  “The One of whom thou thinkest bids thee go
  Alone to Spiran’s huts, across the snow,
  To serve Him there.”  With sorrow and surprise
  Malvin looked up, reluctance in his eyes.
  The broken thought, the strangeness of the call,
  The perilous passage of the mountain-wall,
  The solitary journey, and the length
  Of ways unknown, too great for his frail strength,
  Appalled him.  With a doubtful brow
  He scanned the doubtful task, and muttered “*How?*”
  But Asmiel answered, as he turned to go,
  With cold, disheartened voice, “I do not know.”

\* \* \* \* \*

**Page 40**

  Now as he went, with fading hope, to seek
  The third and last to whom God bade him speak,
  Scarce twenty steps away whom should he meet
  But Fermor, hurrying cheerful down the street,
  With ready heart that faced his work like play,
  And joyed to find it greater every day!
  The angel stopped him with uplifted hand,
  And gave without delay his Lord’s command:
  “He whom thou servest here would have thee go
  Alone to Spiran’s huts, across the snow,
  To serve Him there.”  Ere Asmiel breathed again
  The eager answer leaped to meet him, “*When?*”

  The angel’s face with inward joy grew bright,
  And all his figure glowed with heavenly light;
  He took the golden circlet from his brow
  And gave the crown to Fermor, answering, “Now!
  For thou hast met the Master’s hidden test,
  And I have found the man who loves Him best.
  Not thine, nor mine, to question or reply
  When He commands us, asking ‘how?’ or ‘why?’
  He knows the cause; His ways are wise and just;
  Who serves the King must serve with perfect trust.”

February, 1902.

**THE WHITE BEES**

**I**

**LEGEND**

  Long ago Apollo called to Aristaeus, youngest of the shepherds,
    Saying, “I will make you keeper of my bees.”
  Golden were the hives and golden was the honey; golden, too, the music
    Where the honey-makers hummed among the trees.

Happy Aristaeus loitered in the garden, wandered in the orchard,
Careless and contented, indolent and free;
Lightly took his labour, lightly took his pleasure, till the fated moment
When across his pathway came Eurydice.

Then her eyes enkindled burning love within him; drove him wild with
longing
For the perfect sweetness of her flower-like face;
Eagerly he followed, while she fled before him, over mead and mountain,
On through field and forest, in a breathless race.

But the nymph, in flying, trod upon a serpent; like a dream she vanished;
Pluto’s chariot bore her down among the dead!
Lonely Aristaeus, sadly home returning, found his garden empty,
All the hives deserted, all the music fled.

Mournfully bewailing,—­“Ah, my honey-makers, where have you departed?”
Far and wide he sought them over sea and shore;
Foolish is the tale that says he ever found them, brought them home in
triumph,—­
Joys that once escape us fly for evermore.

Yet I dream that somewhere, clad in downy whiteness, dwell the
honey-makers,
In aerial gardens that no mortal sees:
And at times returning, lo, they flutter round us, gathering mystic
harvest,—­
So I weave the legend of the long-lost bees.

**II**

**THE SWARMING OF THE BEES**

**Page 41**

Who can tell the hiding of the white bees’ nest?
Who can trace the guiding of their swift home flight?
Far would be his riding on a life-long quest:
Surely ere it ended would his beard grow white.

  Never in the coming of the rose-red Spring,
    Never in the passing of the wine-red Fall,
  May you hear the humming of the white bee’s wing
    Murmur o’er the meadow ere the night bells call.

  Wait till winter hardens in the cold gray sky,
    Wait till leaves are fallen and the brooks all freeze,
  Then above the gardens where the dead flowers lie,
    Swarm the merry millions of the wild white bees.

        Out of the high-built airy hive,
        Deep in the clouds that veil the sun,
        Look how the first of the swarm arrive;
        Timidly venturing, one by one,
        Down through the tranquil air,
        Wavering here and there,
        Large, and lazy in flight,—­
        Caught by a lift of the breeze,
        Tangled among the naked trees,—­
        Dropping then, without a sound,
        Feather-white, feather-light,
        To their rest on the ground.

        Thus the swarming is begun.
        Count the leaders, every one
        Perfect as a perfect star
        Till the slow descent is done.
        Look beyond them, see how far
        Down the vistas dim and gray,
        Multitudes are on the way.
        Now a sudden brightness
        Dawns within the sombre day,
        Over fields of whiteness;
        And the sky is swiftly alive
        With the flutter and the flight
        Of the shimmering bees, that pour
        From the hidden door of the hive
        Till you can count no more.

  Now on the branches of hemlock and pine
  Thickly they settle and cluster and swing,
  Bending them low; and the trellised vine
  And the dark elm-boughs are traced with a line
  Of beauty wherever the white bees cling.
  Now they are hiding the wrecks of the flowers,
      Softly, softly, covering all,
  Over the grave of the summer hours
      Spreading a silver pall.
  Now they are building the broad roof ledge,
  Into a cornice smooth and fair,
  Moulding the terrace, from edge to edge,
  Into the sweep of a marble stair.
  Wonderful workers, swift and dumb,
  Numberless myriads, still they come,
  Thronging ever faster, faster, faster!
  Where is their queen?  Who is their master?
  The gardens are faded, the fields are frore,—­
  What is the honey they toil to store
  In the desolate day, where no blossoms gleam?
     *Forgetfulness and a dream!*

**Page 42**

  But now the fretful wind awakes;
  I hear him girding at the trees;
  He strikes the bending boughs, and shakes
  The quiet clusters of the bees
      To powdery drift;
    He tosses them away,
    He drives them like spray;
  He makes them veer and shift
    Around his blustering path.
    In clouds blindly whirling,
    In rings madly swirling,
    Full of crazy wrath,
  So furious and fast they fly
  They blur the earth and blot the sky
      In wild, white mirk.
  They fill the air with frozen wings
  And tiny, angry, icy stings;
  They blind the eyes, and choke the breath,
  They dance a maddening dance of death
      Around their work,
  Sweeping the cover from the hill,
  Heaping the hollows deeper still,
  Effacing every line and mark,
  And swarming, storming in the dark
      Through the long night;
  Until, at dawn, the wind lies down
      Weary of fight;
  The last torn cloud, with trailing gown,
  Passes the open gates of light;
  And the white bees are lost in flight.

  Look how the landscape glitters wide and still,
      Bright with a pure surprise!
  The day begins with joy, and all past ill,
      Buried in white oblivion, lies
  Beneath the snow-drifts under crystal skies.
  New hope, new love, new life, new cheer,
    Flow in the sunrise beam,—­
    The gladness of Apollo when he sees,
  Upon the bosom of the wintry year,
  The honey-harvest of his wild white bees,
     *Forgetfulness and a dream!*

**III**

**LEGEND**

  Listen, my beloved, while the silver morning, like a tranquil vision,
    Fills the world around us and our hearts with peace;
  Quiet is the close of Aristaeus’ legend, happy is the ending—­
    Listen while I tell you how he found release.

Many months he wandered far away in sadness, desolately thinking
Only of the vanished joys he could not find;
Till the great Apollo, pitying his shepherd, loosed him from the burden
Of a dark, reluctant, backward-looking mind.

Then he saw around him all the changeful beauty of the changing seasons,
In the world-wide regions where his journey lay;
Birds that sang to cheer him, flowers that bloomed beside him, stars that
shone to guide him,—­
Traveller’s joy was plenty all along the way!

Everywhere he journeyed strangers made him welcome, listened while he
taught them
Secret lore of field and forest he had learned:
How to train the vines and make the olives fruitful; how to guard the
sheepfolds;
How to stay the fever when the dog-star burned.

Friendliness and blessing followed in his footsteps; richer were the
harvests,
Happier the dwellings, wheresoe’er he came;
Little children loved him, and he left behind him, in the hour of
parting,
Memories of kindness and a god-like name.

**Page 43**

So he travelled onward, desolate no longer, patient in his seeking,
Reaping all the wayside comfort of his quest;
Till at last in Thracia, high upon Mount Haemus, far from human dwelling,
Weary Aristaeus laid him down to rest.

Then the honey-makers, clad in downy whiteness, fluttered soft around
him,
Wrapt him in a dreamful slumber pure and deep.
This is life, beloved:  first a sheltered garden, then a troubled journey,
Joy and pain of seeking,—­and at last we sleep!

1905.

**NEW YEAR’S EVE**

**I**

  The other night I had a dream, most clear
  And comforting, complete
  In every line, a crystal sphere,
  And full of intimate and secret cheer.
  Therefore I will repeat
  That vision, dearest heart, to you,
  As of a thing not feigned, but very true,
  Yes, true as ever in my life befell;
  And you, perhaps, can tell
  Whether my dream was really sad or sweet.

**II**

  The shadows flecked the elm-embowered street
  I knew so well, long, long ago;
  And on the pillared porch where Marguerite
  Had sat with me, the moonlight lay like snow.
  But she, my comrade and my friend of youth,
  Most gaily wise,
  Most innocently loved,—­
  She of the blue-gray eyes
  That ever smiled and ever spoke the truth,—­
  From that familiar dwelling, where she moved
  Like mirth incarnate in the years before,
  Had gone into the hidden house of Death.
  I thought the garden wore
  White mourning for her blessed innocence,
  And the syringa’s breath
  Came from the corner by the fence
  Where she had made her rustic seat,
  With fragrance passionate, intense,
  As if it breathed a sigh for Marguerite.
  My heart was heavy with a sense
  Of something good for ever gone.  I sought
  Vainly for some consoling thought,
  Some comfortable word that I could say
  To her sad father, whom I visited again
  For the first time since she had gone away.
  The bell rang shrill and lonely,—­then
  The door was opened, and I sent my name
  To him,—­but ah! ’twas Marguerite who came!
  There in the dear old dusky room she stood
  Beneath the lamp, just as she used to stand,
  In tender mocking mood.
  “You did not ask for me,” she said,
  “And so I will not let you take my hand;
  But I must hear what secret talk you planned
  With father.  Come, my friend, be good,
  And tell me your affairs of state:
  Why you have stayed away and made me wait
  So long.  Sit down beside me here,—­
  And, do you know, it seems a year
  Since we have talked together,—­why so late?”
  Amazed, incredulous, confused with joy
  I hardly dared to show,
  And stammering like a boy,

 **Page 44**

  I took the place she showed me at her side;
  And then the talk flowed on with brimming tide
  Through the still night,
  While she with influence light
  Controlled it, as the moon the flood.
  She knew where I had been, what I had done,
  What work was planned, and what begun;
  My troubles, failures, fears she understood,
  And touched them with a heart so kind,
  That every care was melted from my mind,
  And every hope grew bright,
  And life seemed moving on to happy ends.
  (Ah, what self-beggared fool was he
  That said a woman cannot be
  The very best of friends?)
  Then there were memories of old times,
  Recalled with many a gentle jest;
  And at the last she brought the book of rhymes
  We made together, trying to translate
  The Songs of Heine (hers were always best).
  “Now come,” she said,
  “To-night we will collaborate
  Again; I’ll put you to the test.
  Here’s one I never found the way to do,—­
  The simplest are the hardest ones, you know,—­
  I give this song to you.”
  And then she read:
       *Mein Kind, wir waren Kinder,
        Zwei Kinder, jung und froh.*

\* \* \* \* \*

  But all the while, a silent question stirred
  Within me, though I dared not speak the word:
  “Is it herself, and is she truly here,
  And was I dreaming when I heard
  That she was dead last year?
  Or was it true, and is she but a shade
  Who brings a fleeting joy to eye and ear,
  Cold though so kind, and will she gently fade
  When her sweet ghostly part is played
  And the light-curtain falls at dawn of day?”

  But while my heart was troubled by this fear
  So deeply that I could not speak it out,
  Lest all my happiness should disappear,
  I thought me of a cunning way
  To hide the question and dissolve the doubt.
  “Will you not give me now your hand,
  Dear Marguerite,” I asked, “to touch and hold,
  That by this token I may understand
  You are the same true friend you were of old?”
  She answered with a smile so bright and calm
  It seemed as if I saw the morn arise
  In the deep heaven of her eyes;
  And smiling so, she laid her palm
  In mine.  Dear God, it was not cold
  But warm with vital heat!
  “You live!” I cried, “you live, dear Marguerite!”
  When I awoke; but strangely comforted,
  Although I knew again that she was dead.

**III**

  Yes, there’s the dream!  And was it sweet or sad?
  Dear mistress of my waking and my sleep,
  Present reward of all my heart’s desire,
  Watching with me beside the winter fire,
  Interpret now this vision that I had.
  But while you read the meaning, let me keep
  The touch of you:  for the Old Year with storm
  Is passing through the midnight, and doth shake
  The corners of the house,—­and oh! my heart would break
  Unless both dreaming and awake
  My hand could feel your hand was warm, warm, warm!

**Page 45**

1905.

**THE VAIN KING**

  In robes of Tyrian blue the King was drest,
  A jewelled collar shone upon his breast,
  A giant ruby glittered in his crown:
  Lord of rich lands and many a splendid town,
  In him the glories of an ancient line
  Of sober kings, who ruled by right divine,
  Were centred; and to him with loyal awe
  The people looked for leadership and law.
  Ten thousand knights, the safeguard of the land,
  Were like a single sword within his hand;
  A hundred courts, with power of life and death,
  Proclaimed decrees of justice by his breath;
  And all the sacred growths that men had known
  Of order and of rule upheld his throne.

  Proud was the King:  yet not with such a heart
  As fits a man to play a royal part.
  Not his the pride that honours as a trust
  The right to rule, the duty to be just:
  Not his the dignity that bends to bear
  The monarch’s yoke, the master’s load of care,
  And labours like the peasant at his gate,
  To serve the people and protect the State.
  Another pride was his, and other joys:
  To him the crown and sceptre were but toys,
  With which he played at glory’s idle game,
  To please himself and win the wreaths of fame.
  The throne his fathers held from age to age,
  To his ambition seemed a fitting stage
  Built for King Martin to display at will,
  His mighty strength and universal skill.
  No conscious child, that, spoiled with praising, tries
  At every step to win admiring eyes,
  No favourite mountebank, whose acting draws
  From gaping crowds the thunder of applause,
  Was vainer than the King:  his only thirst
  Was to be hailed, in every race, the first.
  When tournament was held, in knightly guise
  The King would ride the lists and win the prize;
  When music charmed the court, with golden lyre
  The King would take the stage and lead the choir;
  In hunting, his the lance to slay the boar;
  In hawking, see his falcon highest soar;
  In painting, he would wield the master’s brush;
  In high debate,—­“the King is speaking!  Hush!”
  Thus, with a restless heart, in every field
  He sought renown, and made his subjects yield.
  But while he played the petty games of life
  His kingdom fell a prey to inward strife;
  Corruption through the court unheeded crept,
  And on the seat of honour justice slept.
  The strong trod down the weak; the helpless poor
  Groaned under burdens grievous to endure;
  The nation’s wealth was spent in vain display,
  And weakness wore the nation’s heart away.

**Page 46**

  Yet think not Earth is blind to human woes—­
  Man has more friends and helpers than he knows;
  And when a patient people are oppressed,
  The land that bore them feels it in her breast.
  Spirits of field and flood, of heath and hill,
  Are grieved and angry at the spreading ill;
  The trees complain together in the night,
  Voices of wrath are heard along the height,
  And secret vows are sworn, by stream and strand,
  To bring the tyrant low and free the land.

  But little recked the pampered King of these;
  He heard no voice but such as praise and please.
  Flattered and fooled, victor in every sport,
  One day he wandered idly with his court
  Beside the river, seeking to devise
  New ways to show his skill to wondering eyes.
  There in the stream a patient angler stood,
  And cast his line across the rippling flood.
  His silver spoil lay near him on the green:
  “Such fish,” the courtiers cried, “were never seen!
  Three salmon longer than a cloth-yard shaft—­
  This man must be the master of his craft!”
  “An easy art!” the jealous King replied:
  “Myself could learn it better, if I tried,
  And catch a hundred larger fish a week—­
  Wilt thou accept the challenge, fellow?  Speak!”
  The angler turned, came near, and bent his knee:
  “’Tis not for kings to strive with such as me;
  Yet if the King commands it, I obey.
  But one condition of the strife I pray:
  The fisherman who brings the least to land
  Shall do whate’er the other may command.”
  Loud laughed the King:  “A foolish fisher thou!
  For I shall win, and rule thee then as now.”

  Then to Prince John, a sober soul, sedate
  And slow, King Martin left the helm of State,
  While to the novel game with eager zest
  He all his time and all his powers addressed.
  Sure such a sight was never seen before!
  In robe and crown the monarch trod the shore;
  His golden hooks were decked with feathers fine,
  His jewelled reel ran out a silken line.
  With kingly strokes he flogged the crystal stream;
  Far-off the salmon saw his tackle gleam;
  Careless of kings, they eyed with calm disdain
  The gaudy lure, and Martin fished in vain.
  On Friday, when the week was almost spent,
  He scanned his empty creel with discontent,
  Called for a net, and cast it far and wide,
  And drew—­a thousand minnows from the tide!
  Then came the angler to conclude the match,
  And at the monarch’s feet spread out his catch—­
  A hundred salmon, greater than before.
  “I win!” he cried:  “the King must pay the score.”
  Then Martin, angry, threw his tackle down:
  “Rather than lose this game I’d lose my crown!”
  “Nay, thou hast lost them both,” the angler said;
  And as he spoke a wondrous light was shed
  Around his form; he dropped his garments

**Page 47**

mean,
  And in his place the River-god was seen.
  “Thy vanity has brought thee in my power,
  And thou must pay the forfeit at this hour:
  For thou hast shown thyself a royal fool,
  Too proud to angle, and too vain to rule,
  Eager to win in every trivial strife,—­
  Go!  Thou shalt fish for minnows all thy life!”
  Wrathful, the King the magic sentence heard;
  He strove to answer, but he only *chirr-r-ed*:
  His royal robe was changed to wings of blue,
  His crown a ruby crest,—­away he flew!

  So every summer day along the stream
  The vain King-fisher darts, an azure gleam,
  And scolds the angler with a mocking scream.

April, 1904.

**THE FOOLISH FIR-TREE**

     *A tale that the poet Rueckert told
      To German children, in days of old;
      Disguised in a random, rollicking rhyme
      Like a merry mummer of ancient time,
      And sent, in its English dress, to please
      The little folk of the Christmas trees.*

  A little fir grew in the midst of the wood
  Contented and happy, as young trees should.
  His body was straight and his boughs were clean;
  And summer and winter the bountiful sheen
  Of his needles bedecked him, from top to root,
  In a beautiful, all-the-year, evergreen suit.

  But a trouble came into his heart one day,
  When he saw that the other trees were gay
  In the wonderful raiment that summer weaves
  Of manifold shapes and kinds of leaves:
  He looked at his needles so stiff and small,
  And thought that his dress was the poorest of all.
  Then jealousy clouded the little tree’s mind,
  And he said to himself, “It was not very kind
  To give such an ugly old dress to a tree!
  If the fays of the forest would only ask me,
  I’d tell them how I should like to be dressed,—­
  In a garment of gold, to bedazzle the rest!”
  So he fell asleep, but his dreams were bad.
  When he woke in the morning, his heart was glad;
  For every leaf that his boughs could hold
  Was made of the brightest beaten gold.
  I tell you, children, the tree was proud;
  He was something above the common crowd;
  And he tinkled his leaves, as if he would say
  To a pedlar who happened to pass that way,
  “Just look at me!  Don’t you think I am fine?
  And wouldn’t you like such a dress as mine?”
  “Oh, yes!” said the man, “and I really guess
  I must fill my pack with your beautiful dress.”
  So he picked the golden leaves with care,
  And left the little tree shivering there.

**Page 48**

  “Oh, why did I wish for golden leaves?”
  The fir-tree said, “I forgot that thieves
  Would be sure to rob me in passing by.
  If the fairies would give me another try,
  I’d wish for something that cost much less,
  And be satisfied with glass for my dress!”
  Then he fell asleep; and, just as before,
  The fairies granted his wish once more.
  When the night was gone, and the sun rose clear,
  The tree was a crystal chandelier;
  And it seemed, as he stood in the morning light,
  That his branches were covered with jewels bright.
  “Aha!” said the tree.  “This is something great!”
  And he held himself up, very proud and straight;
  But a rude young wind through the forest dashed,
  In a reckless temper, and quickly smashed
  The delicate leaves.  With a clashing sound
  They broke into pieces and fell on the ground,
  Like a silvery, shimmering shower of hail,
  And the tree stood naked and bare to the gale.

  Then his heart was sad; and he cried, “Alas
  For my beautiful leaves of shining glass!
  Perhaps I have made another mistake
  In choosing a dress so easy to break.
  If the fairies only would hear me again
  I’d ask them for something both pretty and plain:
  It wouldn’t cost much to grant my request,—­
  In leaves of green lettuce I’d like to be dressed!”
  By this time the fairies were laughing, I know;
  But they gave him his wish in a second; and so
  With leaves of green lettuce, all tender and sweet,
  The tree was arrayed, from his head to his feet.
  “I knew it!” he cried, “I was sure I could find
  The sort of a suit that would be to my mind.
  There’s none of the trees has a prettier dress,
  And none as attractive as I am, I guess.”
  But a goat, who was taking an afternoon walk,
  By chance overheard the fir-tree’s talk.
  So he came up close for a nearer view;—­
  “My salad!” he bleated, “I think so too!
  You’re the most attractive kind of a tree,
  And I want your leaves for my five-o’clock tea.”
  So he ate them all without saying grace,
  And walked away with a grin on his face;
  While the little tree stood in the twilight dim,
  With never a leaf on a single limb.

  Then he sighed and groaned; but his voice was weak—­
  He was so ashamed that he could not speak.
  He knew at last he had been a fool,
  To think of breaking the forest rule,
  And choosing a dress himself to please,
  Because he envied the other trees.
  But it couldn’t be helped, it was now too late,
  He must make up his mind to a leafless fate!
  So he let himself sink in a slumber deep,
  But he moaned and he tossed in his troubled sleep,
  Till the morning touched him with joyful beam,
  And he woke to find it was all a dream.
  For there in his evergreen dress he stood,
  A pointed fir in the midst of the wood!
  His branches were sweet with the balsam smell,
  His needles were green when the white snow fell.
  And always contented and happy was he,—­
  The very best kind of a Christmas tree.

**Page 49**

“GRAN’ BOULE”

**A SEAMAN’S TALE OF THE SEA**

  We men hat go down for a livin’ in ships to the sea,—­
  We love it a different way from you poets that ’bide on the land.
  We are fond of it, sure!  But, you take it as comin’ from me,
  There’s a fear and a hate in our love that a landsman can’t understand.

Oh, who could help likin’ the salty smell, and the blue
Of the waves that are lazily breathin’ as if they dreamed in the sun?
She’s a Sleepin’ Beauty, the sea,—­but you can’t tell what she’ll do;
And the seamen never trust her,—­they know too well what she’s done!She’s a wench like one that I saw in a singin’-play,—­
Carmen they called her,—­Lord, what a life her lovers did lead!
She’d cuddle and kiss you, and sing you and dance you away;
And then,—­she’d curse you, and break you, and throw you down like a

                    weed.You may chance it awhile with the girls like that, if you please;
But you want a woman to trust when you settle down with a wife;
And a seaman’s thought of growin’ old at his ease
Is a snug little house on the land to shelter the rest of his life.So that was old Poisson’s dream,—­did you know the Cap’?
A brown little Frenchman, clever, and brave, and quick as a fish,—­
Had a wife and kids on the other side of the map,—­
And a rose-covered cottage for them and him was his darlin’ wish.

  “I ’ave sail,” says he, in his broken-up Frenchy talk,
  “Mos’ forty-two year; I ‘ave go on all part of de worl’ dat ees wet.
  I’m seeck of de boat and de water.  I rader walk
  Wid ma Josephine in one garden; an’ eef we get tire’, we set!

  “You see dat *bateau*, *Sainte Brigitte*?  I bring ’er dh’are
  From de Breton coas’, by gar, jus’ feefteen year bifore.
  She ole w’en she come on Kebec, but *Holloway Freres*
  Dey buy ‘er, an’ hire me run ‘er along dat dam’ Nort’ Shore.

  “Dose engine one leetl’ bit cranky,—­too ole, you see,—­
  She roll and peetch in de wave’.  But I lak’ ’er pretty well;
  An’ dat sheep she lak’ ’er captaine, sure, dat’s me!
  Wit’ forty ton coal in de bunker, I tek’ dat sheep t’rou’ hell.

  “But I don’ wan’ risk it no more; I had *bonne chance*:
  I save already ten t’ousan’ dollar’, dat’s plenty I s’pose!
  Nex’ winter I buy dat house wid de garden on France
  An’ I tell *adieu* to de sea, and I leev’ on de lan’ in ripose.”

  All summer he talked of his house,—­you could see the flowers
  Abloom, and the pear-trees trained on the garden-wall so trim,
  And the Captain awalkin’ and smokin’ away the hours,—­
  He thought he had done with the sea, but the sea hadn’t done with him!

**Page 50**

  It was late in the fall when he made the last regular run,
  Clear down to the Esquimault Point and back with his rickety ship;
  She hammered and pounded a lot, for the storms had begun;
  But he drove her,—­and went for his season’s pay at the end of the trip.

  Now the Holloway Brothers are greedy and thin little men,
  With their eyes set close together, and money’s their only God;
  So they told the Cap’ he must run the “Bridget” again,
  To fetch a cargo from Moisie, two thousand quintals of cod.

  He said the season was over.  They said:  “Not yet.
  You finish the whole of your job, old man, or you don’t draw a cent!”
  (They had the “Bridget” insured for all they could get.)
  And the Captain objected, and cursed, and cried.  But he *went*.

  They took on the cargo at Moisie, and folks beside,—­
  Three traders, a priest, and a couple of nuns, and a girl
  For a school at Quebec,—­when the Captain saw her he sighed,
  And said:  “Ma littl’ Fifi got hair lak’ dat, all curl!”

  The snow had fallen a foot, and the wind was high,
  When the “Bridget” butted her way thro’ the billows on Moisie bar.
  The darkness grew with the gale, not a star in the sky,
  And the Captain swore:  “We mus’ make *Sept Isles* to-night, by gar!”

  He couldn’t go back, for he didn’t dare to turn;
  The sea would have thrown the ship like a mustang noosed with a rope;
  For the monstrous waves were leapin’ high astern,
  And the shelter of Seven Island Bay was the only hope.

  There’s a bunch of broken hills half sunk in the mouth
  Of the bay, with their jagged peaks afoam; and the Captain thought
  He could pass to the north; but the sea kept shovin’ him south,
  With her harlot hands, in the snow-blind murk, till she had him caught.

  She had waited forty years for a night like this,—­
  Did he think he could leave her now, and live in a cottage, the fool?
  She headed him straight for the island he couldn’t miss;
  And heaved his boat in the dark,—­and smashed it against *Gran’ Boule*.

How the Captain and half of the people clambered ashore,
Through the surf and the snow in the gloom of that horrible night,
There’s no one ever will know.  For two days more
The death-white shroud of the tempest covered the island from sight.How they suffered, and struggled, and died, will never be told;
We discovered them all at last when we reached *Gran’ Boule* with a boat;
The drowned and the frozen were lyin’ stiff and cold,
And the poor little girl with the curls was wrapped in the Captain’s

                    coat.Go write your song of the sea as the landsmen do,
And call her your “great sweet mother,” your “bride,” and all the rest;
She was made to be loved,—­but remember, she won’t love you,—­
The men who trust her the least are the sailors who know her the best.

**Page 51**

**HEROES OF THE “TITANIC”**

  Honour the brave who sleep
    Where the lost “Titanic” lies,
  The men who knew what a man must do
    When he looks Death in the eyes.

  “Women and children first,”—­
    Ah, strong and tender cry!
  The sons whom women had borne and nursed,
    Remembered,—­and dared to die.

  The boats crept off in the dark:
    The great ship groaned:  and then,—­
  O stars of the night, who saw that sight,
    Bear witness, *These were men!*

November 9, 1912.

**THE STANDARD-BEARER**

**I**

  “How can I tell,” Sir Edmund said,
    “Who has the right or the wrong o’ this thing?
    Cromwell stands for the people’s cause,
    Charles is crowned by the ancient laws;
  English meadows are sopping red,
  Englishmen striking each other dead,—­
    Times are black as a raven’s wing.
  Out of the ruck and the murk I see
      Only one thing!
  The King has trusted his banner to me,
    And I must fight for the King.”

**II**

  Into the thick of the Edgehill fight
    Sir Edmund rode with a shout; and the ring
    Of grim-faced, hard-hitting Parliament men
    Swallowed him up,—­it was one against ten!
  He fought for the standard with all his might,
  Never again did he come to sight—­
    Victor, hid by the raven’s wing!
  After the battle had passed we found
      Only one thing,—­
  The hand of Sir Edmund gripped around
    The banner-staff of his King.

1914.

**THE PROUD LADY**

  When Staevoren town was in its prime
    And queened the Zuyder Zee,
  Her ships went out to every clime
    With costly merchantry.

  A lady dwelt in that rich town,
    The fairest in all the land;
  She walked abroad in a velvet gown,
    With many rings on her hand.

  Her hair was bright as the beaten gold,
    Her lips as coral red,
  Her roving eyes were blue and bold,
    And her heart with pride was fed.

  For she was proud of her father’s ships,
    As she watched them gaily pass;
  And pride looked out of her eyes and lips
    When she saw herself in the glass.

  “Now come,” she said to the captains ten,
    Who were ready to put to sea,
  “Ye are all my men and my father’s men,
    And what will ye do for me?”

  “Go north and south, go east and west,
    And get me gifts,” she said.
  “And he who bringeth me home the best,
    With that man will I wed.”

  So they all fared forth, and sought with care
    In many a famous mart,
  For satins and silks and jewels rare,
    To win that lady’s heart.

**Page 52**

  She looked at them all with never a thought,
    And careless put them by;
  “I am not fain of the things ye brought,
    Enough of these have I.”

  The last that came was the head of the fleet,
    His name was Jan Borel;
  He bent his knee at the lady’s feet,—­
    In truth he loved her well.

  “I’ve brought thee home the best i’ the world,
    A shipful of Danzig corn!”
  She stared at him long; her red lips curled,
    Her blue eyes filled with scorn.

  “Now out on thee, thou feckless kerl,
    A loon thou art,” she said.
  “Am I a starving beggar girl?
    Shall I ever lack for bread?”

  “Go empty all thy sacks of grain
    Into the nearest sea,
  And never show thy face again
    To make a mock of me.”

  Young Jan Borel, he answered naught,
    But in the harbour cast
  The sacks of golden corn he brought,
    And groaned when fell the last.

  Then Jan Borel, he hoisted sail,
    And out to sea he bore;
  He passed the Helder in a gale
    And came again no more.

  But the grains of corn went drifting down
    Like devil-scattered seed,
  To sow the harbour of the town
    With a wicked growth of weed.

  The roots were thick and the silt and sand
    Were gathered day by day,
  Till not a furlong out from land
    A shoal had barred the way.

  Then Staevoren town saw evil years,
    No ships could out or in,
  The boats lay rotting at the piers,
    And the mouldy grain in the bin.

  The grass-grown streets were all forlorn,
    The town in ruin stood,
  The lady’s velvet gown was torn,
    Her rings were sold for food.

  Her father had perished long ago,
    But the lady held her pride,
  She walked with a scornful step and slow,
    Till at last in her rags she died.

  Yet still on the crumbling piers of the town,
    When the midnight moon shines free,
  A woman walks in a velvet gown
    And scatters corn in the sea.

1917.

**LYRICS OF LABOUR AND ROMANCE**

**A MILE WITH ME**

  O who will walk a mile with me
    Along life’s merry way?
  A comrade blithe and full of glee,
  Who dares to laugh out loud and free,
  And let his frolic fancy play,
  Like a happy child, through the flowers gay
  That fill the field and fringe the way
    Where he walks a mile with me.

  And who will walk a mile with me
    Along life’s weary way?
  A friend whose heart has eyes to see
  The stars shine out o’er the darkening lea,
  And the quiet rest at the end o’ the day,—­
  A friend who knows, and dares to say,
  The brave, sweet words that cheer the way
    Where he walks a mile with me.

**Page 53**

  With such a comrade, such a friend,
  I fain would walk till journeys end,
  Through summer sunshine, winter rain,
  And then?—­Farewell, we shall meet again!

**THE THREE BEST THINGS**

**I**

**WORK**

  Let me but do my work from day to day,
    In field or forest, at the desk or loom,
    In roaring market-place or tranquil room;
  Let me but find it in my heart to say,
  When vagrant wishes beckon me astray,
    “This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;
    Of all who live, I am the one by whom
  This work can best be done in the right way.”

  Then shall I see it not too great, nor small,
    To suit my spirit and to prove my powers;
    Then shall I cheerful greet the labouring hours,
  And cheerful turn, when the long shadows fall
  At eventide, to play and love and rest,
  Because I know for me my work is best.

**II**

**LOVE**

  Let me but love my love without disguise,
    Nor wear a mask of fashion old or new,
    Nor wait to speak till I can hear a clue,
  Nor play a part to shine in others’ eyes,
  Nor bow my knees to what my heart denies;
    But what I am, to that let me be true,
    And let me worship where my love is due,
  And so through love and worship let me rise.

  For love is but the heart’s immortal thirst
    To be completely known and all forgiven,
    Even as sinful souls that enter Heaven:
  So take me, dear, and understand my worst,
  And freely pardon it, because confessed,
  And let me find in loving thee, my best.

**III**

**LIFE**

  Let me but live my life from year to year,
    With forward face and unreluctant soul;
    Not hurrying to, nor turning from, the goal;
  Not mourning for the things that disappear
  In the dim past, nor holding back in fear
    From what the future veils; but with a whole
    And happy heart, that pays its toll
  To Youth and Age, and travels on with cheer.

  So let the way wind up the hill or down,
    O’er rough or smooth, the journey will be joy:
    Still seeking what I sought when but a boy,
  New friendship, high adventure, and a crown,
  My heart will keep the courage of the quest,
  And hope the road’s last turn will be the best.

**RELIANCE**

      Not to the swift, the race:
      Not to the strong, the fight:
  Not to the righteous, perfect grace
      Not to the wise, the light.

      But often faltering feet
      Come surest to the goal;
  And they who walk in darkness meet
      The sunrise of the soul.

**Page 54**

      A thousand times by night
      The Syrian hosts have died;
  A thousand times the vanquished right
      Hath risen, glorified.

      The truth the wise men sought
      Was spoken by a child;
  The alabaster box was brought
      In trembling hands defiled.

      Not from my torch, the gleam,
  But from the stars above:
      Not from my heart, life’s crystal stream,
      But from the depths of Love.

**DOORS OF DARING**

  The mountains that inclose the vale
    With walls of granite, steep and high,
  Invite the fearless foot to scale
    Their stairway toward the sky.

  The restless, deep, dividing sea
    That flows and foams from shore to shore,
  Calls to its sunburned chivalry,
    “Push out, set sail, explore!”

  The bars of life at which we fret,
    That seem to prison and control,
  Are but the doors of daring, set
    Ajar before the soul.

  Say not, “Too poor,” but freely give;
    Sigh not, “Too weak,” but boldly try;
  You never can begin to live
    Until you dare to die.

**THE CHILD IN THE GARDEN**

  When to the garden of untroubled thought
    I came of late, and saw the open door,
    And wished again to enter, and explore
  The sweet, wild ways with stainless bloom inwrought,
  And bowers of innocence with beauty fraught,
    It seemed some purer voice must speak before
    I dared to tread that garden loved of yore,
  That Eden lost unknown and found unsought.

  Then just within the gate I saw a child,—­
    A stranger-child, yet to my heart most dear;
  He held his hands to me, and softly smiled
    With eyes that knew no shade of sin or fear:
  “Come in,” he said, “and play awhile with me;
  I am the little child you used to be.”

**LOVE’S REASON**

  For that thy face is fair I love thee not;
    Nor yet because thy brown benignant eyes
    Have sudden gleams of gladness and surprise,
  Like woodland brooks that cross a sunlit spot:
  Nor for thy body, born without a blot,
    And loveliest when it shines with no disguise
    Pure as the star of Eve in Paradise,—­
  For all these outward things I love thee not:

  But for a something in thy form and face,
    Thy looks and ways, of primal harmony;
  A certain soothing charm, a vital grace
    That breathes of the eternal womanly,
  And makes me feel the warmth of Nature’s breast,
  When in her arms, and thine, I sink to rest.

**THE ECHO IN THE HEART**

**Page 55**

  It’s little I can tell
    About the birds in books;
  And yet I know them well,
    By their music and their looks:
        When May comes down the lane,
        Her airy lovers throng
        To welcome her with song,
        And follow in her train:
        Each minstrel weaves his part
        In that wild-flowery strain,
        And I know them all again
        By their echo in my heart.

  It’s little that I care
    About my darling’s place
  In books of beauty rare,
    Or heraldries of race:
        For when she steps in view,
        It matters not to me
        What her sweet type may be,
        Of woman, old or new.
        I can’t explain the art,
        But I know her for my own,
        Because her lightest tone
        Wakes an echo in my heart.

“UNDINE”

  ’Twas far away and long ago,
    When I was but a dreaming boy,
  This fairy tale of love and woe
    Entranced my heart with tearful joy;
  And while with white Undine I wept
    Your spirit,—­ah, how strange it seems,—­
  Was cradled in some star, and slept,
    Unconscious of her coming dreams.

“RENCONTRE”

  Oh, was I born too soon, my dear, or were you born too late,
  That I am going out the door while you come in the gate?
  For you the garden blooms galore, the castle is *en fete*;
  You are the coming guest, my dear,—­for me the horses wait.

  I know the mansion well, my dear, its rooms so rich and wide;
  If you had only come before I might have been your guide,
  And hand in hand with you explore the treasures that they hide;
  But you have come to stay, my dear, and I prepare to ride.

  Then walk with me an hour, my dear, and pluck the reddest rose
  Amid the white and crimson store with which your garden glows,—­
  A single rose,—­I ask no more of what your love bestows;
  It is enough to give, my dear,—­a flower to him who goes.

  The House of Life is yours, my dear, for many and many a day,
  But I must ride the lonely shore, the Road to Far Away:
  So bring the stirrup-cup and pour a brimming draught, I pray,
  And when you take the road, my dear, I’ll meet you on the way.

**LOVE IN A LOOK**

  Let me but feel thy look’s embrace,
    Transparent, pure, and warm,
  And I’ll not ask to touch thy face,
    Or fold thee in mine arm.
  For in thine eyes a girl doth rise,
    Arrayed in candid bliss,
  And draws me to her with a charm
    More close than any kiss.

  A loving-cup of golden wine,
    Songs of a silver brook,
  And fragrant breaths of eglantine,
    Are mingled in thy look.
  More fair they are than any star,
    Thy topaz eyes divine—­
  And deep within their trysting-nook
    Thy spirit blends with mine.

**Page 56**

**MY APRIL LADY**

  When down the stair at morning
    The sunbeams round her float,
  Sweet rivulets of laughter
    Are rippling in her throat;
  The gladness of her greeting
    Is gold without alloy;
  And in the morning sunlight
    I think her name is Joy.

  When in the evening twilight
    The quiet book-room lies,
  We read the sad old ballads,
    While from her hidden eyes
  The tears are falling, falling,
    That give her heart relief;
  And in the evening twilight,
    I think her name is Grief.

  My little April lady,
    Of sunshine and of showers
  She weaves the old spring magic,
    And my heart breaks in flowers!
  But when her moods are ended,
    She nestles like a dove;
  Then, by the pain and rapture,
    I know her name is Love.

**A LOVER’S ENVY**

  I envy every flower that blows
  Along the meadow where she goes,
    And every bird that sings to her,
    And every breeze that brings to her
      The fragrance of the rose.

  I envy every poet’s rhyme
  That moves her heart at eventime,
    And every tree that wears for her
    Its brightest bloom, and bears for her
      The fruitage of its prime.

  I envy every Southern night
  That paves her path with moonbeams white,
    And silvers all the leaves for her,
    And in their shadow weaves for her
      A dream of dear delight.

  I envy none whose love requires
  Of her a gift, a task that tires:
    I only long to live to her,
    I only ask to give to her,
      All that her heart desires.

**FIRE-FLY CITY**

  Like a long arrow through the dark the train is darting,
    Bearing me far away, after a perfect day of love’s delight:
  Wakeful with all the sad-sweet memories of parting,
    I lift the narrow window-shade and look out on the night.

  Lonely the land unknown, and like a river flowing,
    Forest and field and hill are gliding backward still athwart my dream;
  Till in that country strange, and ever stranger growing,
    A magic city full of lights begins to glow and gleam.

Wide through the landscape dim the lamps are lit in millions;
Long avenues unfold clear-shining lines of gold across the green;
Clusters and rings of light, and luminous pavilions,—­
Oh, who will tell the city’s name, and what these wonders mean?

Why do they beckon me, and what have they to show me?
Crowds in the blazing street, mirth where the feasters meet, kisses and
wine:
Many to laugh with me, but never one to know me:
A cityful of stranger-hearts and none to beat with mine!

Look how the glittering lines are wavering and lifting,—­
Softly the breeze of night scatters the vision bright:  and, passing
fair,
Over the meadow-grass and through the forest drifting,
The Fire-Fly City of the Dark is lost in empty air!

**Page 57**

**THE GENTLE TRAVELLER**

“Through many a land your journey ran,
And showed the best the world can boast:
Now tell me, traveller, if you can,
The place that pleased you most.”

  She laid her hands upon my breast,
    And murmured gently in my ear,
  “The place I loved and liked the best
    Was in your arms, my dear!”

**NEPENTHE**

  Yes, it was like you to forget,
  And cancel in the welcome of your smile
  My deep arrears of debt,
  And with the putting forth of both your hands
  To sweep away the bars my folly set
  Between us—­bitter thoughts, and harsh demands,
  And reckless deeds that seemed untrue
  To love, when all the while
  My heart was aching through and through
  For you, sweet heart, and only you.

  Yet, as I turned to come to you again,
  I thought there must be many a mile
  Of sorrowful reproach to cross,
  And many an hour of mutual pain
  To bear, until I could make plain
  That all my pride was but the fear of loss,
  And all my doubt the shadow of despair
  To win a heart so innocent and fair;
  And even that which looked most ill
  Was but the fever-fret and effort vain
  To dull the thirst which you alone could still.

  But as I turned, the desert miles were crossed,
  And when I came, the weary hours were sped!
  For there you stood beside the open door,
  Glad, gracious, smiling as before,
  And with bright eyes and tender hands outspread
  Restored me to the Eden I had lost.
  Never a word of cold reproof,
  No sharp reproach, no glances that accuse
  The culprit whom they hold aloof,—­
  Ah, ’tis not thus that other women use
  The empire they have won!
  For there is none like you, beloved,—­none
  Secure enough to do what you have done.
  Where did you learn this heavenly art,—­
  You sweetest and most wise of all that live,—­
  With silent welcome to impart
  Assurance of the royal heart
  That never questions where it would forgive?

  None but a queen could pardon me like this!
  My sovereign lady, let me lay
  Within each rosy palm a loyal kiss
  Of penitence, then close the fingers up,
  Thus—­thus!  Now give the cup
  Of full nepenthe in your crimson mouth,
  And come—­the garden blooms with bliss,
  The wind is in the south,
  The rose of love with dew is wet—­
  Dear, it was like you to forget!

**DAY AND NIGHT**

 *How long is the night, brother,
    And how long is the day?*
  Oh, the day’s too short for a happy task,
    And the day’s too short for play;
  And the night’s too short for the bliss of love,
    For look, how the edge of the sky grows gray,
  While the stars die out in the blue above,
    And the wan moon fades away.

**Page 58**

 *How short is the day, brother,
    And how short is the night?*
  Oh, the day’s too long for a heavy task,
    And long, long, long is the night,
  When the wakeful hours are filled with pain,
    And the sad heart waits for the thing it fears,
  And sighs for the dawn to come again,—­
    The night is a thousand years!

 *How long is a life, dear God,
    And how fast does it flow?*
  The measure of life is a flame in the soul:
    It is neither swift nor slow.
  But the vision of time is the shadow cast
    By the fleeting world on the body’s wall;
  When it fades there is neither future nor past,
    But love is all in all.

**HESPER**

  Her eyes are like the evening air,
    Her voice is like a rose,
  Her lips are like a lovely song,
    That ripples as it flows,
  And she herself is sweeter than
    The sweetest thing she knows.

  A slender, haunting, twilight form
    Of wonder and surprise,
  She seemed a fairy or a child,
    Till, deep within her eyes,
  I saw the homeward-leading star
    Of womanhood arise.

**ARRIVAL**

  Across a thousand miles of sea, a hundred leagues of land,
  Along a path I had not traced and could not understand,
  I travelled fast and far for this,—­to take thee by the hand.

  A pilgrim knowing not the shrine where he would bend his knee,
  A mariner without a dream of what his port would be,
  So fared I with a seeking heart until I came to thee.

  O cooler than a grove of palm in some heat-weary place,
  O fairer than an isle of calm after the wild sea race,
  The quiet room adorned with flowers where first I saw thy face!

  Then furl the sail, let fall the oar, forget the paths of foam!
  The fate that made me wander far at last has brought me home
  To thee, dear haven of my heart, and I no more will roam.

**DEPARTURE**

  Oh, why are you shining so bright, big Sun,
    And why is the garden so gay?
  Do you know that my days of delight are done,
    Do you know I am going away?
  If you covered your face with a cloud, I’d dream
    You were sorry for me in my pain,
  And the heavily drooping flowers would seem
    To be weeping with me in the rain.

  But why is your head so low, sweet heart,
    And why are your eyes overcast?
  Are you crying because you know we must part,
    Do you think this embrace is our last?
  Then kiss me again, and again, and again,
    Look up as you bid me good-bye!
  For your face is too dear for the stain of a tear,
    And your smile is the sun in my sky.

**THE BLACK BIRDS**

**I**

**Page 59**

  Once, only once, I saw it clear,—­
  That Eden every human heart has dreamed
  A hundred times, but always far away!
  Ah, well do I remember how it seemed,
  Through the still atmosphere
  Of that enchanted day,
  To lie wide open to my weary feet:
  A little land of love and joy and rest,
  With meadows of soft green,
  Rosy with cyclamen, and sweet
  With delicate breath of violets unseen,—­
  And, tranquil ’mid the bloom
  As if it waited for a coming guest,
  A little house of peace and joy and love
  Was nested like a snow-white dove.

**II**

  From the rough mountain where I stood,
  Homesick for happiness,
  Only a narrow valley and a darkling wood
  To cross, and then the long distress
  Of solitude would be forever past,—­
  I should be home at last.
  But not too soon! oh, let me linger here
  And feed my eyes, hungry with sorrow,
  On all this loveliness, so near,
  And mine to-morrow!

**III**

  Then, from the wood, across the silvery blue,
  A dark bird flew,
  Silent, with sable wings.
  Close in his wake another came,—­
  Fragments of midnight floating through
  The sunset flame,—­
  Another and another, weaving rings
  Of blackness on the primrose sky,—­
  Another, and another, look, a score,
  A hundred, yes, a thousand rising heavily
  From that accursed, dumb, and ancient wood,
  They boiled into the lucid air
  Like smoke from some deep caldron of despair!
  And more, and more, and ever more,
  The numberless, ill-omened brood
  Flapping their ragged plumes,
  Possessed the landscape and the evening light
  With menaces and glooms.
  Oh, dark, dark, dark they hovered o’er the place
  Where once I saw the little house so white
  Amid the flowers, covering every trace
  Of beauty from my troubled sight,—­
  And suddenly it was night!

**IV**

  At break of day I crossed the wooded vale;
  And while the morning made
  A trembling light among the tree-tops pale,
  I saw the sable birds on every limb,
  Clinging together closely in the shade,
  And croaking placidly their surly hymn.
  But, oh, the little land of peace and love
  That those night-loving wings had poised above,—­
  Where was it gone?
  Lost, lost, forevermore!
  Only a cottage, dull and gray,
  In the cold light of dawn,
  With iron bars across the door:
  Only a garden where the drooping head
  Of one sad rose, foreboding its decay,
  Hung o’er a barren bed:
  Only a desolate field that lay
  Untilled beneath the desolate day,—­
  Where Eden seemed to bloom I found but these!
  So, wondering, I passed along my way,
  With anger in my heart, too deep for words,
  Against that grove of evil-sheltering trees,
  And the black magic of the croaking birds.

**Page 60**

**WITHOUT DISGUISE**

  If I have erred in showing all my heart,
    And lost your favour by a lack of pride;
    If standing like a beggar at your side
  With naked feet, I have forgot the art
  Of those who bargain well in passion’s mart,
    And win the thing they want by what they hide;
    Be mine the fault as mine the hope denied,
  Be mine the lover’s and the loser’s part.

  The sin, if sin it was, I do repent,
    And take the penance on myself alone;
  Yet after I have borne the punishment,
    I shall not fear to stand before the throne
  Of Love with open heart, and make this plea:
  “At least I have not lied to her nor Thee!”

**AN HOUR**

  You only promised me a single hour:
    But in that hour I journeyed through a year
    Of life:  the joy of finding you,—­the fear
  Of losing you again,—­the sense of power
  To make you all my own,—­the sudden shower
    Of tears that came because you were more dear
    Than words could ever tell you,—­then,—­the clear
  Soft rapture when I plucked love’s crimson flower.

  An hour,—­a year,—­I felt your bosom rise
    And fall with mystic tides, and saw the gleam
  Of undiscovered stars within your eyes,—­
    A year,—­an hour?  I knew not, for the stream
  Of love had carried me to Paradise,
    Where all the forms of Time are like a dream.

“RAPPELLE-TOI”

Remember, when the timid light
Through the enchanted hall of dawn is gleaming;
Remember, when the pensive night
Beneath her silver-sprinkled veil walks dreaming;
When pleasure calls thee and thy heart beats high,
When tender joys through evening shades draw nigh,
Hark, from the woodland deeps
A gentle whisper creeps,
Remember!

Remember, when the hand of fate
My life from thine forevermore has parted;
When sorrow, exile, and the weight
Of lonely years have made me heavy-hearted;
Think of my loyal love, my last adieu;
Absence and time are naught, if we are true;
Long as my heart shall beat,
To thine it will repeat,
Remember!

Remember, when the cool, dark tomb
Receives my heart into its quiet keeping,
And some sweet flower begins to bloom
Above the grassy mound where I am sleeping;
Ah then, my face thou nevermore shalt see,
But still my soul will linger close to thee,
And in the holy place of night,
The litany of love recite,—­
Remember!

*Freely rendered from the French of Alfred de Musset.*

**LOVE’S NEARNESS**

I think of thee when golden sunbeams glimmer
Across the sea;
And when the waves reflect the moon’s pale shimmer
I think of thee.

I see thy form when down the distant highway
The dust-clouds rise;
In darkest night, above the mountain by-way
I see thine eyes.

**Page 61**

I hear thee when the ocean-tides returning
Aloud rejoice;
And on the lonely moor in silence yearning
I hear thy voice.

I dwell with thee; though thou art far removed,
Yet thou art near.
The sun goes down, the stars shine out,—­Beloved
If thou wert here!

*From the German of Goethe*, 1898.

**TWO SONGS OF HEINE**

**I**

“EIN FICHTENBAUM”

  A fir-tree standeth lonely
  On a barren northern height,
  Asleep, while winter covers
  His rest with robes of white.

  In dreams, he sees a palm-tree
  In the golden morning-land;
  She droops alone and silent
  In burning wastes of sand.

**II**

“DU BIST WIE EINE BLUME”

  Fair art thou as a flower
    And innocent and shy:
  I look on thee and sorrow;
    I grieve, I know not why.

  I long to lay, in blessing,
    My hand upon thy brow,
  And pray that God may keep thee
    As fair and pure as now.

1872.

**EIGHT ECHOES FROM THE POEMS OF AUGUSTE ANGELLIER**

**I**

**THE IVORY CRADLE**

  The cradle I have made for thee
  Is carved of orient ivory,
  And curtained round with wavy silk
  More white than hawthorn-bloom or milk.

  A twig of box, a lilac spray,
  Will drive the goblin-horde away;
  And charm thy childlike heart to keep
  Her happy dream and virgin sleep.

  Within that pure and fragrant nest,
  I’ll rock thy gentle soul to rest,
  With tender songs we need not fear
  To have a passing angel hear.

  Ah, long and long I fain would hold
  The snowy curtain’s guardian fold
  Around thy crystal visions, born
  In clearness of the early morn.

  But look, the sun is glowing red
  With triumph in his golden bed;
  Aurora’s virgin whiteness dies
  In crimson glory of the skies.

  The rapid flame will burn its way
  Through these white curtains, too, one day;
  The ivory cradle will be left
  Undone, and broken, and bereft.

**II**

**DREAMS**

  Often I dream your big blue eyes,
    Though loth their meaning to confess,
  Regard me with a clear surprise
    Of dawning tenderness.

  Often I dream you gladly hear
    The words I hardly dare to breathe,—­
  The words that falter in their fear
    To tell what throbs beneath.

  Often I dream your hand in mine
    Falls like a flower at eventide,
  And down the path we leave a line
    Of footsteps side by side.

**Page 62**

  But ah, in all my dreams of bliss,
    In passion’s hunger, fever’s drouth,
  I never dare to dream of this:
    My lips upon your mouth.

  And so I dream your big blue eyes,
    That look on me with tenderness,
  Grow wide, and deep, and sad, and wise,
    And dim with dear distress.

**III**

**THE GARLAND OF SLEEP**

  A wreath of poppy flowers,
    With leaves of lotus blended,
  Is carved on Life’s facade of hours,
    From night to night suspended.

  Along the columned wall,
    From birth’s low portal starting,
  It flows, with even rise and fall,
    To death’s dark door of parting.

  How short each measured arc,
    How brief the columns’ number!
  The wreath begins and ends in dark,
    And leads from sleep to slumber.

  The marble garland seems,
    With braided leaf and bloom,
  To deck the palace of our dreams
    As if it were a tomb.

**IV**

**TRANQUIL HABIT**

  Dear tranquil Habit, with her silent hands,
    Doth heal our deepest wounds from day to day
    With cooling, soothing oil, and firmly lay
  Around the broken heart her gentle bands.

  Her nursing is as calm as Nature’s care;
    She doth not weep with us; yet none the less
    Her quiet fingers weave forgetfulness,—­
  We fall asleep in peace when she is there.

  Upon the mirror of the mind her breath
    Is like a cloud, to hide the fading trace
    Of that dear smile, of that remembered face,
  Whose presence were the joy and pang of death.

  And he who clings to sorrow overmuch,
    Weeping for withered grief, has cause to bless,
    More than all cries of pity and distress,—­
  Dear tranquil Habit, thy consoling touch!

**V**

**THE OLD BRIDGE**

On the old, old bridge, with its crumbling stones
All covered with lichens red and gray,
Two lovers were talking in sweet low tones:

                        And we were they!As he leaned to breathe in her willing ear
The love that he vowed would never die,
He called her his darling, his dove most dear:

                        And he was I!She covered her face from the pale moonlight
With her trembling hands, but her eyes looked through,
And listened and listened with long delight:

                        And she was you!On the old, old bridge, where the lichens rust,
Two lovers are learning the same old lore;
He tells his love, and she looks her trust:

                        But we,—­no more!

**Page 63**

**VI**

**EYES AND LIPS**

1

Our silent eyes alone interpreted
The new-born feeling in the heart of each:
In yours I read your sorrow without speech,
Your lonely struggle in their tears unshed.
Behind their dreamy sweetness, as a veil,
I saw the moving lights of trouble shine;
And then my eyes were brightened as with wine,
My spirit reeled to see your face grow pale!

  Our deepening love, that is not yet allowed
    Another language than the eyes, doth learn
  To speak it perfectly:  above the crowd
  Our looks exchange avowals and desires,—­
    Like wave-divided beacon lights that burn,
  And talk to one another by their fires.

2

  When I embrace her in a fragrant shrine
    Of climbing roses, my first kiss shall fall
    On you, sweet eyes, that mutely told me all,—­
  Through you my soul will rise to make her mine.
  Upon your drooping lids, blue-veined and fair,
    The touch of tenderness I first will lay,
    You springs of joy, lights of my gloomy day,
  Whose dear discovered secret bade me dare!

  And when you open, eyes of my fond dove,
    Your look will shine with new delight, made sure
  By this forerunner of a faithful love.
    Tis just, dear eyes, so pensive and so pure,
  That you should bear the sealing kisses true
  Of love unhoped that came to me through you.

3

  This was my thought; but when beneath the rose
    That hides the lonely bench where lovers rest,
    In friendly dusk I held her on my breast
  For one brief moment,—­while I saw you close,
  Dear, yielding eyes, as if your lids, blue-veined
    And pure, were meekly fain at last to bear
    The proffered homage of my wistful prayer,—­
  In that high moment, by your grace obtained,

  Forgetting your avowals, your alarms,
    Your anguish and your tears, sweet weary eyes,
  Forgetting that you gave her to my arms,
  I broke my promise; and my first caress,
    Ungrateful, sought her lips in sweet surprise,—­
  Her lips, which breathed a word of tenderness!

**VII**

**AN EVOCATION**

  When first upon my brow I felt your kiss,
    A sudden splendour filled me, like the ray
  That promptly runs to crown the hills with bliss
    Of purple dawn before the golden day,
  And ends the gloom it crosses at one leap.
    My brow was not unworthy your caress;
  For some foreboding joy had bade me keep
    From all affront the place your lips would bless.

  Yet when your mouth upon my mouth did lay
    The royal touch, no rapture made me thrill,
    But I remained confused, ashamed, and still.
    Beneath your kiss, my queen without a stain,
  I felt,—­like ghosts who rise at Judgment Day,—­
    A throng of ancient kisses vile and vain!

**Page 64**

**VIII**

**RESIGNATION**

1

  Well, you will triumph, dear and noble friend!
    The holy love that wounded you so deep
    Will bring you balm, and on your heart asleep
  The fragrant dew of healing will descend.
    Your children,—­ah, how quickly they will grow
    Between us, like a wall that fronts the sun,
    Lifting a screen with rosy buds o’errun,
  To hide the shaded path where I must go.

  You’ll walk in light; and dreaming less and less
    Of him who droops in gloom beyond the wall,
  Your mother-soul will fill with happiness
    When first you hear your grandchild’s babbling call,
  Beneath the braided bloom of flower and leaf
  That We has wrought to veil your vanished grief.

2

  Then I alone shall suffer!  I shall bear
    The double burden of our grief alone,
  While I enlarge my soul to take your share
    Of pain and hold it close beside my own.
  Our love is torn asunder; but the crown
    Of thorns that love has woven I will make
  My relic sacrosanct, and press it down
    Upon my bleeding heart that will not break.

  Ah, that will be the depth of solitude!
    For my regret, that evermore endures,
    Will know that new-born hope has conquered yours;
  And when the evening comes, no gentle brood
  Of wondering children, gathered at my side,
  Will soothe away the tears I cannot hide.

*Freely rendered from the French*, 1911.

**RAPPEL D’AMOUR**

  Come home, my love, come home!
    The twilight is falling,
    The whippoorwill calling,
    The night is very near,
    And the darkness full of fear,
  Come home to my arms, come home!

  Come home, my love, come home!
    In folly we parted,
    And now, lonely hearted,
    I know you look in vain
    For a love like mine again;
  Come home to my arms, come home!

  Come home, dear love, come home!
    I’ve much to forgive you,
    And more yet to give you.
    I’ll put a little light
    In the window every night,—­
  Come home to my arms, come home.

**THE RIVER OF DREAMS**

  The river of dreams runs quietly down
      From its hidden home in the forest of sleep,
      With a measureless motion calm and deep;
  And my boat slips out on the current brown,
      In a tranquil bay where the trees incline
      Far over the waves, and creepers twine
      Far over the boughs, as if to steep
      Their drowsy bloom in the tide that goes
      By a secret way that no man knows,
  Under the branches bending,
  Under the shadows blending,
      And the body rests, and the passive soul
      Is drifted along to an unseen goal,
  While the river of dreams runs down.

**Page 65**

  The river of dreams runs gently down,
      With a leisurely flow that bears my bark
      Out of the visionless woods of dark,
  Into a glory that seems to crown
      Valley and hill with light from far,
      Clearer than sun or moon or star,
      Luminous, wonderful, weird, oh, mark
      How the radiance pulses everywhere,
      In the shadowless vault of lucid air!
  Over the mountains shimmering,
  Up from the fountains glimmering,—­
      Tis the mystical glow of the inner light,
      That shines in the very noon of night,
  While the river of dreams runs down.

  The river of dreams runs murmuring down,
      Through the fairest garden that ever grew;
      And now, as my boat goes drifting through,
  A hundred voices arise to drown
      The river’s whisper, and charm my ear
      With a sound I have often longed to hear,—­
      A magical music, strange and new,
      The wild-rose ballad, the lilac-song,
      The virginal chant of the lilies’ throng,
  Blue-bells silverly ringing,
  Pansies merrily singing,—­
      For all the flowers have found their voice;
      And I feel no wonder, but only rejoice,
  While the river of dreams runs down.

  The river of dreams runs broadening down,
      Away from the peaceful garden-shore,
      With a current that deepens more and more,
  By the league-long walls of a mighty town;
      And I see the hurrying crowds of men
      Gather like clouds and dissolve again;
      But never a face I have seen before.
      They come and go, they shift and change,
      Their ways and looks are wild and strange,—­
  This is a city haunted,
  A multitude enchanted!
      At the sight of the throng I am dumb with fear,
      And never a sound from their lips I hear,
  While the river of dreams runs down.

  The river of dreams runs darkly down
      Into the heart of a desolate land,
      With ruined temples half-buried in sand,
  And riven hills, whose black brows frown
      Over the shuddering, lonely wave.
      The air grows dim with the dust of the grave;
      No sign of life on the dreary strand;
      No ray of light on the mountain’s crest;
      And a weary wind that cannot rest
  Comes down the valley creeping,
  Lamenting, wailing, weeping,—­
      I strive to cry out, but my fluttering breath
      Is choked with the clinging fog of death,
  While the river of dreams runs down.

  The river of dreams runs trembling down,
      Out of the valley of nameless fear,
      Into a country calm and clear,
  With a mystical name of high renown,—­
      A name that I know, but may not tell,—­
      And there the friends that I loved so well,
      Old companions forever dear,
      Come beckoning down to the river shore,

 **Page 66**

      And hail my boat with the voice of yore.
  Fair and sweet are the places
  Where I see their unchanged faces!
      And I feel in my heart with a secret thrill,
      That the loved and lost are living still,
  While the river of dreams runs down.

  The river of dreams runs dimly down
      By a secret way that no man knows;
      But the soul lives on while the river flows
  Through the gardens bright and the forests brown;
      And I often think that our whole life seems
      To be more than half made up of dreams.
      The changing sights and the passing shows,
      The morning hopes and the midnight fears,
      Are left behind with the vanished years;
  Onward, with ceaseless motion,
  The life-stream flows to the ocean,
      While we follow the tide, awake or asleep,
      Till we see the dawn on Love’s great deep,
      And the shadows melt, and the soul is free,—­
      The river of dreams has reached the sea.

1900.

**SONGS OF HEARTH AND ALTAR**

**A HOME SONG**

  I read within a poet’s book
    A word that starred the page:
  “Stone walls do not a prison make,
    Nor iron bars a cage!”

  Yes, that is true, and something more:
    You’ll find, where’er you roam,
  That marble floors and gilded walls
    Can never make a home.

  But every house where Love abides,
    And Friendship is a guest,
  Is surely home, and home-sweet-home:
    For there the heart can rest.

“LITTLE BOATIE”

**A SLUMBER-SONG FOR THE FISHERMAN’S CHILD**

  Furl your sail, my little boatie;
      Here’s the haven still and deep,
  Where the dreaming tides in-streaming
          Up the channel creep.
  Now the sunset breeze is dying;
  Hear the plover, landward flying,
  Softly down the twilight crying;
      Come to anchor, little boatie,
          In the port of Sleep.

  Far away, my little boatie,
      Roaring waves are white with foam;
  Ships are striving, onward driving,
          Day and night they roam.
  Father’s at the deep-sea trawling,
  In the darkness, rowing, hauling,
  While the hungry winds are calling,—­
      God protect him, little boatie,
          Bring him safely home!

  Not for you, my little boatie,
      Is the wide and weary sea;
  You’re too slender, and too tender,
          You must bide with me.
  All day long you have been straying
  Up and down the shore and playing;
  Come to harbour, no delaying!
      Day is over, little boatie,
          Night falls suddenly.

**Page 67**

  Furl your sail, my little boatie,
      Fold your wings, my weary dove.
  Dews are sprinkling, stars are twinkling
          Drowsily above.
  Cease from sailing, cease from rowing;
  Rock upon the dream-tide, knowing
  Safely o’er your rest are glowing,
      All the night, my little boatie,
          Harbour-lights of love.

1897.

**A MOTHER’S BIRTHDAY**

  Lord Jesus, Thou hast known
    A mother’s love and tender care:
        And Thou wilt hear,
          While for my own
        Mother most dear
          I make this birthday prayer.

  Protect her life, I pray,
    Who gave the gift of life to me;
        And may she know,
          From day to day,
        The deepening glow
          Of joy that comes from Thee.

  As once upon her breast
    Fearless and well content I lay,
        So let her heart,
          On Thee at rest,
        Feel fear depart
          And trouble fade away.

  Ah, hold her by the hand,
    As once her hand held mine;
        And though she may
          Not understand
        Life’s winding way,
          Lead her in peace divine.

  I cannot pay my debt
    For all the love that she has given;
        But Thou, love’s Lord,
          Wilt not forget
        Her due reward,—­
          Bless her in earth and heaven.

**TRANSFORMATION**

  Only a little shrivelled seed,
  It might be flower, or grass, or weed;
  Only a box of earth on the edge
  Of a narrow, dusty window-ledge;
  Only a few scant summer showers;
  Only a few clear shining hours;
  That was all.  Yet God could make
  Out of these, for a sick child’s sake,
  A blossom-wonder, fair and sweet
  As ever broke at an angel’s feet.

  Only a life of barren pain,
  Wet with sorrowful tears for rain,
  Warmed sometimes by a wandering gleam
  Of joy, that seemed but a happy dream;
  A life as common and brown and bare
  As the box of earth in the window there;
  Yet it bore, at last, the precious bloom
  Of a perfect soul in that narrow room;
  Pure as the snowy leaves that fold
  Over the flower’s heart of gold.

**RENDEZVOUS**

  I count that friendship little worth
    Which has not many things untold,
    Great longings that no words can hold,
  And passion-secrets waiting birth.

  Along the slender wires of speech
    Some message from the heart is sent;
    But who can tell the whole that’s meant?
  Our dearest thoughts are out of reach.

  I have not seen thee, though mine eyes
    Hold now the image of thy face;
    In vain, through form, I strive to trace
  The soul I love:  that deeper lies.

**Page 68**

  A thousand accidents control
    Our meeting here.  Clasp hand in hand,
    And swear to meet me in that land
  Where friends hold converse soul to soul.

**GRATITUDE**

“Do you give thanks for this?—­or that?” No, God be thanked
I am not grateful
In that cold, calculating way, with blessings ranked
As one, two, three, and four,—­that would be hateful.

I only know that every day brings good above
My poor deserving;
I only feel that in the road of Life true Love
Is leading me along and never swerving.

Whatever gifts and mercies to my lot may fall,
I would not measure
As worth a certain price in praise, or great or small;
But take and use them all with simple pleasure.

For when we gladly eat our daily bread, we bless
The Hand that feeds us;
And when we tread the road of Life in cheerfulness,
Our very heart-beats praise the Love that leads us.

**PEACE**

With eager heart and will on fire,
I strove to win my great desire.
“Peace shall be mine,” I said; but life
Grew bitter in the barren strife.

  My soul was weary, and my pride
  Was wounded deep; to Heaven I cried,
  “God grant me peace or I must die;”
  The dumb stars glittered no reply.

  Broken at last, I bowed my head,
  Forgetting all myself, and said,
  “Whatever comes, His will be done;”
  And in that moment peace was won.

**SANTA CHRISTINA**

  Saints are God’s flowers, fragrant souls
    That His own hand hath planted,
  Not in some far-off heavenly place,
    Or solitude enchanted,
  But here and there and everywhere,—­
    In lonely field, or crowded town,
    God sees a flower when He looks down.

  Some wear the lily’s stainless white,
    And some the rose of passion,
  And some the violet’s heavenly blue,
    But each in its own fashion,
  With silent bloom and soft perfume,
    Is praising Him who from above
    Beholds each lifted face of love.

  One such I knew,—­and had the grace
    To thank my God for knowing:
  The beauty of her quiet life
    Was like a rose in blowing,
  So fair and sweet, so all-complete
    And all unconscious, as a flower,
    That light and fragrance were her dower.

  No convent-garden held this rose,
    Concealed like secret treasure;
  No royal terrace guarded her
    For some sole monarch’s pleasure.
  She made her shrine, this saint of mine,
    In a bright home where children played;
    And there she wrought and there she prayed.

  In sunshine, when the days were glad,
    She had the art of keeping
  The clearest rays, to give again
    In days of rain and weeping;
  Her blessed heart could still impart
    Some portion of its secret grace,
    And charity shone in her face.

**Page 69**

  In joy she grew from year to year;
    And sorrow made her sweeter;
  And every comfort, still more kind;
    And every loss, completer.
  Her children came to love her name,—­
    “Christina,”—­’twas a lip’s caress;
    And when they called, they seemed to bless.

  No more they call, for she is gone
    Too far away to hear them;
  And yet they often breathe her name
    As if she lingered near them;
  They cannot reach her with love’s speech,
    But when they say “Christina” now
    ’Tis like a prayer or like a vow:

  A vow to keep her life alive
    In deeds of pure affection,
  So that her love shall find in them
    A daily resurrection;
  A constant prayer that they may wear
    Some touch of that supernal light
    With which she blossoms in God’s sight.

**THE BARGAIN**

  What shall I give for thee,
    Thou Pearl of greatest price?
  For all the treasures I possess
    Would not suffice.

  I give my store of gold;
    It is but earthly dross:
  But thou wilt make me rich, beyond
    All fear of loss.

  Mine honours I resign;
    They are but small at best:
  Thou like a royal star wilt shine
    Upon my breast.

  My worldly joys I give,
    The flowers with which I played;
  Thy beauty, far more heavenly fair,
    Shall never fade.

  Dear Lord, is that enough?
   *Nay, not a thousandth part.*
  Well, then, I have but one thing more:
    Take Thou my heart.

**TO THE CHILD JESUS**

**I**

**THE NATIVITY**

  Could every time-worn heart but see Thee once again,
  A happy human child, among the homes of men,
  The age of doubt would pass,—­the vision of Thy face
  Would silently restore the childhood of the race.

**II**

**THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT**

  Thou wayfaring Jesus, a pilgrim and stranger,
    Exiled from heaven by love at thy birth,
  Exiled again from thy rest in the manger,
    A fugitive child ’mid the perils of earth,—­
  Cheer with thy fellowship all who are weary,
    Wandering far from the land that they love;
  Guide every heart that is homeless and dreary,
    Safe to its home in thy presence above.

**BITTER-SWEET**

    Just to give up, and trust
      All to a Fate unknown,
    Plodding along life’s road in the dust,
      Bounded by walls of stone;
  Never to have a heart at peace;
  Never to see when care will cease;
  Just to be still when sorrows fall—­
  This is the bitterest lesson of all.

**Page 70**

    Just to give up, and rest
      All on a Love secure,
    Out of a world that’s hard at the best,
      Looking to heaven as sure;
  Ever to hope, through cloud and fear,
  In darkest night, that the dawn is near;
  Just to wait at the Master’s feet—­
  Surely, now, the bitter is sweet.

**HYMN OF JOY**

**TO THE MUSIC OF BEETHOVEN’S NINTH SYMPHONY**

  Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
    God of glory, Lord of love;
  Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
    Praising Thee their sun above.
  Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
    Drive the dark of doubt away;
  Giver of immortal gladness,
    Fill us with the light of day!

  All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
    Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
  Stars and angels sing around Thee,
    Centre of unbroken praise:
  Field and forest, vale and mountain,
    Blooming meadow, flashing sea,
  Chanting bird and flowing fountain,
    Call us to rejoice in Thee.

  Thou art giving and forgiving,
    Ever blessing, ever blest,
  Well-spring of the joy of living,
    Ocean-depth of happy rest!
  Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,—­
    All who live in love are Thine:
  Teach us how to love each other,
    Lift us to the Joy Divine.

  Mortals join the mighty chorus,
    Which the morning stars began;
  Father-love is reigning o’er us,
    Brother-love binds man to man.
  Ever singing march we onward,
    Victors in the midst of strife;
  Joyful music lifts us sunward
    In the triumph song of life.

1908.

**SONG OF A PILGRIM-SOUL**

  March on, my soul, nor like a laggard stay!
  March swiftly on.  Yet err not from the way
  Where all the nobly wise of old have trod,—­
  The path of faith, made by the sons of God.

  Follow the marks that they have set beside
  The narrow, cloud-swept track, to be thy guide:
  Follow, and honour what the past has gained,
  And forward still, that more may be attained.

  Something to learn, and something to forget:
  Hold fast the good, and seek the better yet:
  Press on, and prove the pilgrim-hope of youth:
  The Creeds are milestones on the road to Truth.

**ODE TO PEACE**

**I**

**IN EXCELSIS**

  Two dwellings, Peace, are thine.
    One is the mountain-height,
  Uplifted in the loneliness of light
    Beyond the realm of shadows,—­fine,
  And far, and clear,—­where advent of the night
  Means only glorious nearness of the stars,
  And dawn unhindered breaks above the bars
  That long the lower world in twilight keep.
  Thou sleepest not, and hast no need of

**Page 71**

sleep,
  For all thy cares and fears have dropped away;
  The night’s fatigue, the fever-fret of day,
  Are far below thee; and earth’s weary wars,
    In vain expense of passion, pass
  Before thy sight like visions in a glass,—­
  Or like the wrinkles of the storm that creep
    Across the sea and leave no trace
  Of trouble on that immemorial face,—­
  So brief appear the conflicts, and so slight
  The wounds men give, the things for which they fight!
  Here hangs a fortress on the distant steep,—­
    A lichen clinging to the rock.
  There sails a fleet upon the deep,—­
          A wandering flock
  Of snow-winged gulls.  And yonder, in the plain,
    A marble palace shines,—­a grain
    Of mica glittering in the rain.
    Beneath thy feet the clouds are rolled
    By voiceless winds:  and far between
  The rolling clouds, new shores and peaks are seen,
    In shimmering robes of green and gold,
          And faint aerial hue
  That silent fades into the silent blue.
      Thou, from thy mountain-hold,
  All day in tranquil wisdom looking down
  On distant scenes of human toil and strife,
  All night, with eyes aware of loftier life
  Uplifted to the sky where stars are sown,
  Dost watch the everlasting fields grow white
  Unto the harvest of the sons of light,
  And welcome to thy dwelling-place sublime
  The few strong souls that dare to climb
  The slippery crags, and find thee on the height.

**II**

**DE PROFUNDIS**

  But in the depth thou hast another home,
      For hearts less daring, or more frail.
  Thou dwellest also in the shadowy vale;
        And pilgrim-souls that roam
      With weary feet o’er hill and dale,
      Bearing the burden and the heat
          Of toilful days,
        Turn from the dusty ways
  To find thee in thy green and still retreat.
      Here is no vision wide outspread
  Before the lonely and exalted seat
  Of all-embracing knowledge.  Here, instead,
  A little cottage, and a garden-nook,
        With outlooks brief and sweet
  Across the meadows, and along the brook,—­
      A little stream that nothing knows
  Of the great sea to which it gladly flows,—­
  A little field that bears a little wheat
  To make a portion of earth’s daily bread.
      The vast cloud-armies overhead
      Are marshalled, and the wild wind blows
      Its trumpet, but thou canst not tell
  Whence comes the wind nor where it goes;
  Nor dost thou greatly care, since all is well.
        Thy daily task is done,
  And now the wages of repose are won.
  Here friendship lights the fire, and every heart,
  Sure of itself and sure of all the rest,
  Dares to be true, and gladly takes its part
  In open converse, bringing forth its best:

 **Page 72**

  And here is music, melting every chain
        Of lassitude and pain:
  And here, at last, is sleep with silent gifts,—­
      Kind sleep, the tender nurse who lifts
  The soul grown weary of the waking world,
      And lays it, with its thoughts all furled,
  Its fears forgotten, and its passions still,
  On the deep bosom of the Eternal Will.

**THREE PRAYERS FOR SLEEP AND WAKING**

**I**

**BEDTIME**

  Ere thou sleepest gently lay
  Every troubled thought away:
  Put off worry and distress
  As thou puttest off thy dress:
  Drop thy burden and thy care
  In the quiet arms of prayer.

 *Lord, Thou knowest how I live,
  All I’ve done amiss forgive:
  All of good I’ve tried to do,
  Strengthen, bless, and carry through,
  All I love in safety keep,
  While in Thee I fall asleep.*

**II**

**NIGHT WATCH**

  If slumber should forsake
    Thy pillow in the dark,
    Fret not thyself to mark
  How long thou liest awake.
  There is a better way;
    Let go the strife and strain,
    Thine eyes will close again,
  If thou wilt only pray.

 *Lord, Thy peaceful gift restore,
  Give my body sleep once more:
  While I wait my soul will rest
  Like a child upon Thy breast.*

**III**

**NEW DAY**

  Ere thou risest from thy bed,
  Speak to God Whose wings were spread
  O’er thee in the helpless night:
  Lo, He wakes thee now with light!
  Lift thy burden and thy care
  In the mighty arms of prayer.

 *Lord, the newness of this day
  Calls me to an untried way:
  Let me gladly take the road,
  Give me strength to bear my load,
  Thou my guide and helper be—­
  I will travel through with Thee.*

The Mission Inn, California, Easter, 1913.

**PORTRAIT AND REALITY**

  If on the closed curtain of my sight
    My fancy paints thy portrait far away,
    I see thee still the same, by night or day;
  Crossing the crowded street, or moving bright
  ’Mid festal throngs, or reading by the light
    Of shaded lamp some friendly poet’s lay,
    Or shepherding the children at their play,—­
  The same sweet self, and my unchanged delight.

  But when I see thee near, I recognize
    In every dear familiar way some strange
  Perfection, and behold in April guise
    The magic of thy beauty that doth range
  Through many moods with infinite surprise,—­
    Never the same, and sweeter with each change.

**THE WIND OF SORROW**

**Page 73**

  The fire of love was burning, yet so low
      That in the peaceful dark it made no rays,
      And in the light of perfect-placid days
  The ashes hid the smouldering embers’ glow.
  Vainly, for love’s delight, we sought to throw
      New pleasures on the pyre to make it blaze:
      In life’s calm air and tranquil-prosperous ways
  We missed the radiant heat of long ago.

  Then in the night, a night of sad alarms,
      Bitter with pain and black with fog of fears
  That drove us trembling to each other’s arms,
      Across the gulf of darkness and salt tears
  Into life’s calm the wind of sorrow came,
  And fanned the fire of love to clearest name.

**HIDE AND SEEK**

**I**

All the trees are sleeping, all the winds are still,
All the fleecy flocks of cloud, gone beyond the hill;
Through the noon-day silence, down the woods of June,
Hark, a little hunter’s voice, running with a tune.
“Hide and seek!
When I speak,
You must answer me:
Call again,
Merry men,
Coo-ee, coo-ee, coo-ee!”

Now I hear his footsteps rustling in the grass:
Hidden in my leafy nook, shall I let him pass?
Just a low, soft whistle,—­quick the hunter turns,
Leaps upon me laughing loud, rolls me in the ferns.
“Hold him fast,
Caught at last!
Now you’re it, you see.
Hide your eye,
Till I cry,
Coo-ee, coo-ee, coo-ee!”

**II**

Long ago he left me, long and long ago;
Now I wander thro’ the world, seeking high and low.
Hidden safe and happy, in some pleasant place,—­
If I could but hear his voice, soon I’d see his face!
Far away,
Many a day,
Where can Barney be?
Answer, dear,
Don’t you hear?
Coo-ee, coo-ee, coo-ee!

Birds that every spring-time sung him full of joy,
Flowers he loved to pick for me, mind me of my boy.
Somewhere he is waiting till my steps come nigh;
Love may hide itself awhile, but love can never die.
Heart, be glad,
The little lad
Will call again to thee:
“Father dear,
Heaven is here,
Coo-ee, coo-ee, coo-ee!”

1898.

**AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN**

When the frosty kiss of Autumn in the dark
Makes its mark
On the flowers, and the misty morning grieves
Over fallen leaves;
Then my olden garden, where the golden soil
Through the toil
Of a hundred years is mellow, rich, and deep,
Whispers in its sleep.

’Mid the crumpled beds of marigold and phlox,
Where the box
Borders with its glossy green the ancient walks,
There’s a voice that talks
Of the human hopes that bloomed and withered here
Year by year,—­
And the dreams that brightened all the labouring hours.
Fading as the flowers.

**Page 74**

Yet the whispered story does not deepen grief;
But relief
For the loneliness of sorrow seems to flow
From the Long-Ago,
When I think of other lives that learned, like mine,
To resign,
And remember that the sadness of the fall
Comes alike to all.

What regrets, what longings for the lost were theirs I
And what prayers
For the silent strength that nerves us to endure
Things we cannot cure!
Pacing up and down the garden where they paced,
I have traced
All their well-worn paths of patience, till I find
Comfort in my mind.

Faint and far away their ancient griefs appear:
Yet how near
Is the tender voice, the careworn, kindly face,
Of the human race!
Let us walk together in the garden, dearest heart,—­
Not apart!
They who know the sorrows other lives have known
Never walk alone.

October, 1903.

**THE MESSAGE**

Waking from tender sleep,
My neighbour’s little child
Put out his baby hand to me,
Looked in my face, and smiled.

  It seems as if he came
    Home from a happy land,
  To bring a message to my heart
    And make me understand.

  Somewhere, among bright dreams,
    A child that once was mine
  Has whispered wordless love to him,
    And given him a sign.

  Comfort of kindly speech,
    And counsel of the wise,
  Have helped me less than what I read
    In those deep-smiling eyes.

  Sleep sweetly, little friend,
    And dream again of heaven:
  With double love I kiss your hand,—­
    Your message has been given.

November, 1903.

**DULCIS MEMORIA**

  Long, long ago I heard a little song,
    (Ah, was it long ago, or yesterday?)
  So lowly, slowly wound the tune along,
    That far into my heart it found the way:
  A melody consoling and endearing;
  And now, in silent hours, I’m often hearing
    The small, sweet song that does not die away.

  Long, long ago I saw a little flower—­
    (Ah, was it long ago, or yesterday?)
  So fair of face and fragrant for an hour,
    That something dear to me it seemed to say,—­
  A wordless joy that blossomed into being;
  And now, in winter days, I’m often seeing
    The friendly flower that does not fade away.

  Long, long ago we had a little child,—­
    (Ah, was it long ago, or yesterday?)
  Into his mother’s eyes and mine he smiled
    Unconscious love; warm in our arms he lay.
  An angel called!  Dear heart, we could not hold him;
  Yet secretly your arms and mine infold him—­
    Our little child who does not go away.

  Long, long ago?  Ah, memory, make it clear—­
    (It was not long ago, but yesterday.)
  So little and so helpless and so dear—­
    Let not the song be lost, the flower decay!
  His voice, his waking eyes, his gentle sleeping:
  The smallest things are safest in thy keeping,—­
    Sweet memory, keep our child with us alway.

**Page 75**

November, 1903.

**THE WINDOW**

  All night long, by a distant bell
    The passing hours were notched
  On the dark, while her breathing rose and fell;
    And the spark of life I watched
  In her face was glowing, or fading,—­who could tell?—­
    And the open window of the room,
      With a flare of yellow light,
    Was peering out into the gloom,
      Like an eye that searched the night.

 *Oh, what do you see in the dark, little window, and why do you peer?
  “I see that the garden is crowded with creeping forms of fear:
  Little white ghosts in the locust-tree, wave in the night-wind’s breath,
  And low in the leafy laurels the lurking shadow of death."*

  Sweet, clear notes of a waking bird
    Told of the passing away
  Of the dark,—­and my darling may have heard;
    For she smiled in her sleep, while the ray
  Of the rising dawn spoke joy without a word,
    Till the splendour born in the east outburned
      The yellow lamplight, pale and thin,
    And the open window slowly turned
      To the eye of the morning, looking in.

*Oh, what do you see in the room, little window, that makes you so
bright?
“I see that a child is asleep on her pillow, soft and white:
With the rose of life on her lips, the pulse of life in her breast,
And the arms of God around her, she quietly takes her rest."*

Neuilly, June, 1909.

**CHRISTMAS TEARS**

  The day returns by which we date our years:
  Day of the joy of giving,—­that means love;
  Day of the joy of living,—­that means hope;
  Day of the Royal Child,—­and day that brings
  To older hearts the gift of Christmas tears!

  Look, how the candles twinkle through the tree,
  The children shout when baby claps his hands,
  The room is full of laughter and of song!
  Your lips are smiling, dearest,—­tell me why
  Your eyes are brimming full of Christmas tears?

  Was it a silent voice that joined the song?
  A vanished face that glimmered once again
  Among the happy circle round the tree?
  Was it an unseen hand that touched your cheek
  And brought the secret gift of Christmas tears?

  Not dark and angry like the winter storm
  Of selfish grief,—­but full of starry gleams,
  And soft and still that others may not weep,—­
  Dews of remembered happiness descend
  To bless us with the gift of Christmas tears.

  Ah, lose them not, dear heart,—­life has no pearls
  More pure than memories of joy love-shared.
  See, while we count them one by one with prayer,
  The Heavenly hope that lights the Christmas tree
  Has made a rainbow in our Christmas tears!

1912.

**DOROTHEA**

**Page 76**

1888-1912

  A deeper crimson in the rose,
  A deeper blue in sky and sea,
  And ever, as the summer goes,
  A deeper loss in losing thee!

  A deeper music in the strain
  Of hermit-thrush from lonely tree;
  And deeper grows the sense of gain
  My life has found in having thee.

  A deeper love, a deeper rest,
  A deeper joy in all I see;
  And ever deeper in my breast
  A silver song that comes from thee!

Seal Harbour, August 1, 1912.

**EPIGRAMS, GREETINGS, AND INSCRIPTIONS**

**FOR KATRINA’S SUN-DIAL**

**IN HER GARDEN OF YADDO**

Hours fly,
Flowers die
New days,
New ways,
Pass by.
Love stays.

\* \* \*

Time is
Too Slow for those who Wait,
Too Swift for those who Fear,
Too Long for those who Grieve,
Too Short for those who Rejoice;
But for those who Love,
Time is not.

**FOR KATRINA’S WINDOW**

**IN HER TOWER OF YADDO**

This is the window’s message,
In silence, to the Queen:
“Thou hast a double kingdom
And I am set between:
Look out and see the glory,
On hill and plain and sky:
Look in and see the light of love
That nevermore shall die!”

*L’ENVOI*

 *Window in the Queen’s high tower,
  This shall be thy magic power!
  Shut the darkness and the doubt,
  Shut the storm and conflict, out;
  Wind and hail and snow and rain
  Dash against thee all in vain.
  Let in nothing from the night,—­
  Let in every ray of light!*

**FOR THE FRIENDS AT HURSTMONT**

**THE HOUSE**

  The cornerstone in Truth is laid,
  The guardian walls of Honour made,
  The roof of Faith is built above,
  The fire upon the hearth is Love:
  Though rains descend and loud winds call,
  This happy house shall never fall.

**THE HEARTH**

  When the logs are burning free,
  Then the fire is full of glee:
  When each heart gives out its best,
  Then the talk is full of zest:
  Light your fire and never fear,
  Life was made for love and cheer.

**THE DOOR**

  The lintel low enough to keep out pomp and pride:
  The threshold high enough to turn deceit aside:
  The fastening strong enough from robbers to defend:
  This door will open at a touch to welcome every friend.

**THE DIAL**

  Time can never take
    What Time did not give;
  When my shadows have all passed,
    You shall live.

**Page 77**

**THE SUN-DIAL AT MORVEN**

**FOR BAYARD AND HELEN STOCKTON**

  Two hundred years of blessing I record
  For Morven’s house, protected by the Lord:
  And still I stand among old-fashioned flowers
  To mark for Morven many sunlit hours.

**THE SUN-DIAL AT WELLS COLLEGE**

**FOR THE CLASS OF 1904**

  The shadow by my finger cast
  Divides the future from the past:
  Before it, sleeps the unborn hour,
  In darkness, and beyond thy power:
  Behind its unreturning line,
  The vanished hour, no longer thine:
  One hour alone is in thy hands,—­
  The NOW on which the shadow stands.

March, 1904.

**TO MARK TWAIN**

**I**

**AT A BIRTHDAY FEAST**

  With memories old and wishes new
  We crown our cups again,
  And here’s to you, and here’s to you
  With love that ne’er shall wane!
  And may you keep, at sixty-seven,
  The joy of earth, the hope of heaven,
  And fame well-earned, and friendship true,
  And peace that comforts every pain,
  And faith that fights the battle through,
  And all your heart’s unbounded wealth,
  And all your wit, and all your health,—­
  Yes, here’s a hearty health to you,
  And here’s to you, and here’s to you,
  Long life to you, Mark Twain.

November 30, 1902.

**II**

**AT THE MEMORIAL MEETING**

  We knew you well, dear Yorick of the West,
  The very soul of large and friendly jest!
  You loved and mocked the broad grotesque of things
  In this new world where all the folk are kings.

  Your breezy humour cleared the air, with sport
  Of shams that haunt the democratic court;
  For even where the sovereign people rule,
  A human monarch needs a royal fool.

  Your native drawl lent flavour to your wit;
  Your arrows lingered but they always hit;
  Homeric mirth around the circle ran,
  But left no wound upon the heart of man.

  We knew you kind in trouble, brave in pain;
  We saw your honour kept without a stain;
  We read this lesson of our Yorick’s years,—­
  True wisdom comes with laughter and with tears.

November 30, 1910.

**STARS AND THE SOUL**

(TO CHARLES A. YOUNG, ASTRONOMER)

  “Two things,” the wise man said, “fill me with awe:
  The starry heavens and the moral law.”
  Nay, add another wonder to thy roll,—­
  The living marvel of the human soul!

  Born in the dust and cradled in the dark,
  It feels the fire of an immortal spark,
  And learns to read, with patient, searching eyes,
  The splendid secret of the unconscious skies.

**Page 78**

  For God thought Light before He spoke the word;
  The darkness understood not, though it heard:
  But man looks up to where the planets swim,
  And thinks God’s thoughts of glory after Him.

  What knows the star that guides the sailor’s way,
  Or lights the lover’s bower with liquid ray,
  Of toil and passion, danger and distress,
  Brave hope, true love, and utter faithfulness?

  But human hearts that suffer good and ill,
  And hold to virtue with a loyal will,
  Adorn the law that rules our mortal strife
  With star-surpassing victories of life.

  So take our thanks, dear reader of the skies,
  Devout astronomer, most humbly wise,
  For lessons brighter than the stars can give,
  And inward light that helps us all to live.

**TO JULIA MARLOWE**

(READING KEATS’ ODE ON A GRECIAN URN)

  Long had I loved this “Attic shape,” the brede
    Of marble maidens round this urn divine:
  But when your golden voice began to read,
    The empty urn was filled with Chian wine.

**TO JOSEPH JEFFERSON**

*May 4th*, 1898.—­*To-day, fishing down the Swiftwater, I found Joseph Jefferson on a big rock in the middle of the brook, casting the fly for trout.  He said he had fished this very stream three-and-forty years ago; and near by, in the Paradise Valley, he wrote his famous play.*—­Leaf from my Diary.

  We met on Nature’s stage,
      And May had set the scene,
  With bishop-caps standing in delicate ranks,
  And violets blossoming over the banks,
      While the brook ran full between.

  The waters rang your call,
    With frolicsome waves a-twinkle,—­
  They knew you as boy, and they knew you as man,
  And every wave, as it merrily ran,
    Cried, “Enter Rip van Winkle!”

**THE MOCKING-BIRD**

  In mirth he mocks the other birds at noon,
  Catching the lilt of every easy tune;
  But when the day departs he sings of love,—­
  His own wild song beneath the listening moon.

**THE EMPTY QUATRAIN**

  A flawless cup:  how delicate and fine
  The flowing curve of every jewelled line!
  Look, turn it up or down, ’tis perfect still,—­
  But holds no drop of life’s heart-warming wine.

**PAN LEARNS MUSIC**

**FOR A SCULPTURE BY SARA GREENE**

  Limber-limbed, lazy god, stretched on the rock,
  Where is sweet Echo, and where is your flock?
  What are you making here?  “Listen,” said Pan,—­
  “Out of a river-reed music for man!”

**THE SHEPHERD OF NYMPHS**

      The nymphs a shepherd took
      To guard their snowy sheep;
  He led them down along the brook,
  And guided them with pipe and crook,
      Until he fell asleep.

**Page 79**

      But when the piping stayed,
      Across the flowery mead
  The milk-white nymphs ran out afraid:
  O Thyrsis, wake!  Your flock has strayed,—­
      The nymphs a shepherd need.

**ECHOES FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY**

**I**

**STARLIGHT**

  With two bright eyes, my star, my love,
  Thou lookest on the stars above:
  Ah, would that I the heaven might be
  With a million eyes to look on thee.

*Plato.*

**II**

**ROSELEAF**

  A little while the rose,
  And after that the thorn;
  An hour of dewy morn,
  And then the glamour goes.
  Ah, love in beauty born,
  A little while the rose!

*Unknown.*

**III**

**PHOSPHOR—­HESPER**

    O morning star, farewell!
    My love I now must leave;
  The hours of day I slowly tell,
  And turn to her with the twilight bell,—­
    O welcome, star of eve!

*Meleager.*

**IV**

**SEASONS**

  Sweet in summer, cups of snow,
  Cooling thirsty lips aglow;
  Sweet to sailors winter-bound,
  Spring arrives with garlands crowned;
  Sweeter yet the hour that covers
  With one cloak a pair of lovers,
  Living lost in golden weather,
  While they talk of love together.

*Asclepiades.*

**V**

**THE VINE AND THE GOAT**

  Although you eat me to the root,
  I yet shall bear enough of fruit
  For wine to sprinkle your dim eyes,
  When you are made a sacrifice.

*Euenus.*

**VI**

**THE PROFESSOR**

  Seven pupils, in the class
  Of Professor Callias,
  Listen silent while he drawls,—­
  Three are benches, four are walls.

*Unknown.*

**ONE WORLD**

     *"The worlds in which we live are two:
      The world ‘I am’ and the world ‘I do,’"*

  The worlds in which we live at heart are one,
  The world “I am,” the fruit of “I have done”;
  And underneath these worlds of flower and fruit,
  The world “I love,”—­the only living root.

**JOY AND DUTY**

  “Joy is a Duty,”—­so with golden lore
  The Hebrew rabbis taught in days of yore,
  And happy human hearts heard in their speech
  Almost the highest wisdom man can reach.

  But one bright peak still rises far above,
  And there the Master stands whose name is Love,
  Saying to those whom weary tasks employ:
  “Life is divine when Duty is a Joy.”

**Page 80**

**THE PRISON AND THE ANGEL**

  Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul;
  Love is the only angel who can bid the gates unroll;
  And when he comes to call thee, arise and follow fast;
  His way may lie through darkness, but it leads to light at last.

**THE WAY**

  Who seeks for heaven alone to save his soul,
  May keep the path, but will not reach the goal;
  While he who walks in love may wander far,
  But God will bring him where the Blessed are.

**LOVE AND LIGHT**

  There are many kinds of love, as many kinds of light,
  And every kind of love makes a glory in the night.
  There is love that stirs the heart, and love that gives it rest,
  But the love that leads life upward is the noblest and the best.

*FACTA NON VERBA*

*Deeds not Words*:  I say so too!  And yet I find it somehow true, A word may help a man in need, To nobler act and braver deed.

**FOUR THINGS**

  Four things a man must learn to do
  If he would make his record true:
  To think without confusion clearly;
  To love his fellow-men sincerely;
  To act from honest motives purely;
  To trust in God and Heaven securely.

**THE GREAT RIVER**

     *"In la sua volontade e nostra pace."*

  O mighty river! strong, eternal Will,
  Wherein the streams of human good and ill
  Are onward swept, conflicting, to the sea!
  The world is safe because it floats in Thee.

**INSCRIPTION FOR A TOMB IN ENGLAND**

  Read here, O friend unknown,
    Our grief, of her bereft;
  Yet think not tears alone
    Within our hearts are left.
  The gifts she came to give,
    Her heavenly love and cheer,
  Have made us glad to live
    And die without a fear.

1912.

**THE TALISMAN**

  What is Fortune, what is Fame?
  Futile gold and phantom name,—­
  Riches buried in a cave,
  Glory written on a grave.

  What is Friendship?  Something deep
  That the heart can spend and keep:
  Wealth that greatens while we give,
  Praise that heartens us to live.

  Come, my friend, and let us prove
  Life’s true talisman is love!
  By this charm we shall elude
  Poverty and solitude.

January 21, 1914.

**THORN AND ROSE**

  Far richer than a thornless rose
  Whose branch with beauty never glows,
  Is that which every June adorns
  With perfect bloom among its thorns.

  Merely to live without a pain
  Is little gladness, little gain,
  Ah, welcome joy tho’ mixt with grief,—­
  The thorn-set flower that crowns the leaf.

**Page 81**

June 20, 1914.

“THE SIGNS”

*Dedicated to the Zodiac Club*

Who knows how many thousand years ago
The twelvefold Zodiac was made to show
The course of stars above and men below?

The great sun plows his furrow by its “lines”:
From all its “houses” mystic meaning shines:
Deep lore of life is written in its “signs.”

       *Aries*—­Sacrifice.

Snow-white and sacred is the sacrifice
That Heaven demands for what our heart doth prize:
The man who fears to suffer, ne’er can rise.       *Taurus*—­Strength.

Rejoice, my friend, if God has made you strong:
Put forth your force to move the world along:
Yet never shame your strength to do a wrong.       *Gemini*—­Brotherhood.

Bitter his life who lives for self alone,
Poor would he be with riches and a throne:
But friendship doubles all we are and own.       *Cancer*—­The Wisdom of Retreat.

Learn from the crab, O runner fresh and fleet,
Sideways to move, or backward, when discreet;
Life is not all advance,—­sometimes retreat!       *Leo*—­Fire.

The sign of Leo is the sign of fire.
Hatred we hate:  but no man should desire
A heart too cold to flame with righteous ire.       *Virgo*—­Love.

Mysterious symbol, words are all in vain
To tell the secret power by which you reign.
The more we love, the less we can explain.       *Libra*—­Justice.

Examine well the scales with which you weigh;
Let justice rule your conduct every day;
For when you face the Judge you’ll need fair play.       *Scorpio*—­Self-Defense.

There’s not a creature in the realm of night
But has the wish to live, likewise the right:
Don’t tread upon the scorpion, or he’ll fight.       *Sagittarius*—­The Archer.

Life is an arrow, therefore you must know
What mark to aim at, how to use the bow,—­
Then draw it to the head and let it go!       *Capricornus*—­The Goat.

The goat looks solemn, yet he likes to run,
And leap the rocks, and gambol in the sun:
The truly wise enjoy a little fun.       *Aquarius*—­Water.

“Like water spilt upon the ground,”—­alas,
Our little lives flow swiftly on and pass;
Yet may they bring rich harvests and green grass!

*Pisces*—­The Fishes.
Last of the sacred signs, you bring to me
A word of hope, a word of mystery,—­ *We all are swimmers in God’s mighty sea.*

February 28, 1918.

**Page 82**

**PRO PATRIA**

**PATRIA**

  I would not even ask my heart to say
    If I could love another land as well
    As thee, my country, had I felt the spell
  Of Italy at birth, or learned to obey
  The charm of France, or England’s mighty sway.
    I would not be so much an infidel
    As once to dream, or fashion words to tell,
  What land could hold my heart from thee away.

  For like a law of nature in my blood,
    America, I feel thy sovereignty,
      And woven through my soul thy vital sign.
  My life is but a wave and thou the flood;
    I am a leaf and thou the mother-tree;
      Nor should I be at all, were I not thine.

June, 1904.

**AMERICA**

  I love thine inland seas,
  Thy groves of giant trees,
    Thy rolling plains;
  Thy rivers’ mighty sweep,
  Thy mystic canyons deep,
  Thy mountains wild and steep,
    All thy domains;

  Thy silver Eastern strands,
  Thy Golden Gate that stands
    Wide to the West;
  Thy flowery Southland fair,
  Thy sweet and crystal air,—­
  O land beyond compare,
    Thee I love best!

March, 1906.

**THE ANCESTRAL DWELLINGS**

  Dear to my heart are the ancestral dwellings of America,
  Dearer than if they were haunted by ghosts of royal splendour;
  They are simple enough to be great in their friendly dignity,—­
  Homes that were built by the brave beginners of a nation.

I love the old white farmhouses nestled in New England valleys,
Ample and long and low, with elm-trees feathering over them:
Borders of box in the yard, and lilacs, and old-fashioned roses,
A fan-light above the door, and little square panes in the windows,
The wood-shed piled with maple and birch and hickory ready for winter,
The gambrel-roof with its garret crowded with household relics,—­
All the tokens of prudent thrift and the spirit of self-reliance.

I love the weather-beaten, shingled houses that front the ocean;
They seem to grow out of the rocks, there is something indomitable
about them:
Their backs are bowed, and their sides are covered with lichens;
Soft in their colour as gray pearls, they are full of a patient courage.
Facing the briny wind on a lonely shore they stand undaunted,
While the thin blue pennant of smoke from the square-built chimney
Tells of a haven for man, with room for a hearth and a cradle.

I love the stately southern mansions with their tall white columns,
They look through avenues of trees, over fields where the cotton is
growing;
I can see the flutter of white frocks along their shady porches,
Music and laughter float from the windows, the yards

**Page 83**

are full of
hounds and horses.
Long since the riders have ridden away, yet the houses have not
forgotten,
They are proud of their name and place, and their doors are always open,
For the thing they remember best is the pride of their ancient
hospitality.

In the towns I love the discreet and tranquil Quaker dwellings,
With their demure brick faces and immaculate marble doorsteps;
And the gabled houses of the Dutch, with their high stoops and iron
railings,
(I can see their little brass knobs shining in the morning sunlight);
And the solid self-contained houses of the descendants of the Puritans,
Frowning on the street with their narrow doors and dormer-windows;
And the triple-galleried, many-pillared mansions of Charleston,
Standing open sideways in their gardens of roses and magnolias.

Yes, they are all dear to my heart, and in my eyes they are beautiful;
For under their roofs were nourished the thoughts that have made the
nation;
The glory and strength of America come from her ancestral dwellings.

July, 1909.

**HUDSON’S LAST VOYAGE**

**THE SHALLOP ON HUDSON BAY**

June 22, 1611

  One sail in sight upon the lonely sea,
  And only one!  For never ship but mine
  Has dared these waters.  We were first,
  My men, to battle in between the bergs
  And floes to these wide waves.  This gulf is mine;
  I name it! and that flying sail is mine!
  And there, hull-down below that flying sail,
  The ship that staggers home is mine, mine, mine!
  My ship *Discoverie*!
                        The sullen dogs
  Of mutineers, the bitches’ whelps that snatched
  Their food and bit the hand that nourished them,
  Have stolen her.  You ingrate Henry Greene,
  I picked you from the gutter of Houndsditch,
  And paid your debts, and kept you in my house,
  And brought you here to make a man of you!
  You Robert Juet, ancient, crafty man,
  Toothless and tremulous, how many times
  Have I employed you as a master’s mate
  To give you bread?  And you Abacuck Prickett,
  You sailor-clerk, you salted puritan,
  You knew the plot and silently agreed,
  Salving your conscience with a pious lie!
  Yes, all of you—­hounds, rebels, thieves!  Bring back
  My ship!
            Too late,—­I rave,—­they cannot hear
  My voice:  and if they heard, a drunken laugh
  Would be their answer; for their minds have caught
  The fatal firmness of the fool’s resolve,
  That looks like courage but is only fear.
  They’ll blunder on, and lose my ship, and drown;
  Or blunder home to England and be hanged.
  Their skeletons will rattle in the chains
  Of some tall gibbet on the Channel cliffs,
  While passing mariners look up and say:
  “Those are the rotten bones of Hudson’s men
  Who left their captain in the frozen North!”

**Page 84**

  O God of justice, why hast Thou ordained
  Plans of the wise and actions of the brave
  Dependent on the aid of fools and cowards?

  Look,—­there she goes,—­her topsails in the sun
  Gleam from the ragged ocean edge, and drop
  Clean out of sight!  So let the traitors go
  Clean out of mind!  We’ll think of braver things!
  Come closer in the boat, my friends.  John King,
  You take the tiller, keep her head nor’west.
  You Philip Staffe, the only one who chose
  Freely to share our little shallop’s fate,
  Rather than travel in the hell-bound ship,—­
  Too good an English sailor to desert
  Your crippled comrades,—­try to make them rest
  More easy on the thwarts.  And John, my son,
  My little shipmate, come and lean your head
  Against my knee.  Do you remember still
  The April morn in Ethelburga’s church,
  Five years ago, when side by side we kneeled
  To take the sacrament with all our men,
  Before the *Hopewell* left St. Catherine’s docks
  On our first voyage?  It was then I vowed
  My sailor-soul and yours to search the sea
  Until we found the water-path that leads
  From Europe into Asia.
                          I believe
  That God has poured the ocean round His world,
  Not to divide, but to unite the lands.
  And all the English captains that have dared
  In little ships to plough uncharted waves,—­
  Davis and Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher,
  Raleigh and Gilbert,—­all the other names,—­
  Are written in the chivalry of God
  As men who served His purpose.  I would claim
  A place among that knighthood of the sea;
  And I have earned it, though my quest should fail!
  For, mark me well, the honour of our life
  Derives from this:  to have a certain aim
  Before us always, which our will must seek
  Amid the peril of uncertain ways.
  Then, though we miss the goal, our search is crowned
  With courage, and we find along our path
  A rich reward of unexpected things.
  Press towards the aim:  take fortune as it fares!

  I know not why, but something in my heart
  Has always whispered, “Westward seek your goal!”
  Three times they sent me east, but still I turned
  The bowsprit west, and felt among the floes
  Of ruttling ice along the Greenland coast,
  And down the rugged shore of Newfoundland,
  And past the rocky capes and wooded bays
  Where Gosnold sailed,—­like one who feels his way
  With outstretched hand across a darkened room,—­
  I groped among the inlets and the isles,
  To find the passage to the Land of Spice.
  I have not found it yet,—­but I have found
  Things worth the finding!
                            Son, have you forgot
  Those mellow autumn days, two years ago,
  When first we sent our little ship *Half-Moon*,—­
  The flag of Holland floating at her peak,—­

 **Page 85**

  Across a sandy bar, and sounded in
  Among the channels, to a goodly bay
  Where all the navies of the world could ride?
  A fertile island that the redmen called
  Manhattan, lay above the bay:  the land
  Around was bountiful and friendly fair.
  But never land was fair enough to hold
  The seaman from the calling of the sea.
  And so we bore to westward of the isle,
  Along a mighty inlet, where the tide
  Was troubled by a downward-flowing flood
  That seemed to come from far away,—­perhaps
  From some mysterious gulf of Tartary?
  Inland we held our course; by palisades
  Of naked rock; by rolling hills adorned
  With forests rich in timber for great ships;
  Through narrows where the mountains shut us in
  With frowning cliffs that seemed to bar the stream;
  And then through open reaches where the banks
  Sloped to the water gently, with their fields
  Of corn and lentils smiling in the sun.
  Ten days we voyaged through that placid land,
  Until we came to shoals, and sent a boat
  Upstream to find,—­what I already knew,—­
  We travelled on a river, not a strait.

  But what a river!  God has never poured
  A stream more royal through a land more rich.
  Even now I see it flowing in my dream,
  While coming ages people it with men
  Of manhood equal to the river’s pride.
  I see the wigwams of the redmen changed
  To ample houses, and the tiny plots
  Of maize and green tobacco broadened out
  To prosperous farms, that spread o’er hill and dale
  The many-coloured mantle of their crops.
  I see the terraced vineyard on the slope
  Where now the fox-grape loops its tangled vine,
  And cattle feeding where the red deer roam,
  And wild-bees gathered into busy hives
  To store the silver comb with golden sweet;
  And all the promised land begins to flow
  With milk and honey.  Stately manors rise
  Along the banks, and castles top the hills,
  And little villages grow populous with trade,
  Until the river runs as proudly as the Rhine,—­
  The thread that links a hundred towns and towers!
  Now looking deeper in my dream, I see
  A mighty city covering the isle
  They call Manhattan, equal in her state
  To all the older capitals of earth,—­
  The gateway city of a golden world,—­
  A city girt with masts, and crowned with spires,
  And swarming with a million busy men,
  While to her open door across the bay
  The ships of all the nations flock like doves.
  My name will be remembered there, the world
  Will say, “This river and this isle were found
  By Henry Hudson, on his way to seek
  The Northwest Passage.”
                          Yes, I seek it still,—­
  My great adventure and my guiding star!
  For look ye, friends, our voyage is not done;
  We hold by hope as long as life endures!

 **Page 86**

  Somewhere among these floating fields of ice,
  Somewhere along this westward widening bay,
  Somewhere beneath this luminous northern night,
  The channel opens to the Farthest East,—­
  I know it,—­and some day a little ship
  Will push her bowsprit in, and battle through!
  And why not ours,—­to-morrow,—­who can tell?
  The lucky chance awaits the fearless heart!
  These are the longest days of all the year;
  The world is round and God is everywhere,
  And while our shallop floats we still can steer.

  So point her up, John King, nor’west by north
  We’ll keep the honour of a certain aim
  Amid the peril of uncertain ways,
  And sail ahead, and leave the rest to God.

July, 1909.

**SEA-GULLS OF MANHATTAN**

  Children of the elemental mother,
    Born upon some lonely island shore
  Where the wrinkled ripples run and whisper,
    Where the crested billows plunge and roar;
  Long-winged, tireless roamers and adventurers,
    Fearless breasters of the wind and sea,
  In the far-off solitary places
    I have seen you floating wild and free!

  Here the high-built cities rise around you;
    Here the cliffs that tower east and west,
  Honeycombed with human habitations,
    Have no hiding for the sea-bird’s nest:
  Here the river flows begrimed and troubled;
    Here the hurrying, panting vessels fume,
  Restless, up and down the watery highway,
    While a thousand chimneys vomit gloom.

  Toil and tumult, conflict and confusion,
    Clank and clamour of the vast machine
  Human hands have built for human bondage—­
    Yet amid it all you float serene;
  Circling, soaring, sailing, swooping lightly
    Down to glean your harvest from the wave;
  In your heritage of air and water,
    You have kept the freedom Nature gave.

  Even so the wild-woods of Manhattan
    Saw your wheeling flocks of white and gray;
  Even so you fluttered, followed, floated,
    Round the *Half-Moon* creeping up the bay;
  Even so your voices creaked and chattered.
    Laughing shrilly o’er the tidal rips,
  While your black and beady eyes were glistening
    Round the sullen British prison-ships.

  Children of the elemental mother,
    Fearless floaters ’mid the double blue,
  From the crowded boats that cross the ferries
    Many a longing heart goes out to you.
  Though the cities climb and close around us,
    Something tells us that our souls are free,
  While the sea-gulls fly above the harbour,
    While the river flows to meet the sea!

December, 1905.

**A BALLAD OF CLAREMONT HILL**

          The roar of the city is low,
          Muffled by new-fallen snow,
  And the sign of the wintry moon is small and round and still.
          Will you come with me to-night,
          To see a pleasant sight
  Away on the river-side, at the edge of Claremont Hill?

**Page 87**

          “And what shall we see there,
          But streets that are new and bare,
  And many a desolate place that the city is coming to fill;
          And a soldier’s tomb of stone,
          And a few trees standing alone—­
  Will you walk for that through the cold, to the edge of Claremont Hill?”

          But there’s more than that for me,
          In the place that I fain would see:
  There’s a glimpse of the grace that helps us all to bear life’s ill,
          A touch of the vital breath
          That keeps the world from death,
  A flower that never fades, on the edge of Claremont Hill.

          For just where the road swings round,
          In a narrow strip of ground,
  Where a group of forest trees are lingering fondly still,
          There’s a grave of the olden time,
          When the garden bloomed in its prime,
  And the children laughed and sang on the edge of Claremont Hill.

          The marble is pure and white,
          And even in this dim light,
  You may read the simple words that are written there if you will;
          You may hear a father tell
          Of the child he loved so well,
  A hundred years ago, on the edge of Claremont Hill.

          The tide of the city has rolled
          Across that bower of old,
  And blotted out the beds of the rose and the daffodil;
          But the little playmate sleeps,
          And the shrine of love still keeps
  A record of happy days, on the edge of Claremont Hill.

          The river is pouring down
          To the crowded, careless town,
  Where the intricate wheels of trade are grinding on like a mill;
          But the clamorous noise and strife
          Of the hurrying waves of life
  Flow soft by this haven of peace on the edge of Claremont Hill.

          And after all, my friend,
          When the tale of our years shall end,
  Be it long or short, or lowly or great, as God may will,
          What better praise could we hear,
          Than this of the child so dear:
  You have made my life more sweet, on the edge of Claremont Hill?

December, 1896.

**URBS CORONATA**

(Song for the City College of New York)

  O youngest of the giant brood
    Of cities far-renowned;
  In wealth and glory thou hast passed
    Thy rivals at a bound;
  Thou art a mighty queen, New York;
    And how wilt thou be crowned?

  “Weave me no palace-wreath of Pride,”
    The royal city said;
  “Nor forge of frowning fortress-walls
    A helmet for my head;
  But let me wear a diadem
    Of Wisdom’s towers instead.”

  She bowed herself, she spent herself,
    She wrought her will forsooth,
  And set upon her island height
    A citadel of Truth,
  A house of Light, a home of Thought,
    A shrine of noble Youth.

**Page 88**

  Stand here, ye City College towers,
    And look both up and down;
  Remember all who wrought for you
    Within the toiling town;
  Remember all their hopes for you,
    And *be* the City’s Crown.

June, 1908.

**MERCY FOR ARMENIA**

**I**

**THE TURK’S WAY**

  Stand back, ye messengers of mercy!  Stand
    Far off, for I will save my troubled folk
    In my own way.  So the false Sultan spoke;
  And Europe, hearkening to his base command,
  Stood still to see him heal his wounded land.
    Through blinding snows of winter and through smoke
    Of burning towns, she saw him deal the stroke
  Of cruel mercy that his hate had planned.
  Unto the prisoners and the sick he gave
    New tortures, horrible, without a name;
      Unto the thirsty, blood to drink; a sword
    Unto the hungry; with a robe of shame
      He clad the naked, making life abhorred;
  He saved by slaughter, and denied a grave.

**II**

**AMERICA’S WAY**

  But thou, my country, though no fault be thine
    For that red horror far across the sea;
    Though not a tortured wretch can point to thee,
  And curse thee for the selfishness supine
  Of those great Powers that cowardly combine
    To shield the Turk in his iniquity;
    Yet, since thy hand is innocent and free,
  Arise, and show the world the way divine!
  Thou canst not break the oppressor’s iron rod,
    But thou canst help and comfort the oppressed;
      Thou canst not loose the captive’s heavy chain,
      But thou canst bind his wounds and soothe his pain.
    Armenia calls thee, Sovereign of the West,
  To play the Good Samaritan for God.

1896.

**SICILY, DECEMBER, 1908**

  O garden isle, beloved by Sun and Sea,
    Whose bluest billows kiss thy curving bays,
    Whose light infolds thy hills with golden rays,
  Filling with fruit each dark-leaved orange-tree,
  What hidden hatred hath the Earth for thee,
    That once again, in these dark, dreadful days,
    Breaks forth in trembling rage, and swiftly lays
  Thy beauty waste in wreck and agony!
  Is Nature, then, a strife of jealous powers,
    And man the plaything of unconscious fate?
      Not so, my troubled heart!  God reigns above,
  And man is greatest in his darkest hours.
    Walking amid the cities desolate,
      Behold the Son of God in human love!

Tertius and Henry van Dyke.

“COME BACK AGAIN, JEANNE D’ARC”

  The land was broken in despair,
    The princes quarrelled in the dark,
  When clear and tranquil, through the troubled air
  Of selfish minds and wills that did not dare,
          Your star arose, Jeanne d’Arc.

**Page 89**

  O virgin breast with lilies white,
    O sun-burned hand that bore the lance,
  You taught the prayer that helps men to unite,
  You brought the courage equal to the fight,
          You gave a heart to France!

  Your king was crowned, your country free,
    At Rheims you had your soul’s desire:
  And then, at Rouen, maid of Domremy,
  The black-robed judges gave your victory
          The martyr’s crown of fire.

  And now again the times are ill,
    And doubtful leaders miss the mark;
  The people lack the single faith and will
  To make them one,—­your country needs you still,—­
          Come back again, Jeanne d’Arc!

  O woman-star, arise once more
    And shine to bid your land advance:
  The old heroic trust in God restore,
  Renew the brave, unselfish hopes of yore,
          And give a heart to France!

Paris, July, 1909.

**NATIONAL MONUMENTS**

  Count not the cost of honour to the dead!
    The tribute that a mighty nation pays
    To those who loved her well in former days
  Means more than gratitude for glories fled;
  For every noble man that she hath bred,
    Lives in the bronze and marble that we raise,
    Immortalised by art’s immortal praise,
  To lead our sons as he our fathers led.

  These monuments of manhood strong and high
    Do more than forts or battle-ships to keep
  Our dear-bought liberty.  They fortify
    The heart of youth with valour wise and deep;
  They build eternal bulwarks, and command
  Immortal hosts to guard our native land.

February, 1905.

**THE MONUMENT OF FRANCIS MAKEMIE**

(Presbyter of Christ in America, 1683-1708)

  To thee, plain hero of a rugged race,
    We bring the meed of praise too long delayed!
    Thy fearless word and faithful work have made
  For God’s Republic firmer resting-place
  In this New World:  for thou hast preached the grace
    And power of Christ in many a forest glade,
    Teaching the truth that leaves men unafraid
  Of frowning tyranny or death’s dark face.

  Oh, who can tell how much we owe to thee,
    Makemie, and to labour such as thine,
    For all that makes America the shrine
  Of faith untrammelled and of conscience free?
  Stand here, gray stone, and consecrate the sod
  Where rests this brave Scotch-Irish man of God!

April, 1908.

**THE STATUE OF SHERMAN BY ST. GAUDENS**

  This is the soldier brave enough to tell
  The glory-dazzled world that ‘war is hell’:
  Lover of peace, he looks beyond the strife,
  And rides through hell to save his country’s life.

April, 1904.

**Page 90**

“AMERICA FOR ME”

  ’Tis fine to see the Old World, and travel up and down
  Among the famous palaces and cities of renown,
  To admire the crumbly castles and the statues of the kings,—­
  But now I think I’ve had enough of antiquated things.

   *So it’s home again, and home again, America for me!
    My heart is turning home again, and there I long to be,
    In the land of youth and freedom beyond the ocean bars,
    Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.*

  Oh, London is a man’s town, there’s power in the air;
  And Paris is a woman’s town, with flowers in her hair;
  And it’s sweet to dream in Venice, and it’s great to study Rome;
  But when it comes to living there is no place like home.

  I like the German fir-woods, in green battalions drilled;
  I like the gardens of Versailles with flashing fountains filled;
  But, oh, to take your hand, my dear, and ramble for a day
  In the friendly western woodland where Nature has her way!

  I know that Europe’s wonderful, yet something seems to lack:
  The Past is too much with her, and the people looking back.
  But the glory of the Present is to make the Future free,—­
  We love our land for what she is and what she is to be.

   *Oh, it’s home again, and home again, America for me!
    I want a ship that’s westward bound to plough the rolling sea,
    To the blessed Land of Room Enough beyond the ocean bars,
    Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.*

June, 1909.

**THE BUILDERS**

**ODE FOR THE HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF PRINCETON COLLEGE**

October 21, 1896

**I**

  Into the dust of the making of man
  Spirit was breathed when his life began,
  Lifting him up from his low estate,
  With masterful passion, the wish to create.
  Out of the dust of his making, man
  Fashioned his works as the ages ran;
  Fortress, and palace, and temple, and tower,
  Filling the world with the proof of his power.
  Over the dust that awaits him, man,
  Building the walls that his pride doth plan,
  Dreams they will stand in the light of the sun
  Bearing his name till Time is done.

**II**

The monuments of mortals
Are as the glory of the grass;
Through Time’s dim portals
A voiceless, viewless wind doth pass,
The blossoms fall before it in a day,
The forest monarchs year by year decay,
And man’s great buildings slowly fade away.
One after one,
They pay to that dumb breath
The tribute of their death,
And are undone.
The towers incline to dust,
The massive girders rust,
The domes dissolve in air,
The pillars that upbear
The lofty arches crumble, stone by stone,
While man the builder looks about him in despair,
For all his works of pride and power are overthrown.

**Page 91**

**III**

  A Voice came from the sky:
  “Set thy desires more high.
  Thy buildings fade away
  Because thou buildest clay.
  Now make the fabric sure
  With stones that will endure!
  Hewn from the spiritual rock,
    The immortal towers of the soul
  At Death’s dissolving touch shall mock,
    And stand secure while aeons roll.”

**IV**

Well did the wise in heart rejoice
To hear the summons of that Voice,
And patiently begin
The builder’s work within,
Houses not made with hands,
Nor founded on the sands.
And thou, Revered Mother, at whose call
We come to keep thy joyous festival,
And celebrate thy labours on the walls of Truth
Through sevenscore years and ten of thine eternal youth—­
A master builder thou,
And on thy shining brow,
Like Cybele, in fadeless light dost wear
A diadem of turrets strong and fair.

**V**

I see thee standing in a lonely land,
But late and hardly won from solitude,
Unpopulous and rude,—­
On that far western shore I see thee stand,
Like some young goddess from a brighter strand,
While in thine eyes a radiant thought is born,
Enkindling all thy beauty like the morn.
Sea-like the forest rolled, in waves of green,
And few the lights that glimmered, leagues between.
High in the north, for fourscore years alone
Fair Harvard’s earliest beacon-tower had shone
When Yale was lighted, and an answering ray
Flashed from the meadows by New Haven Bay.
But deeper spread the forest, and more dark,
Where first Neshaminy received the spark
Of sacred learning to a woodland camp,
And Old Log College glowed with Tennant’s lamp.
Thine, Alma Mater, was the larger sight,
That saw the future of that trembling light,
And thine the courage, thine the stronger will,
That built its loftier home on Princeton Hill.

  “New light!” men cried, and murmured that it came
  From an unsanctioned source with lawless flame;
  It shone too free, for still the church and school
  Must only shine according to their rule.
  But Princeton answered, in her nobler mood,
  “God made the light, and all the light is good.
  There is no war between the old and new;
  The conflict lies between the false and true.
  The stars, that high in heaven their courses run,
  In glory differ, but their light is one.
  The beacons, gleaming o’er the sea of life,
  Are rivals but in radiance, not in strife.
  Shine on, ye sister-towers, across the night!
  I too will build a lasting house of light.”

**VI**

**Page 92**

  Brave was that word of faith and bravely was it kept:
  With never-wearying zeal that faltered not, nor slept,
  Our Alma Mater toiled, and while she firmly laid
  The deep foundation-walls, at all her toil she prayed.
  And men who loved the truth because it made them free,
  And clearly saw the twofold Word of God agree,
  Reading from Nature’s book and from the Bible’s page
  By the same inward ray that grows from age to age,
  Were built like living stones that beacon to uplift,
  And drawing light from heaven gave to the world the gift.
  Nor ever, while they searched the secrets of the earth,
  Or traced the stream of life through mystery to its birth,
  Nor ever, while they taught the lightning-flash to bear
  The messages of man in silence through the air,
  Fell from their home of light one false, perfidious ray
  To blind the trusting heart, or lead the life astray.
  But still, while knowledge grew more luminous and broad
  It lit the path of faith and showed the way to God.

**VII**

  Yet not for peace alone
    Labour the builders.
  Work that in peace has grown
  Swiftly is overthrown,
  When in the darkening skies
  Storm-clouds of wrath arise,
  And through the cannon’s crash,
  War’s deadly lightning-flash
    Smites and bewilders.
  Ramparts of strength must frown
  Round every placid town
    And city splendid;
  All that our fathers wrought
  With true prophetic thought,
    Must be defended!

**VIII**

But who could raise protecting walls for thee,
Thou young, defenceless land of liberty?
Or who could build a fortress strong enough,
Or stretch a mighty bulwark long enough
To hold thy far-extended coast
Against the overweening host
That took the open path across the sea,
And like a tempest poured
Their desolating horde,
To quench thy dawning light in gloom of tyranny?
Yet not unguarded thou wert found
When on thy shore with sullen sound
The blaring trumpets of an unjust king
Proclaimed invasion.  From the ground,
In freedom’s darkest hour, there seemed to spring
Unconquerable walls for her defence;
Not trembling, like those battlements of stone
That fell when Joshua’s horns were blown;
But firm and stark the living rampart rose,
To meet the onset of imperious foes
With a long line of brave, unyielding men.
This was thy fortress, well-defended land,
And on these walls, the patient, building hand
Of Princeton laboured with the force of ten.
Her sons were foremost in the furious fight;
Her sons were firmest to uphold the right
In council-chambers of the new-born State,
And prove that he who would be free must first be great
In heart, and high in thought, and strong

 **Page 93**

In purpose not to do or suffer wrong.
Such were the men, impregnable to fear,
Whose souls were framed and fashioned here;
And when war shook the land with threatening shock,
The men of Princeton stood like muniments of rock.
Nor has the breath of Time
Dissolved that proud array
Of never-broken strength:
For though the rocks decay,
And all the iron bands
Of earthly strongholds are unloosed at length,
And buried deep in gray oblivion’s sands;
The work that heroes’ hands
Wrought in the light of freedom’s natal day
Shall never fade away,
But lifts itself, sublime
Into a lucid sphere,
For ever calm and clear,
Preserving in the memory of the fathers’ deed,
A never-failing fortress for their children’s need.
There we confirm our hearts to-day, and read
On many a stone the signature of fame,
The builder’s mark, our Alma Mater’s name.

**IX**

    Bear with us then a moment, while we turn
    From all the present splendours of this place—­
    The lofty towers that like a dream have grown
    Where once old Nassau Hall stood all alone—­
    Back to that ancient time, with hearts that burn
          In filial gratitude, to trace
    The glory of our mother’s best degree,
          In that “high son of Liberty,”
          Who like a granite block,
          Riven from Scotland’s rock,
    Stood loyal here to keep Columbia free.
  Born far away beyond the ocean’s tide,
  He found his fatherland upon this side;
  And every drop of ardent blood that ran
  Through his great heart, was true American.
  He held no fealty to a distant throne,
  But made his new-found country’s cause his own.
          In peril and distress,
          In toil and weariness,
          When darkness overcast her
          With shadows of disaster,
          And voices of confusion
          Proclaimed her hope delusion,
          Robed in his preacher’s gown,
          He dared the danger down;
  Like some old prophet chanting an inspired rune
  In freedom’s councils rang the voice of Witherspoon.

    And thou, my country, write it on thy heart:
   *Thy sons are they who nobly take thy part;
    Who dedicates his manhood at thy shrine,
    Wherever born, is born a son of thine.
    Foreign in name, but not in soul, they come
    To find in thee their long desired home;
  Lovers of liberty and haters of disorder,
  They shall be built in strength along thy border.*

      Dream not thy future foes
      Will all be foreign-born!
      Turn thy clear look of scorn
      Upon thy children who oppose
  Their passions wild and policies of shame
  To wreck the righteous splendour of thy name.
    Untaught and overconfident they rise,
    With folly on their lips,

**Page 94**

and envy in their eyes:
    Strong to destroy, but powerless to create,
    And ignorant of all that made our fathers great,
    Their hands would take away thy golden crown,
    And shake the pillars of thy freedom down
    In Anarchy’s ocean, dark and desolate.
      O should that storm descend,
      What fortress shall defend
      The land our fathers wrought for,
      The liberties they fought for?
      What bulwark shall secure
    Her shrines of law, and keep her founts of justice pure?
          Then, ah then,
        As in the olden days,
      The builders must upraise
      A rampart of indomitable men.
          And once again,
    Dear Mother, if thy heart and hand be true,
    There will be building work for thee to do;
      Yea, more than once again,
      Thou shalt win lasting praise,
    And never-dying honour shall be thine,
    For setting many stones in that illustrious line,
    To stand unshaken in the swirling strife,
    And guard their country’s honour as her life.

**X**

  Softly, my harp, and let me lay the touch
  Of silence on these rudely clanging strings;
      For he who sings
  Even of noble conflicts overmuch,
  Loses the inward sense of better things;
    And he who makes a boast
  Of knowledge, darkens that which counts the most,—­
    The insight of a wise humility
  That reverently adores what none can see.
    The glory of our life below
  Comes not from what we do, or what we know,
      But dwells forevermore in what we are.
      There is an architecture grander far
        Than all the fortresses of war,
        More inextinguishably bright
      Than learning’s lonely towers of light.
      Framing its walls of faith and hope and love
        In souls of men, it lifts above
        The frailty of our earthly home
            An everlasting dome;
      The sanctuary of the human host,
      The living temple of the Holy Ghost.

**XI**

If music led the builders long ago,
When Arthur planned the halls of Camelot,
And made the royal city grow,
Fair as a flower in that forsaken spot;
What sweeter music shall we bring,
To weave a harmony divine
Of prayer and holy thought
Into the labours of this loftier shrine,
This consecrated hill,
Where through so many a year
Our Alma Mater’s hand hath wrought,
With toil serene and still,
And heavenly hope, to rear
Eternal dwellings for the Only King?
Here let no martial trumpets blow,
Nor instruments of pride proclaim
The loud exultant notes of fame!
But let the chords be clear and low,
And let the anthem deeper grow,
And let it move more solemnly and slow;
For only such an ode
Can seal the harmony
Of that deep masonry
Wherein the soul of man is framed for God’s abode.

**Page 95**

**XII**

  O Thou whose boundless love bestows
    The joy of earth, the hope of Heaven,
  And whose unchartered mercy flows
    O’er all the blessings Thou hast given;
  Thou by whose light alone we see;
  And by whose truth our souls set free
  Are made imperishably strong;
  Hear Thou the solemn music of our song.

  Grant us the knowledge that we need
    To solve the questions of the mind,
  And light our candle while we read,
    To keep our hearts from going blind;
  Enlarge our vision to behold
  The wonders Thou hast wrought of old;
  Reveal thyself in every law,
  And gild the towers of truth with holy awe.

  Be Thou our strength if war’s wild gust
    Shall rage around us, loud and fierce;
  Confirm our souls and let our trust
    Be like a shield that none can pierce;
  Renew the courage that prevails,
  The steady faith that never fails,
  And make us stand in every fight
  Firm as a fortress to defend the right.

  O God, control us as Thou wilt,
    And guide the labour of our hand;
  Let all our work be surely built
    As Thou, the architect, hast planned;
  But whatso’er thy power shall make
  Of these frail lives, do not forsake
  Thy dwelling:  let thy presence rest
  For ever in the temple of our breast.

**SPIRIT OF THE EVERLASTING BOY**

**ODE FOR THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL**

June 11, 1910

**I**

  The British bard who looked on Eton’s walls,
  Endeared by distance in the pearly gray
  And soft aerial blue that ever falls
  On English landscape with the dying day,
  Beheld in thought his boyhood far away,
  Its random raptures and its festivals
      Of noisy mirth,
  The brief illusion of its idle joys,
  And mourned that none of these can stay
  With men, whom life inexorably calls
  To face the grim realities of earth.
  His pensive fancy pictured there at play
  From year to year the careless bands of boys,
  Unconscious victims kept in golden state,
      While haply they await
  The dark approach of disenchanting Fate,
      To hale them to the sacrifice
  Of Pain and Penury and Grief and Care,
  Slow-withering Age, or Failure’s swift despair.
  Half-pity and half-envy dimmed the eyes
  Of that old poet, gazing on the scene
  Where long ago his youth had flowed serene,
  And all the burden of his ode was this:
      “Where ignorance is bliss,
      ’Tis folly to be wise.”

**II**

  But not for us, O plaintive elegist,
  Thine epicedial tone of sad farewell
  To joy in wisdom and to thought in youth!
  Our western Muse would keep her tryst
  With sunrise, not with sunset, and foretell
  In boyhood’s bliss the dawn of manhood’s truth.

**Page 96**

**III**

      O spirit of the everlasting boy,
          Alert, elate,
      And confident that life is good,
      Thou knockest boldly at the gate,
          In hopeful hardihood,
      Eager to enter and enjoy
          Thy new estate.

  Through the old house thou runnest everywhere,
  Bringing a breath of folly and fresh air.
  Ready to make a treasure of each toy,
  Or break them all in discontented mood;
          Fearless of Fate,
    Yet strangely fearful of a comrade’s laugh;
    Reckless and timid, hard and sensitive;
    In talk a rebel, full of mocking chaff,
        At heart devout conservative;
    In love with love, yet hating to be kissed;
          Inveterate optimist,
          And judge severe,
    In reason cloudy but in feeling clear;
    Keen critic, ardent hero-worshipper,
    Impatient of restraint in little ways,
        Yet ever ready to confer
    On chosen leaders boundless power and praise;
    Adventurous spirit burning to explore
    Untrodden paths where hidden danger lies,
    And homesick heart looking with wistful eyes
    Through every twilight to a mother’s door;
    Thou daring, darling, inconsistent boy,
        How dull the world would be
    Without thy presence, dear barbarian,
    And happy lord of high futurity!
    Be what thou art, our trouble and our joy,
    Our hardest problem and our brightest hope!
    And while thine elders lead thee up the slope
    Of knowledge, let them learn from teaching thee
    That vital joy is part of nature’s plan,
    And he who keeps the spirit of the boy
    Shall gladly grow to be a happy man.

**IV**

    What constitutes a school?
  Not ancient halls and ivy-mantled towers,
    Where dull traditions rule
  With heavy hand youth’s lightly springing powers;
    Not spacious pleasure courts,
  And lofty temples of athletic fame,
    Where devotees of sports
  Mistake a pastime for life’s highest aim;
    Not fashion, nor renown
  Of wealthy patronage and rich estate;
    No, none of these can crown
  A school with light and make it truly great.
    But masters, strong and wise,
  Who teach because they love the teacher’s task,
    And find their richest prize
  In eyes that open and in minds that ask;
    And boys, with heart aglow
  To try their youthful vigour on their work,
    Eager to learn and grow,
  And quick to hate a coward or a shirk:
    These constitute a school,—­
  A vital forge of weapons keen and bright,
    Where living sword and tool
  Are tempered for true toil or noble fight!
    But let not wisdom scorn
  The hours of pleasure in the playing fields:
    There also strength is born,

 **Page 97**

  And every manly game a virtue yields.
    Fairness and self-control,
  Good-humour, pluck, and patience in the race,
    Will make a lad heart-whole
  To win with honour, lose without disgrace.
    Ah, well for him who gains
  In such a school apprenticeship to life:
    With him the joy of youth remains
  In later lessons and in larger strife!

**V**

  On Jersey’s rolling plain, where Washington,
  In midnight marching at the head
  Of ragged regiments, his army led
  To Princeton’s victory of the rising sun;
  Here in this liberal land, by battle won
      For Freedom and the rule
  Of equal rights for every child of man,
      Arose a democratic school,
  To train a virile race of sons to bear
  With thoughtful joy the name American,
  And serve the God who heard their father’s prayer.
  No cloister, dreaming in a world remote
  From that real world wherein alone we live;
  No mimic court, where titled names denote
  A dignity that only worth can give;
  But here a friendly house of learning stood,
  With open door beside the broad highway,
  And welcomed lads to study and to play
  In generous rivalry of brotherhood.
  A hundred years have passed, and Lawrenceville,
  In beauty and in strength renewed,
  Stands with her open portal still,
  And neither time nor fortune brings
  To her deep spirit any change of mood,
  Or faltering from the faith she held of old.
  Still to the democratic creed she clings:
  That manhood needs nor rank nor gold
  To make it noble in our eyes;
  That every boy is born with royal right,
  From blissful ignorance to rise
  To joy more lasting and more bright,
  In mastery of body and of mind,
  King of himself and servant of mankind.

**VI**

      Old Lawrenceville,
      Thy happy bell
      Shall ring to-day,
      O’er vale and hill,
      O’er mead and dell,
      While far away,
      With silent thrill,
      The echoes roll
      Through many a soul,
      That knew thee well,
      In boyhood’s day,
      And loves thee still.

      Ah, who can tell
      How far away,
      Some sentinel
      Of God’s good will,
      In forest cool,
      Or desert gray,
      By lonely pool,
      Or barren hill,
      Shall faintly hear,
      With inward ear,
      The chiming bell,
      Of his old school,
  Through darkness pealing;
  And lowly kneeling,
      Shall feel the spell
      Of grateful tears
      His eyelids fill;
      And softly pray
      To Him who hears:
  God bless old Lawrenceville!

**TEXAS**

A DEMOCRATIC ODE [1]

**I**

**Page 98**

**THE WILD-BEES**

  All along the Brazos river,
  All along the Colorado,
  In the valleys and the lowlands
  Where the trees were tall and stately,
  In the rich and rolling meadows
  Where the grass was full of wild-flowers,
  Came a humming and a buzzing,
  Came the murmur of a going
  To and fro among the tree-tops,
  Far and wide across the meadows.
  And the red-men in their tepees
  Smoked their pipes of clay and listened.
  “What is this?” they asked in wonder;
  “Who can give the sound a meaning?
  Who can understand the language
  Of this going in the tree-tops?”
  Then the wisest of the Tejas
  Laid his pipe aside and answered:
  “O my brothers, these are people,
  Very little, winged people,
  Countless, busy, banded people,
  Coming humming through the timber.
  These are tribes of bees, united
  By a single aim and purpose,
  To possess the Tejas’ country,
  Gather harvest from the prairies,
  Store their wealth among the timber.
  These are hive and honey makers,
  Sent by Manito to warn us
  That the white men now are coming,
  With their women and their children.
  Not the fiery filibusters
  Passing wildly in a moment,
  Like a flame across the prairies,
  Like a whirlwind through the forest,
  Leaving empty lands behind them!
  Not the Mexicans and Spaniards,
  Indolent and proud hidalgos,
  Dwelling in their haciendas,
  Dreaming, talking of tomorrow,
  While their cattle graze around them,
  And their fickle revolutions
  Change the rulers, not the people!
  Other folk are these who follow
  When the wild-bees come to warn us;
  These are hive and honey makers,
  These are busy, banded people,
  Roaming far to swarm and settle,
  Working every day for harvest,
  Fighting hard for peace and order,
  Worshipping as queens their women,
  Making homes and building cities
  Full of riches and of trouble.
  All our hunting-grounds must vanish,
  All our lodges fall before them,
  All our customs and traditions,
  All our happy life of freedom,
  Fade away like smoke before them.
  Come, my brothers, strike your tepees,
  Call your women, load your ponies!
  Let us take the trail to westward,
  Where the plains are wide and open,
  Where the bison-herds are gathered
  Waiting for our feathered arrows.
  We will live as lived our fathers,
  Gleaners of the gifts of nature,
  Hunters of the unkept cattle,
  Men whose women run to serve them.
  If the toiling bees pursue us,
  If the white men seek to tame us,
  We will fight them off and flee them,
  Break their hives and take their honey,
  Moving westward, ever westward,
  There to live as lived our fathers.”
  So the red-men drove their ponies,
  With the tent-poles trailing after,

 **Page 99**

  Out along the path to sunset,
  While along the river valleys
  Swarmed the wild-bees, the forerunners;
  And the white men, close behind them,
  Men of mark from old Missouri,
  Men of daring from Kentucky,
  Tennessee, Louisiana,
  Men of many States and races,
  Bringing wives and children with them,
  Followed up the wooded valleys,
  Spread across the rolling prairies,
  Raising homes and reaping harvests.
  Rude the toil that tried their patience,
  Fierce the fights that proved their courage,
  Rough the stone and tough the timber
  Out of which they built their order!
  Yet they never failed nor faltered,
  And the instinct of their swarming
  Made them one and kept them working,
  Till their toil was crowned with triumph,
  And the country of the Tejas
  Was the fertile land of Texas.

**II**

**THE LONE STAR**

  Behold a star appearing in the South,
  A star that shines apart from other stars,
      Ruddy and fierce like Mars!
  Out of the reeking smoke of cannon’s mouth
  That veils the slaughter of the Alamo,
      Where heroes face the foe,
  One man against a score, with blood-choked breath
  Shouting the watchword, “Victory or Death—­”
  Out of the dreadful cloud that settles low
      On Goliad’s plain,
  Where thrice a hundred prisoners lie slain
  Beneath the broken word of Mexico—­
  Out of the fog of factions and of feuds
      That ever drifts and broods
  Above the bloody path of border war,
      Leaps the Lone Star!

  What light is this that does not dread the dark?
  What star is this that fights a stormy way
      To San Jacinto’s field of victory?
      It is the fiery spark
      That burns within the breast
  Of Anglo-Saxon men, who can not rest
      Under a tyrant’s sway;
      The upward-leading ray
  That guides the brave who give their lives away
      Rather than not be free!
  O question not, but honour every name,
  Travis and Crockett, Bowie, Bonham, Ward,
  Fannin and King, and all who drew the sword
  And dared to die for Texan liberty!
  Yea, write them all upon the roll of fame,
  But no less love and equal honour give
  To those who paid the longer sacrifice—­
  Austin and Houston, Burnet, Rusk, Lamar
  And all the stalwart men who dared to live
  Long years of service to the lonely star.

  Great is the worth of such heroic souls:
  Amid the strenuous turmoil of their deeds,
  They clearly speak of something that controls
  The higher breeds of men by higher needs
  Than bees, content with honey in their hives!
      Ah, not enough the narrow lives
    On profitable toil intent!
  And not enough the guerdons of success
  Garnered in homes of affluent selfishness!

 **Page 100**

      A noble discontent
      Cries for a wider scope
  To use the wider wings of human hope;
      A vision of the common good
  Opens the prison-door of solitude;
      And, once beyond the wall,
      Breathing the ampler air,
      The heart becomes aware
 *That life without a country is not life at all.*
      A country worthy of a freeman’s love;
      A country worthy of a good man’s prayer;
      A country strong, and just, and brave, and fair,—­
      A woman’s form of beauty throned above
      The shrine where noble aspirations meet—­
      To live for her is great, to die is sweet!

      Heirs of the rugged pioneers
      Who dreamed this dream and made it true,
      Remember that they dreamed for you.
      They did not fear their fate
      In those tempestuous years,
  But put their trust in God, and with keen eyes,
  Trained in the open air for looking far,
      They saw the many-million-acred land
      Won from the desert by their hand,
      Swiftly among the nations rise,—­
        Texas a sovereign State,
        And on her brow a star!

**III**

**THE CONSTELLATION**

  How strange that the nature of light is a thing beyond our ken,
    And the flame of the tiniest candle flows from a fountain sealed!
  How strange that the meaning of life, in the little lives of men,
    So often baffles our search with a mystery unrevealed!

  But the larger life of man, as it moves in its secular sweep,
    Is the working out of a Sovereign Will whose ways appear;
  And the course of the journeying stars on the dark blue boundless deep,
    Is the place where our science rests in the reign of law most clear.

I would read the story of Texas as if it were written on high;
I would look from afar to follow her path through the calms and storms;
With a faith in the worldwide sway of the Reason that rules in the sky,
And gathers and guides the starry host in clusters and swarms.

When she rose in the pride of her youth, she seemed to be moving apart,
As a single star in the South, self-limited, self-possessed;
But the law of the constellation was written deep in her heart,
And she heard when her sisters called, from the North and the East and
the West.

They were drawn together and moved by a common hope and aim—­
The dream of a sign that should rule a third of the heavenly arch;
The soul of a people spoke in their call, and Texas came
To enter the splendid circle of States in their onward march.

So the glory gathered and grew and spread from sea to sea,
And the stars of the great republic lent each other light;
For all were bound together in strength, and each was free—­
Suddenly broke the tempest out of the ancient night!

**Page 101**

  It came as a clash of the force that drives and the force that draws;
    And the stars were riven asunder, the heavens were desolate,
  While brother fought with brother, each for his country’s cause:
    But the country of one was the Nation, the country of other the State.

  Oh, who shall measure the praise or blame in a strife so vast?
    And who shall speak of traitors or tyrants when all were true?
  We lift our eyes to the sky, and rejoice that the storm is past,
    And we thank the God of all that the Union shines in the blue.

  Yea, it glows with the glory of peace and the hope of a mighty race,
    High over the grave of broken chains and buried hates;
  And the great, big star of Texas is shining clear in its place
    In the constellate symbol and sign of the free United States.

**IV**

**AFTER THE PIONEERS**

After the pioneers—­
Big-hearted, big-handed lords of the axe and the plow and the rifle,
Tan-faced tamers of horses and lands, themselves remaining tameless,
Full of fighting, labour and romance, lovers of rude adventure—­
After the pioneers have cleared the way to their homes and graves on the

                    prairies:

After the State-builders—­
Zealous and jealous men, dreamers, debaters, often at odds with each
other,
All of them sure it is well to toil and to die, if need be,
Just for the sake of founding a country to leave to their children—­
After the builders have done their work and written their names upon it:

After the civil war—­
Wildest of all storms, cruel and dark and seemingly wasteful,
Tearing up by the root the vines that were splitting the old foundations,
Washing away with a rain of blood and tears the dust of slavery,
After the cyclone has passed and the sky is fair to the far horizon;
After the era of plenty and peace has come with full hands to Texas,
Then—­what then?

  Is it to be the life of an indolent heir, fat-witted and self-contented,
  Dwelling at ease in the house that others have builded,
  Boasting about the country for which he has done nothing?
  Is it to be an age of corpulent, deadly-dull prosperity,
  Richer and richer crops to nourish a race of Philistines,
  Bigger and bigger cities full of the same confusion and sorrow,
  The people increasing mightily but no increase of the joy?
  Is this what the forerunners wished and toiled to win for you,
  This the reward of war and the fruitage of high endeavor,
  This the goal of your hopes and the vision that satisfies you?

  Nay, stand up and answer—­I can read what is in your hearts—­
  You, the children of those who followed the wild-bees,
  You, the children of those who served the Lone Star,
  Now that the hives are full and the star is fixed in the constellation,
  I know that the best of you still are lovers of sweetness and light!

**Page 102**

You hunger for honey that comes from invisible gardens;
Pure, translucent, golden thoughts and feelings and inspirations,
Sweetness of all the best that has bloomed in the mind of man.
You rejoice in the light that is breaking along the borders of science;
The hidden rays that enable a man to look through a wall of stone;
The unseen, fire-filled wings that carry his words across the ocean;
The splendid gift of flight that shines, half-captured, above him;
The gleam of a thousand half-guessed secrets, just ready to be
discovered!
You dream and devise great things for the coming race—­
Children of yours who shall people and rule the domain of Texas;
They shall know, they shall comprehend more than their fathers,
They shall grow in the vigour of well-rounded manhood and womanhood,
Riper minds, richer hearts, finer souls, the only true wealth of a
nation—­
The league-long fields of the State are pledged to ensure this harvest!

Your old men have dreamed this dream and your young men have seen this
vision.
The age of romance has not gone, it is only beginning;
Greater words than the ear of man has heard are waiting to be spoken,
Finer arts than the eyes of man have seen are sleeping to be awakened:
Science exploring the scope of the world,
Poetry breathing the hope of the world,
Music to measure and lead the onward march of man!

Come, ye honoured and welcome guests from the elder nations,
Princes of science and arts and letters,
Look on the walls that embody the generous dream of one of the old men
of Texas,
Enter these halls of learning that rise in the land of the pioneer’s
log-cabin,
Read the confessions of faith that are carved on the stones around you:
Faith in the worth of the smallest fact and the laws that govern the
starbeams,
Faith in the beauty of truth and the truth of perfect beauty,
Faith in the God who creates the souls of men by knowledge and love and
worship.

This is the faith of the New Democracy—­
Proud and humble, patiently pressing forward,
Praising her heroes of old and training her future leaders,
Seeking her crown in a nobler race of men and women—­
After the pioneers, sweetness and light!

October, 1912.

[1] Read at the Dedication of the Rice Institute, Houston, Texas,
    October, 1912.

**WHO FOLLOW THE FLAG**

**PHI BETA KAPPA ODE**

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

June 30, 1910

**I**

  All day long in the city’s canyon-street,
    With its populous cliffs alive on either side,
    I saw a river of marching men like a tide
  Flowing after the flag:  and the rhythmic beat
    Of the drums, and the bugles’ resonant blare
  Metred the tramp, tramp, tramp of a myriad feet,
  While the red-white-and-blue was fluttering everywhere,
  And the heart of the crowd kept time to a martial air:

**Page 103**

 *O brave flag, O bright flag, O flag to lead the free!
      The glory of thy silver stars,
      Engrailed in blue above the bars
      Of red for courage, white for truth,
      Has brought the world a second youth
  And drawn a hundred million hearts to follow after thee.*

**II**

  Old Cambridge saw thee first unfurled,
    By Washington’s far-reaching hand,
  To greet, in Seventy-six, the wintry morn
  Of a new year, and herald to the world
    Glad tidings from a Western land,—­
    A people and a hope new-born!
  The double cross then filled thine azure field,
  In token of a spirit loath to yield
  The breaking ties that bound thee to a throne.
  But not for long thine oriflamme could bear
  That symbol of an outworn trust in kings.
  The wind that bore thee out on widening wings
  Called for a greater sign and all thine own,—­
  A new device to speak of heavenly laws
  And lights that surely guide the people’s cause.
  Oh, greatly did they hope, and greatly dare,
  Who bade the stars in heaven fight for them,
  And set upon their battle-flag a fair
  New constellation as a diadem!
  Along the blood-stained banks of Brandywine
  The ragged troops were rallied to this sign;
  Through Saratoga’s woods it fluttered bright
  Amid the perils of the hard-won fight;
  O’er Yorktown’s meadows broad and green
  It hailed the glory of the final scene;
  And when at length Manhattan saw
  The last invaders’ line of scarlet coats
  Pass Bowling Green, and fill the waiting boats
          And sullenly withdraw,
          The flag that proudly flew
  Above the battered line of buff and blue,
  Marching, with rattling drums and shrilling pipes,
  Along the Bowery and down Broadway,
  Was this that leads the great parade to-day,—­
  The glorious banner of the stars and stripes.

     *First of the flags of earth to dare
          A heraldry so high;
      First of the flags of earth to bear
          The blazons of the sky;
      Long may thy constellation glow,
          Foretelling happy fate;
      Wider thy starry circle grow,
          And every star a State!*

**III**

  Pass on, pass on, ye flashing files
  Of men who march in militant array;
  Ye thrilling bugles, throbbing drums,
  Ring out, roll on, and die away;
  And fade, ye crowds, with the fading day!
      Around the city’s lofty piles
      Of steel and stone
      The lilac veil of dusk is thrown,
  Entangled full of sparks of fairy light;
  And the never-silent heart of the city hums
  To a homeward-turning tune before the night.
  But far above, on the sky-line’s broken height,
  From all the towers and domes outlined
  In gray and gold along the city’s crest,
  I see the rippling flag still take the wind
  With a promise of good to come for all mankind.

**Page 104**

**IV**

      O banner of the west,
      No proud and brief parade,
      That glorifies a nation’s holiday
  With show of troops for warfare dressed,
      Can rightly measure or display
      The mighty army thou hast made
  Loyal to guard thy more than royal sway.
      Millions have come across the sea
      To find beneath thy shelter room to grow;
  Millions were born beneath thy folds and know
      No other flag but thee.
  And other, darker millions bore the yoke
  Of bondage in thy borders till the voice
      Of Lincoln spoke,
  And sent thee forth to set the bondmen free.
      Rejoice, dear flag, rejoice!
  Since thou hast proved and passed that bitter strife,
  Richer thy red with blood of heroes wet,
  Purer thy white through sacrificial life,
  Brighter thy blue wherein new stars are set.
      Thou art become a sign,
  Revealed in heaven to speak of things divine:
      Of Truth that dares
      To slay the lie it sheltered unawares;
      Of Courage fearless in the fight,
  Yet ever quick its foemen to forgive;
  Of Conscience earnest to maintain its right
  And gladly grant the same to all who live.
      Thy staff is deeply planted in the fact
      That nothing can ennoble man
      Save his own act,
  And naught can make him worthy to be free
  But practice in the school of liberty.
  The cords are two that lift thee to the sky:
  Firm faith in God, the King who rules on high;
      And never-failing trust
  In human nature, full of faults and flaws,
  Yet ever answering to the inward call
  That bids it set the “ought” above the “must,”
  In all its errors wiser than it seems,
  In all its failures full of generous dreams,
  Through endless conflict rising without pause
  To self-dominion, charactered in laws
  That pledge fair-play alike to great and small,
  And equal rights for each beneath the rule of all.
      These are thy halyards, banner bold,
      And while these hold,
  Thy brightness from the sky shall never fall,
  Thy broadening empire never know decrease,—­
  Thy strength is union and thy glory peace.

**V**

  Look forth across thy widespread lands,
  O flag, and let thy stars to-night be eyes
      To see the visionary hosts
  Of men and women grateful to be thine,
      That joyfully arise
  From all thy borders and thy coasts,
  And follow after thee in endless line!
  They lift to thee a forest of saluting hands;
  They hail thee with a rolling ocean-roar
      Of cheers; and as the echo dies,
  There comes a sweet and moving song
  Of treble voices from the childish throng
  Who run to thee from every school-house door.
  Behold thine army!  Here thy power

**Page 105**

lies:
  The men whom freedom has made strong,
  And bound to follow thee by willing vows;
      The women greatened by the joys
  Of motherhood to rule a happy house;
      The vigorous girls and boys,
  Whose eager faces and unclouded brows
  Foretell the future of a noble race,
  Rich in the wealth of wisdom and true worth!
  While millions such as these to thee belong,
      What foe can do thee wrong,
  What jealous rival rob thee of thy place
      Foremost of all the flags of earth?

**VI**

  My vision darkens as the night descends;
  And through the mystic atmosphere
  I feel the creeping coldness that portends
      A change of spirit in my dream
  The multitude that moved with song and cheer
      Have vanished, yet a living stream
      Flows on and follows still the flag,
  But silent now, with leaden feet that lag
      And falter in the deepening gloom,—­
  A weird battalion bringing up the rear.
  Ah, who are these on whom the vital bloom
  Of life has withered to the dust of doom?
  These little pilgrims prematurely worn
  And bent as if they bore the weight of years?
  These childish faces, pallid and forlorn,
  Too dull for laughter and too hard for tears?
  Is this the ghost of that insane crusade
  That led ten thousand children long ago,
  A flock of innocents, deceived, betrayed,
  Yet pressing on through want and woe
  To meet their fate, faithful and unafraid?
      Nay, for a million children now
  Are marching in the long pathetic line,
  With weary step and early wrinkled brow;
  And at their head appears no holy sign
      Of hope in heaven;
      For unto them is given
  No cross to carry, but a cross to drag.
  Before their strength is ripe they bear
  The load of labour, toiling underground
  In dangerous mines and breathing heavy air
  Of crowded shops; their tender lives are bound
  To service of the whirling, clattering wheels
  That fill the factories with dust and noise;
      They are not girls and boys,
  But little “hands” who blindly, dumbly feed
  With their own blood the hungry god of Greed.
      Robbed of their natural joys,
  And wounded with a scar that never heals,
  They stumble on with heavy-laden soul,
  And fall by thousands on the highway lined
  With little graves; or reach at last their goal
  Of stunted manhood and embittered age,
  To brood awhile with dark and troubled mind,
  Beside the smouldering fire of sullen rage,
  On life’s unfruitful work and niggard wage.
  Are these the regiments that Freedom rears
      To serve her cause in coming years?
  Nay, every life that Avarice doth maim
  And beggar in the helpless days of youth,
      Shall surely claim
  A just revenge, and take it without ruth;

 **Page 106**

  And every soul denied the right to grow
  Beneath the flag, shall be its secret foe.
  Bow down, dear land, in penitence and shame!
  Remember now thine oath, so nobly sworn,
      To guard an equal lot
  For every child within thy borders born!
  These are thy children whom thou hast forgot:
  They have the bitter right to live, but not
  The blessed right to look for happiness.
  O lift thy liberating hand once more,
  To loose thy little ones from dark duress;
  The vital gladness to their hearts restore
  In healthful lessons and in happy play;
  And set them free to climb the upward way
  That leads to self-reliant nobleness.
  Speak out, my country, speak at last,
      As thou hast spoken in the past,
      And clearly, bravely say:
      “I will defend
  The coming race on whom my hopes depend:
  Beneath my flag and on my sacred soil
  No child shall bear the crushing yoke of toil.”

**VII**

  Look up, look up, ye downcast eyes!
      The night is almost gone:
  Along the new horizon flies
      The banner of the dawn;
  The eastern sky is banded low
      With white and crimson bars,
  While far above the morning glow
      The everlasting stars.

 *O bright flag, O brave flag, O flag to lead the free!
      The hand of God thy colours blent,
      And heaven to earth thy glory lent,
      To shield the weak, and guide the strong
      To make an end of human wrong,
  And draw a countless human host to follow after thee!*

**STAIN NOT THE SKY**

    Ye gods of battle, lords of fear,
      Who work your iron will as well
    As once ye did with sword and spear,
      With rifled gun and rending shell,—­
    Masters of sea and land, forbear
  The fierce invasion of the inviolate air!

    With patient daring man hath wrought
      A hundred years for power to fly;
    And will you make his winged thought
      A hovering horror in the sky,
    Where flocks of human eagles sail,
  Dropping their bolts of death on hill and dale?

    Ah no, the sunset is too pure,
      The dawn too fair, the noon too bright
    For wings of terror to obscure
      Their beauty, and betray the night
    That keeps for man, above his wars,
  The tranquil vision of untroubled stars.

    Pass on, pass on, ye lords of fear!
      Your footsteps in the sea are red,
    And black on earth your paths appear
      With ruined homes and heaps of dead.
    Pass on to end your transient reign,
  And leave the blue of heaven without a stain.

   The wrong ye wrought will fall to dust,
      The right ye shielded will abide;
    The world at last will learn to trust
      In law to guard, and love to guide;
    And Peace of God that answers prayer
  Will fall like dew from the inviolate air.

**Page 107**

March 5, 1914.

**PEACE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC**

  O Lord our God, Thy mighty hand
  Hath made our country free;
  From all her broad and happy land
  May praise arise to Thee.
  Fulfill the promise of her youth,
  Her liberty defend;
  By law and order, love and truth,
  America befriend!

  The strength of every State increase
  In Union’s golden chain;
  Her thousand cities fill with peace,
  Her million fields with grain.
  The virtues of her mingled blood
  In one new people blend;
  By unity and brotherhood,
  America befriend!

  O suffer not her feet to stray;
  But guide her untaught might,
  That she may walk in peaceful day,
  And lead the world in light.
  Bring down the proud, lift up the poor,
  Unequal ways amend;
  By justice, nation-wide and sure,
  America befriend!

  Thro’ all the waiting land proclaim
  Thy gospel of good-will;
  And may the music of Thy name
  In every bosom thrill.
  O’er hill and vale, from sea to sea.
  Thy holy reign extend;
  By faith and hope and charity,
  America befriend!

**THE RED FLOWER AND GOLDEN STARS**

*These verses were written during the terrible world-war, and immediately after.  The earlier ones had to be unsigned because America was still “neutral” and I held a diplomatic post.  The rest of them were printed after I had resigned, and was free to speak out, and to take active service in the Navy, when America entered the great conflict for liberty and peace on earth.*

Avalon, February 22, 1920.

**THE RED FLOWER**

June, 1914

  In the pleasant time of Pentecost,
    By the little river Kyll,
  I followed the angler’s winding path
    Or waded the stream at will,
  And the friendly fertile German land
    Lay round me green and still.

  But all day long on the eastern bank
    Of the river cool and clear,
  Where the curving track of the double rails
    Was hardly seen though near,
  The endless trains of German troops
    Went rolling down to Trier.

  They packed the windows with bullet heads
    And caps of hodden gray;
  They laughed and sang and shouted loud
    When the trains were brought to a stay;
  They waved their hands and sang again
    As they went on their iron way.

  No shadow fell on the smiling land,
    No cloud arose in the sky;
  I could hear the river’s quiet tune
    When the trains had rattled by;
  But my heart sank low with a heavy sense
    Of trouble,—­I knew not why.

  Then came I into a certain field
    Where the devil’s paint-brush spread
  ’Mid the gray and green of the rolling hills
    A flaring splotch of red,—­
  An evil omen, a bloody sign,
    And a token of many dead.

**Page 108**

  I saw in a vision the field-gray horde
    Break forth at the devil’s hour,
  And trample the earth into crimson mud
    In the rage of the Will to Power,—­
  All this I dreamed in the valley of Kyll,
    At the sign of the blood-red flower.

**A SCRAP OF PAPER**

  “Will you go to war just for a scrap of paper?”—­*Question of the
  German Chancellor to the British Ambassador*, *August 5*, 1914.

  A mocking question!  Britain’s answer came
  Swift as the light and searching as the flame.

  “Yes, for a scrap of paper we will fight
  Till our last breath, and God defend the right!

  “A scrap of paper where a name is set
  Is strong as duty’s pledge and honor’s debt.

  “A scrap of paper holds for man and wife
  The sacrament of love, the bond of life.

  “A scrap of paper may be Holy Writ
  With God’s eternal word to hallow it.

  “A scrap of paper binds us both to stand
  Defenders of a neutral neighbor land.

  “By God, by faith, by honor, yes!  We fight
  To keep our name upon that paper white.”

September, 1914.

**STAND FAST**

        Stand fast, Great Britain!
  Together England, Scotland, Ireland stand
  One in the faith that makes a mighty land,—­
  True to the bond you gave and will not break
  And fearless in the fight for conscience’ sake!
  Against the Giant Robber clad in steel,
  With blood of trampled Belgium on his heel,
  Striding through France to strike you down at last,
        Britain, stand fast!

        Stand fast, brave land!
  The Huns are thundering toward the citadel;
  They prate of Culture but their path is Hell;
  Their light is darkness, and the bloody sword
  They wield and worship is their only Lord.
  O land where reason stands secure on right,
  O land where freedom is the source of light,
  Against the mailed Barbarians’ deadly blast,
        Britain, stand fast!

        Stand fast, dear land!
  Thou island mother of a world-wide race,
  Whose children speak thy tongue and love thy face,
  Their hearts and hopes are with thee in the strife,
  Their hands will break the sword that seeks thy life;
  Fight on until the Teuton madness cease;
  Fight bravely on, until the word of peace
  Is spoken in the English tongue at last,—­
        Britain, stand fast!

September, 1914.

**LIGHTS OUT**

(1915)

  “Lights out” along the land,
  “Lights out” upon the sea.
  The night must put her hiding hand
  O’er peaceful towns where children sleep,
  And peaceful ships that darkly creep
  Across the waves, as if they were not free.

**Page 109**

  The dragons of the air,
  The hell-hounds of the deep,
  Lurking and prowling everywhere,
  Go forth to seek their helpless prey,
  Not knowing whom they maim or slay—­
  Mad harvesters, who care not what they reap.

  Out with the tranquil lights,
  Out with the lights that burn
  For love and law and human rights!
  Set back the clock a thousand years:
  All they have gained now disappears,
  And the dark ages suddenly return.

  Kaiser, who loosed wild death,
  And terror in the night,
  God grant you draw no quiet breath,
  Until the madness you began
  Is ended, and long-suffering man,
  Set free from war lords, cries, “Let there be Light.”

October, 1915.

Read at the meeting of the American Academy, Boston, November, 1915.

**REMARKS ABOUT KINGS**

“*God said I am tired of kings.*”—­EMERSON.

  God said, “I am tired of kings,”—­
  But that was a long while ago!
  And meantime man said, “No,—­
  I like their looks in their robes and rings.”
  So he crowned a few more,
  And they went on playing the game as before,
  Fighting and spoiling things.

  Man said, “I am tired of kings!
  Sons of the robber-chiefs of yore,
  They make me pay for their lust and their war;
  I am the puppet, they pull the strings;
  The blood of my heart is the wine they drink.
  I will govern myself for awhile I think,
  And see what that brings!”

  Then God, who made the first remark,
  Smiled in the dark.

October, 1915.

Read at the meeting of the American Academy, Boston, November, 1915.

**MIGHT AND RIGHT**

  If Might made Right, life were a wild-beasts’ cage;
  If Right made Might, this were the golden age;
  But now, until we win the long campaign,
  Right must gain Might to conquer and to reign.

July 1, 1915.

**THE PRICE OF PEACE**

  Peace without Justice is a low estate,—­
  A coward cringing to an iron Fate!
  But Peace through Justice is the great ideal,—­
  We’ll pay the price of war to make it real.

December 28, 1916.

**STORM-MUSIC**

  O Music hast thou only heard
  The laughing river, the singing bird,
  The murmuring wind in the poplar-trees,—­
  Nothing but Nature’s melodies?
    Nay, thou hearest all her tones,
      As a Queen must hear!
      Sounds of wrath and fear,
      Mutterings, shouts, and moans,
    Madness, tumult, and despair,—­
    All she has that shakes the air
    With voices fierce and wild!
  Thou art a Queen and not a dreaming child,—­
  Put on thy crown and let us hear thee reign
  Triumphant in a world of storm and strain!

**Page 110**

    Echo the long-drawn sighs
  Of the mounting wind in the pines;
  And the sobs of the mounting waves that rise
    In the dark of the troubled deep
  To break on the beach in fiery lines.
    Echo the far-off roll of thunder,
        Rumbling loud
    And ever louder, under
    The blue-black curtain of cloud,
    Where the lightning serpents gleam.
      Echo the moaning
    Of the forest in its sleep
    Like a giant groaning
  In the torment of a dream.

    Now an interval of quiet
    For a moment holds the air
    In the breathless hush
    Of a silent prayer.

    Then the sudden rush
    Of the rain, and the riot
    Of the shrieking, tearing gale
    Breaks loose in the night,
    With a fusillade of hail!
    Hear the forest fight,
  With its tossing arms that crack and clash
    In the thunder’s cannonade,
    While the lightning’s forked flash
  Brings the old hero-trees to the ground with a crash!
  Hear the breakers’ deepening roar,
    Driven like a herd of cattle
    In the wild stampede of battle,
  Trampling, trampling, trampling, to overwhelm the shore!

      Is it the end of all?
      Will the land crumble and fall?
      Nay, for a voice replies
      Out of the hidden skies,
  “Thus far, O sea, shalt thou go,
  So long, O wind, shalt thou blow:
  Return to your bounds and cease,
  And let the earth have peace!”

    O Music, lead the way—­
      The stormy night is past,
  Lift up our hearts to greet the day,
      And the joy of things that last.

    The dissonance and pain
      That mortals must endure,
  Are changed in thine immortal strain
      To something great and pure.

    True love will conquer strife,
      And strength from conflict flows,
  For discord is the thorn of life
      And harmony the rose.

May, 1916.

**THE BELLS OF MALINES**

August 17, 1914

  The gabled roofs of old Malines
  Are russet red and gray and green,
  And o’er them in the sunset hour
  Looms, dark and huge, St. Rombold’s tower.
  High in that rugged nest concealed,
  The sweetest bells that ever pealed,
  The deepest bells that ever rung,
  The lightest bells that ever sung,
  Are waiting for the master’s hand
  To fling their music o’er the land.

  And shall they ring to-night, Malines?
  In nineteen hundred and fourteen,
  The frightful year, the year of woe,
  When fire and blood and rapine flow
  Across the land from lost Liege,
  Storm-driven by the German rage?
  The other carillons have ceased:
  Fallen is Hasselt, fallen Diest,
  From Ghent and Bruges no voices come,
  Antwerp is silent, Brussels dumb!

**Page 111**

  But in thy belfry, O Malines,
  The master of the bells unseen
  Has climbed to where the keyboard stands,—­
  To-night his heart is in his hands!
  Once more, before invasion’s hell
  Breaks round the tower he loves so well,
  Once more he strikes the well-worn keys,
  And sends aerial harmonies
  Far-floating through the twilight dim
  In patriot song and holy hymn.

  O listen, burghers of Malines!
  Soldier and workman, pale beguine,
  And mother with a trembling flock
  Of children clinging to thy frock,—­
  Look up and listen, listen all!
  What tunes are these that gently fall
  Around you like a benison?
  “The Flemish Lion,” “Brabanconne,”
  “O brave Liege,” and all the airs
  That Belgium in her bosom bears.

  Ring up, ye silvery octaves high,
  Whose notes like circling swallows fly;
  And ring, each old sonorous bell,—­
  “Jesu,” “Maria,” “Michael!”
  Weave in and out, and high and low,
  The magic music that you know,
  And let it float and flutter down
  To cheer the heart of the troubled town.
  Ring out, “Salvator,” lord of all,—­
  “Roland” in Ghent may hear thee call!

  O brave bell-music of Malines,
  In this dark hour how much you mean!
  The dreadful night of blood and tears
  Sweeps down on Belgium, but she hears
  Deep in her heart the melody
  Of songs she learned when she was free.
  She will not falter, faint, nor fail,
  But fight until her rights prevail
  And all her ancient belfries ring
  “The Flemish Lion,” “God Save the King!”

**JEANNE D’ARC RETURNS [2]**

1914-1916

  What hast thou done, O womanhood of France,
    Mother and daughter, sister, sweetheart, wife,
    What hast thou done, amid this fateful strife,
  To prove the pride of thine inheritance
  In this fair land of freedom and romance?
    I hear thy voice with tears and courage rife,—­
    Smiling against the swords that seek thy life,—­
  Make answer in a noble utterance:
  “I give France all I have, and all she asks.
    Would it were more!  Ah, let her ask and take:
  My hands to nurse her wounded, do her tasks,—­
    My feet to run her errands through the dark,—­
  My heart to bleed in triumph for her sake,—­
    And all my soul to follow thee, Jeanne d’Arc!”

April 16, 1916.

[2] This sonnet belongs with the poem on page 309,
    “Come Back Again, Jeanne D’Arc.”

**THE NAME OF FRANCE**

  Give us a name to fill the mind
  With the shining thoughts that lead mankind,
  The glory of learning, the joy of art,—­
  A name that tells of a splendid part
  In the long, long toil and the strenuous fight
  Of the human race to win its way
  From the feudal darkness into the day
  Of Freedom, Brotherhood, Equal Right,—­
  A name like a star, a name of light.
      I give you *France*!

**Page 112**

  Give us a name to stir the blood
  With a warmer glow and a swifter flood,
  At the touch of a courage that conquers fear,—­
  A name like the sound of a trumpet, clear,
  And silver-sweet, and iron-strong,
  That calls three million men to their feet,
  Ready to march, and steady to meet
  The foes who threaten that name with wrong,—­
  A name that rings like a battle-song.
      I give you *France*!

  Give us a name to move the heart
  With the strength that noble griefs impart,
  A name that speaks of the blood outpoured
  To save mankind from the sway of the sword,—­
  A name that calls on the world to share
  In the burden of sacrificial strife
  When the cause at stake is the world’s free life
  And the rule of the people everywhere,—­
  A name like a vow, a name like a prayer.
      I give you *France*!

The Hague, September, 1916.

**AMERICA’S PROSPERITY**

  They tell me thou art rich, my country:  gold
    In glittering flood has poured into thy chest;
    Thy flocks and herds increase, thy barns are pressed
  With harvest, and thy stores can hardly hold
  Their merchandise; unending trains are rolled
    Along thy network rails of East and West;
    Thy factories and forges never rest;
  Thou art enriched in all things bought and sold!

  But dost *thou* prosper?  Better news I crave.
    O dearest country, is it well with thee
      Indeed, and is thy soul in health?
  A nobler people, hearts more wisely brave,
    And thoughts that lift men up and make them free,—­
      These are prosperity and vital wealth!

The Hague, October 1, 1916.

**THE GLORY OF SHIPS**

  The glory of ships is an old, old song,
    since the days when the sea-rovers ran,
  In their open boats through the roaring surf,
    and the spread of the world began;
  The glory of ships is a light on the sea,
    and a star in the story of man.

  When Homer sang of the galleys of Greece
    that conquered the Trojan shore,
  And Solomon lauded the barks of Tyre
    that brought great wealth to his door,
  ’Twas little they knew, those ancient men,
    what would come of the sail and the oar.

  The Greek ships rescued the West from the East,
    when they harried the Persians home;
  And the Roman ships were the wings of strength
    that bore up the empire, Rome;
  And the ships of Spain found a wide new world,
    far over the fields of foam.

  Then the tribes of courage at last saw clear
    that the ocean was not a bound,
  But a broad highway, and a challenge to seek
    for treasure as yet unfound;
  So the fearless ships fared forth to the search,
    in joy that the globe was round.

**Page 113**

  Their hulls were heightened, their sails spread out,
    they grew with the growth of their quest;
  They opened the secret doors of the East,
    and the golden gates of the West;
  And many a city of high renown
    was proud of a ship on its crest.

  The fleets of England and Holland and France
    were at strife with each other and Spain;
  And battle and storm sent a myriad ships
    to sleep in the depths of the main;
  But the seafaring spirit could never be drowned,
    and it filled up the fleets again.

  They greatened and grew, with the aid of steam,
    to a wonderful, vast array,
  That carries the thoughts and the traffic of men
    into every harbor and bay;
  And now in the world-wide work of the ships
    ’tis England that leads the way.

  O well for the leading that follows the law
    of a common right on the sea!
  But ill for the leader who tries to hold
    what belongs to mankind in fee!
  The way of the ships is an open way,
    and the ocean must ever be free!

  Remember, O first of the maritime folk,
    how the rise of your greatness began.
  It will live if you safeguard the round-the-world road
    from the shame of a selfish ban;
  For the glory of ships is a light on the sea,
    and a star in the story of man!

September 12, 1916.

**MARE LIBERUM**

**I**

You dare to say with perjured lips, “We fight to make the ocean free”? *You*, whose black trail of butchered ships Bestrews the bed of every sea Where German submarines have wrought Their horrors!  Have you never thought,—­ What you call freedom, men call piracy!

**II**

  Unnumbered ghosts that haunt the wave,
  Where you have murdered, cry you down;
  And seamen whom you would not save,
  Weave now in weed-grown depths a crown
  Of shame for your imperious head,
  A dark memorial of the dead
  Women and children whom you sent to drown.

**III**

  Nay, not till thieves are set to guard
  The gold, and corsairs called to keep
  O’er peaceful commerce watch and ward,
  And wolves to herd the helpless sheep,
  Shall men and women look to thee,
  Thou ruthless Old Man of the Sea,
  To safeguard law and freedom on the deep!

**IV**

  In nobler breeds we put our trust:
  The nations in whose sacred lore
  The “Ought” stands out above the “Must,”
  And honor rules in peace and war.
  With these we hold in soul and heart,
  With these we choose our lot and part,
  Till Liberty is safe on sea and shore.

**Page 114**

*London Times*, February 12, 1917.

“LIBERTY ENLIGHTENING THE WORLD”

  Thou warden of the western gate, above Manhattan Bay,
  The fogs of doubt that hid thy face are driven clean away:
  Thine eyes at last look far and clear, thou liftest high thy hand
  To spread the light of liberty world-wide for every land.

  No more thou dreamest of a peace reserved alone for thee,
  While friends are fighting for thy cause beyond the guardian sea:
  The battle that they wage is thine; thou fallest if they fall;
  The swollen flood of Prussian pride will sweep unchecked o’er all.

  O cruel is the conquer-lust in Hohenzollern brains:
  The paths they plot to gain their goal are dark with shameful stains;
  No faith they keep, no law revere, no god but naked Might;
  They are the foemen of mankind.  Up, Liberty, and smite!

  Britain, and France, and Italy, and Russia newly born,
  Have waited for thee in the night.  Oh, come as comes the morn!
  Serene and strong and full of faith, America, arise,
  With steady hope and mighty help to join thy brave Allies.

  O dearest country of my heart, home of the high desire,
  Make clean thy soul for sacrifice on Freedom’s altar-fire:
  For thou must suffer, thou must fight, until the warlords cease,
  And all the peoples lift their heads in liberty and peace.

*London Times*, April 12, 1917.

**THE OXFORD THRUSHES**

February, 1917

  I never thought again to hear
  The Oxford thrushes singing clear,
  Amid the February rain,
  Their sweet, indomitable strain.

  A wintry vapor lightly spreads
  Among the trees, and round the beds
  Where daffodil and jonquil sleep;
  Only the snowdrop wakes to weep.

  It is not springtime yet.  Alas,
  What dark, tempestuous days must pass,
  Till England’s trial by battle cease,
  And summer comes again with peace.

  The lofty halls, the tranquil towers,
  Where Learning in untroubled hours
  Held her high court, serene in fame,
  Are lovely still, yet not the same.

  The novices in fluttering gown
  No longer fill the ancient town;
  But fighting men in khaki drest,
  And in the Schools the wounded rest.

  Ah, far away, ’neath stranger skies
  Full many a son of Oxford lies,
  And whispers from his warrior grave,
  “I died to keep the faith you gave.”

  The mother mourns, but does not fail,
  Her courage and her love prevail
  O’er sorrow, and her spirit hears
  The promise of triumphant years.

  Then sing, ye thrushes, in the rain
  Your sweet indomitable strain.
  Ye bring a word from God on high
  And voices in our hearts reply.

**HOMEWARD BOUND**

**Page 115**

  Home, for my heart still calls me;
    Home, through the danger zone;
  Home, whatever befalls me,
    I will sail again to my own!

  Wolves of the sea are hiding
    Closely along the way,
  Under the water biding
    Their moment to rend and slay.

  Black is the eagle that brands them,
    Black are their hearts as the nights
  Black is the hate that sends them
    To murder but not to fight.

  Flower of the German Culture,
    Boast of the Kaiser’s Marine,
  Choose for your emblem the vulture,
    Cowardly, cruel, obscene!

  Forth from her sheltered haven
    Our peaceful ship glides slow,
  Noiseless in flight as a raven,
    Gray as a hoodie crow.

  She doubles and turns in her bearing,
    Like a twisting plover she goes;
  The way of her westward faring
    Only the captain knows.

  In a lonely bay concealing
    She lingers for days, and slips
  At dusk from her covert, stealing
    Thro’ channels feared by the ships.

  Brave are the men, and steady,
    Who guide her over the deep,—­
  British mariners, ready
    To face the sea-wolf’s leap.

  Lord of the winds and waters,
    Bring our ship to her mark,
  Safe from this game of hide-and-seek
    With murderers in the dark!

On the S.S. *Baltic*, May, 1917.

**THE WINDS OF WAR-NEWS**

  The winds of war-news change and veer:
  Now westerly and full of cheer,
  Now easterly, depressing, sour
  With tidings of the Teutons’ power.

  But thou, America, whose heart
  With brave Allies has taken part,
  Be not a weathercock to change
  With these wild winds that shift and range.

  Be thou a compass ever true,
  Through sullen clouds or skies of blue,
  To that great star which rules the night,—­
  The star of Liberty and Right.

  Lover of peace, oh set thy soul,
  Thy strength, thy wealth, thy conscience whole,
  To win the peace thine eyes foresee,—­
  The triumph of Democracy.

December 19, 1917.

**RIGHTEOUS WRATH**

  There are many kinds of anger, as many kinds of fire;
  And some are fierce and fatal with murderous desire;
  And some are mean and craven, revengeful, sullen, slow,
  They hurt the man that holds them more than they hurt his foe.

  And yet there is an anger that purifies the heart:
  The anger of the better against the baser part,
  Against the false and wicked, against the tyrant’s sword,
  Against the enemies of love, and all that hate the Lord.

  O cleansing indignation, O flame of righteous wrath,
  Give me a soul to feel thee and follow in thy path!
  Save me from selfish virtue, arm me for fearless fight,
  And give me strength to carry on, a soldier of the Right!

**Page 116**

January, 1918.

**THE PEACEFUL WARRIOR**

  I have no joy in strife,
    Peace is my great desire;
  Yet God forbid I lose my life
    Through fear to face the fire.

  A peaceful man must fight
    For that which peace demands,—­
  Freedom and faith, honor and right,
    Defend with heart and hands.

  Farewell, my friendly books;
    Farewell, ye woods and streams;
  The fate that calls me forward looks
    To a duty beyond dreams.

  Oh, better to be dead
    With a face turned to the sky,
  Than live beneath a slavish dread
    And serve a giant lie.

  Stand up, my heart, and strive
    For the things most dear to thee!
  Why should we care to be alive
    Unless the world is free?

May, 1918.

**FROM GLORY UNTO GLORY**

**AMERICAN FLAG SONG**

1776

  O dark the night and dim the day
    When first our flag arose;
  It fluttered bravely in the fray
    To meet o’erwhelming foes.
  Our fathers saw the splendor shine,
    They dared and suffered all;
  They won our freedom by the sign—­
  The holy sign, the radiant sign—­
    Of the stars that never fall.

*Chorus*

    All hail to thee, Young Glory!
      Among the flags of earth
    We’ll ne’er forget the story
      Of thy heroic birth.

1861

  O wild the later storm that shook
    The pillars of the State,
  When brother against brother took
    The final arms of fate.
  But union lived and peace divine
    Enfolded brothers all;
  The flag floats o’er them with the sign—­
  The loyal sign, the equal sign—­
    Of the stars that never fall.

*Chorus*

    All hail to thee, Old Glory!
      Of thee our heart’s desire
    Foretells a golden story,
      For thou hast come through fire.

1917

  O fiercer than all wars before
    That raged on land or sea,
  The Giant Robber’s world-wide war
    For the things that shall not be!
  Thy sister banners hold the line;
    To thee, dear flag, they call;
  And thou hast joined them with the sign—­
  The heavenly sign, the victor sign—­
    Of the stars that never fall.

*Chorus*

    All hail to thee, New Glory!
      We follow thee unfurled
    To write the larger story
      Of Freedom for the World.

September 4, 1918.

**BRITAIN, FRANCE, AMERICA**

  The rough expanse of democratic sea
  Which parts the lands that live by liberty
  Is no division; for their hearts are one.
  To fight together till their cause is won.

**Page 117**

  For land and water let us make our pact,
  And seal the solemn word with valiant act:
  No continent is firm, no ocean pure,
  Until on both the rights of man are sure.

April, 1917.

**THE RED CROSS**

  Sign of the Love Divine
    That bends to bear the load
  Of all who suffer, all who bleed,
    Along life’s thorny road:

  Sign of the Heart Humane,
    That through the darkest fight
  Would bring to wounded friend and foe
    A ministry of light:

  O dear and holy sign,
    Lead onward like a star!
  The armies of the just are thine,
    And all we have and are.

October 20, 1918.

For the Red Cross Christmas Roll Call.

**EASTER ROAD**

1918

  Under the cloud of world-wide war,
  While earth is drenched with sorrow,
  I have no heart for idle merrymaking,
  Or for the fashioning of glad raiment.
  I will retrace the divine footmarks,
  On the Road of the first Easter.

  Down through the valley of utter darkness
  Dripping with blood and tears;
  Over the hill of the skull, the little hill of great anguish,
  The ambuscade of Death.
  Into the no-man’s-land of Hades
  Bearing despatches of hope to spirits in prison,
  Mortally stricken and triumphant
  Went the faithful Captain of Salvation.

  Then upward, swiftly upward,—­
  Victory, liberty, glory,
  The feet that were wounded walked in the tranquil garden,
  Bathed in dew and the light of deathless dawn.

  O my soul, my comrades, soldiers of freedom,
  Follow the pathway of Easter, for there is no other,
  Follow it through to peace, yea, follow it fighting.
  This Armageddon is not darker than Calvary.
  The day will break when the Dragon is vanquished;
  He that exalteth himself as God shall be cast down,
  And the Lords of war shall fall,
  And the long, long terror be ended,
  Victory, justice, peace enduring!
  They that die in this cause shall live forever,
  And they that live shall never die,
  They shall rejoice together in the Easter of a new world.

March 31, 1918.

**AMERICA’S WELCOME HOME**

  Oh, gallantly they fared forth in khaki and in blue,
  America’s crusading host of warriors bold and true;
  They battled for the rights of man beside our brave Allies,
  And now they’re coming home to us with glory in their eyes.

   *Oh, it’s home again, and home again, America for me!
    Our hearts are turning home again and there we long to be,
    In our beautiful big country beyond the ocean bars,
    Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.*

**Page 118**

  Our boys have seen the Old World as none have seen before.
  They know the grisly horror of the German gods of war:
  The noble faith of Britain and the hero-heart of France,
  The soul of Belgium’s fortitude and Italy’s romance.

  They bore our country’s great word across the rolling sea,
  “America swears brotherhood with all the just and free.”
  They wrote that word victorious on fields of mortal strife,
  And many a valiant lad was proud to seal it with his life.

  Oh, welcome home in Heaven’s peace, dear spirits of the dead!
  And welcome home ye living sons America hath bred!
  The lords of war are beaten down, your glorious task is done;
  You fought to make the whole world free, and the victory is won.

   *Now it’s home again, and home again, our hearts are turning west,
    Of all the lands beneath the sun America is best.
    We’re going home to our own folks, beyond the ocean bars,
    Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.*

November 11, 1918.

A sequel to “America For Me,” written in 1909.  Page 314.

**THE SURRENDER OF THE GERMAN FLEET**

Ship after ship, and every one with a high-resounding name,
From the robber-nest of Heligoland the German war-fleet came;
Not victory or death they sought, but a rendezvous of shame.

*Sing out, sing out,
A joyful shout,
Ye lovers of the sea!
The “Kaiser” and the “Kaiserin,”
The “Koenig” and the “Prinz,”
The potentates of piracy,
Are coming to surrender,
And the ocean shall be free.*

They never dared the final fate of battle on the blue;
Their sea-wolves murdered merchantmen and mocked the drowning crew;
They stained the wave with martyr-blood,—­but we sent our transports

                    through!

What flags are these that dumbly droop from the gaff o’ the mainmast
tall?
The black of the Kaiser’s iron cross, the red of the Empire’s fall!
Come down, come down, ye pirate flags.  Yea, strike your colors all.

The Union Jack and the Tricolor and the Starry Flag o’ the West
Shall guard the fruit of Freedom’s war and the victory confest,
The flags of the brave and just and free shall rule on the ocean’s

                    breast.

*Sing out, sing out,
A mighty shout,
Ye lovers of the sea!
The “Kaiser” and the “Kaiserin,”
The “Koenig” and the “Prinz,”
The robber-lords of death and sin,
Have come to their surrender,
And the ocean shall be free!*

November 20, 1918.

**GOLDEN STARS**

**I**

**Page 119**

  It was my lot of late to travel far
  Through all America’s domain,
  A willing, gray-haired servitor
  Bearing the Fiery Cross of righteous war.
  And everywhere, on mountain, vale and plain,
  In crowded street and lonely cottage door,
  I saw the symbol of the bright blue star.
  Millions of stars!  Rejoice, dear land, rejoice
  That God hath made thee great enough to give
  Beneath thy starry flag unfurled
  A gift to all the world,—­
  Thy living sons that Liberty might live.

**II**

It seems but yesterday they sallied forth Boys of the east, the west, the south, the north, High-hearted, keen, with laughter and with song, Fearless of lurking danger on the sea, Eager to fight in Flanders or in France Against the monstrous German wrong, And sure of victory!  Brothers in soul with British and with French They held their ground in many a bloody trench; And when the swift word came—­ *Advance!* Over the top they went through waves of flame,—­ Confident, reckless, irresistible, Real Americans,—­ Their rush was never stayed Until the foe fell back, defeated and dismayed.  O land that bore them, write upon thy roll Of battles won To liberate the human soul, Chateau Thierry and Saint Mihiel And the fierce agony of the Argonne; Yea, count among thy little rivers, dear Because of friends whose feet have trodden there, The Marne, the Meuse, and the Moselle.

**III**

  Now the vile sword
  In Potsdam forged and bathed in hell,
  Is beaten down, the victory given
  To the sword forged in faith and bathed in heaven.
  Now home again our heroes come:
  Oh, welcome them with bugle and with drum,
  Ring bells, blow whistles, make a joyful noise
  Unto the Lord,
  And welcome home our blue-star boys,
  Whose manhood has made known
  To all the world America,
  Unselfish, brave and free, the Great Republic,
  Who lives not to herself alone.

**IV**

  But many a lad we hold
  Dear in our heart of hearts
  Is missing from the home-returning host.
  Ah, say not they are lost,
  For they have found and given their life
  In sacrificial strife:
  Their service stars have changed from blue to gold!
  That sudden rapture took them far away,
  Yet are they here with us to-day,
  Even as the heavenly stars we cannot see
  Through the bright veil of sunlight,
  Shed their influence still
  On our vexed life, and promise peace
  From God to all men of good will.

**V**

**Page 120**

  What wreaths shall we entwine
  For our dear boys to deck their holy shrine?
    Mountain-laurel, morning-glory,
    Goldenrod and asters blue,
    Purple loosestrife, prince’s-pine,
    Wild-azalea, meadow-rue,
    Nodding-lilies, columbine,—­
  All the native blooms that grew
  In these fresh woods and pastures new,
  Wherein they loved to ramble and to play.
  Bring no exotic flowers:
  America was in their hearts,
  And they are ours
  For ever and a day.

**VI**

  O happy warriors, forgive the tear
    Falling from eyes that miss you:
  Forgive the word of grief from mother-lips
    That ne’er on earth shall kiss you;
  Hear only what our hearts would have you hear,—­
  Glory and praise and gratitude and pride
  From the dear country in whose cause you died.
  Now you have run your race and won your prize,
  Old age shall never burden you, the fears
  And conflicts that beset our lingering years
  Shall never vex your souls in Paradise.
  Immortal, young, and crowned with victory,
  From life’s long battle you have found release.
    And He who died for all on Calvary
  Has welcomed you, brave soldiers of the cross,
    Into eternal Peace.

**VII**

  Come, let us gird our loins and lift our load,
  Companions who are left on life’s rough road,
  And bravely take the way that we must tread
  To keep true faith with our beloved dead.
  To conquer war they dared their lives to give,
  To safeguard peace our hearts must learn to live.
  Help us, dear God, our forward faith to hold!
  We want a better world than that of old.
  Lead us on paths of high endeavor,
  Toiling upward, climbing ever,
  Ready to suffer for the right,
  Until at last we gain a loftier height,
  More worthy to behold
  Our guiding stars, our hero-stars of gold.

Ode for the Memorial Service,
Princeton University, December 15, 1918.

**IN THE BLUE HEAVEN**

In the blue heaven the clouds will come and go,
Scudding before the gale, or drifting slow
As galleons becalmed in Sundown Bay:
And through the air the birds will wing their way
Soaring to far-off heights, or flapping low,
Or darting like an arrow from the bow;
And when the twilight comes the stars will show,
One after one, their tranquil bright array

                                In the blue heaven.But ye who fearless flew to meet the foe,
Eagles of freedom,—­nevermore, we know,
Shall we behold you floating far away.
Yet clouds and birds and every starry ray
Will draw our heart to where your spirits glow

                                In the blue Heaven.

**Page 121**

For the American Aviators who died in the war.

March, 1919.

**A SHRINE IN THE PANTHEON**

**FOR THE UNNAMED SOLDIERS WHO DIED IN FRANCE**

Universal approval has been accorded the proposal made in the French Chamber that the ashes of an unnamed French soldier, fallen for his country, shall be removed with solemn ceremony to the Pantheon.  In this way it is intended to honor by a symbolic ceremony the memory of all who lie in unmarked graves.

  Here the great heart of France,
    Victor in noble strife,
  Doth consecrate a Poilu’s tomb
    To those who saved her life!

  Brave son without a name,
    Your country calls you home,
  To rest among her heirs of fame,
    Beneath the Pantheon’s dome!

  Now from the height of Heaven,
    The souls of heroes look;
  Their names, ungraven on this stone,
    Are written in God’s book.

  Women of France, who mourn
    Your dead in unmarked ground,
  Come hither!  Here the man you loved
    In the heart of France is found!

**IN PRAISE OF POETS**

**MOTHER EARTH**

Mother of all the high-strung poets and singers departed,
Mother of all the grass that weaves over their graves the glory of the
field,
Mother of all the manifold forms of life, deep-bosomed, patient,
impassive,
Silent brooder and nurse of lyrical joys and sorrows!
Out of thee, yea, surely out of the fertile depth below thy breast,
Issued in some strange way, thou lying motionless, voiceless,
All these songs of nature, rhythmical, passionate, yearning.
Coming in music from earth, but not unto earth returning.

Dust are the blood-red hearts that beat in time to these measures,
Thou hast taken them back to thyself, secretly, irresistibly
Drawing the crimson currents of life down, down, down
Deep into thy bosom again, as a river is lost in the sand.
But the souls of the singers have entered into the songs that revealed
them,—­
Passionate songs, immortal songs of joy and grief and love and longing,
Floating from heart to heart of thy children, they echo above thee:
Do they not utter thy heart, the voices of those that love thee?

Long hadst thou lain like a queen transformed by some old enchantment
Into an alien shape, mysterious, beautiful, speechless,
Knowing not who thou wert, till the touch of thy Lord and Lover
Wakened the man-child within thee to tell thy secret.
All of thy flowers and birds and forests and flowing waters
Are but the rhythmical forms to reveal the life of the spirit;
Thou thyself, earth-mother, in mountain and meadow and ocean,
Holdest the poem of God, eternal thought and emotion.

December, 1905.

**MILTON**

**Page 122**

**I**

  Lover of beauty, walking on the height
    Of pure philosophy and tranquil song;
    Born to behold the visions that belong
  To those who dwell in melody and light;
  Milton, thou spirit delicate and bright!
    What drew thee down to join the Roundhead throng
    Of iron-sided warriors, rude and strong,
  Fighting for freedom in a world half night?

  Lover of Liberty at heart wast thou,
    Above all beauty bright, all music clear:
  To thee she bared her bosom and her brow,
    Breathing her virgin promise in thine ear,
  And bound thee to her with a double vow,—­
    Exquisite Puritan, grave Cavalier!

**II**

  The cause, the cause for which thy soul resigned
    Her singing robes to battle on the plain,
    Was won, O poet, and was lost again;
  And lost the labour of thy lonely mind
  On weary tasks of prose.  What wilt thou find
    To comfort thee for all the toil and pain?
    What solace, now thy sacrifice is vain
  And thou art left forsaken, poor, and blind?

  Like organ-music comes the deep reply:
    “The cause of truth looks lost, but shall be won.
  For God hath given to mine inward eye
    Vision of England soaring to the sun.
  And granted me great peace before I die,
    In thoughts of lowly duty bravely done.”

**III**

  O bend again above thine organ-board,
    Thou blind old poet longing for repose!
    Thy Master claims thy service not with those
  Who only stand and wait for His reward;
  He pours the heavenly gift of song restored
    Into thy breast, and bids thee nobly close
    A noble life, with poetry that flows
  In mighty music of the major chord.

  Where hast thou learned this deep, majestic strain,
    Surpassing all thy youthful lyric grace,
  To sing of Paradise?  Ah, not in vain
    The griefs that won at Dante’s side thy place,
  And made thee, Milton, by thy years of pain,
    The loftiest poet of the English race!

1908.

**WORDSWORTH**

  Wordsworth, thy music like a river rolls
    Among the mountains, and thy song is fed
    By living springs far up the watershed;
  No whirling flood nor parching drought controls
  The crystal current:  even on the shoals
    It murmurs clear and sweet; and when its bed
    Deepens below mysterious cliffs of dread,
  Thy voice of peace grows deeper in our souls.

  But thou in youth hast known the breaking stress
    Of passion, and hast trod despair’s dry ground
      Beneath black thoughts that wither and destroy.
  Ah, wanderer, led by human tenderness
    Home to the heart of Nature, thou hast found
      The hidden Fountain of Recovered Joy.

**Page 123**

October, 1906.

**KEATS**

  The melancholy gift Aurora gained
    From Jove, that her sad lover should not see
    The face of death, no goddess asked for thee,
  My Keats!  But when the scarlet blood-drop stained
  Thy pillow, thou didst read the fate ordained,—­
    Brief life, wild love, a flight of poesy!
    And then,—­a shadow fell on Italy:
  Thy star went down before its brightness waned.

  Yet thou hast won the gift Tithonus missed:
    Never to feel the pain of growing old,
      Nor lose the blissful sight of beauty’s truth,
  But with the ardent lips Urania kissed
    To breathe thy song, and, ere thy heart grew cold,
      Become the Poet of Immortal Youth.

August, 1906.

**SHELLEY**

  Knight-errant of the Never-ending Quest,
    And Minstrel of the Unfulfilled Desire;
    For ever tuning thy frail earthly lyre
  To some unearthly music, and possessed
  With painful passionate longing to invest
    The golden dream of Love’s immortal fire
    With mortal robes of beautiful attire,
  And fold perfection to thy throbbing breast!

  What wonder, Shelley, that the restless wave
    Should claim thee and the leaping flame consume
      Thy drifted form on Viareggio’s beach?
  These were thine elements,—­thy fitting grave.
    But still thy soul rides on with fiery plume,
      Thy wild song rings in ocean’s yearning speech!

August, 1906.

**ROBERT BROWNING**

  How blind the toil that burrows like the mole,
    In winding graveyard pathways underground,
    For Browning’s lineage!  What if men have found
  Poor footmen or rich merchants on the roll
  Of his forbears?  Did they beget his soul?
    Nay, for he came of ancestry renowned
    Through all the world,—­the poets laurel-crowned
  With wreaths from which the autumn takes no toll.

  The blazons on his coat-of-arms are these:
    The flaming sign of Shelley’s heart on fire,
      The golden globe of Shakespeare’s human stage,
      The staff and scrip of Chaucer’s pilgrimage,
    The rose of Dante’s deep, divine desire,
  The tragic mask of wise Euripides.

November, 1906.

**TENNYSON**

In Lucem Transitus, October, 1892

  From the misty shores of midnight, touched with splendours of the moon,
  To the singing tides of heaven, and the light more clear than noon,
  Passed a soul that grew to music till it was with God in tune.

  Brother of the greatest poets, true to nature, true to art;
  Lover of Immortal Love, uplifter of the human heart;
  Who shall cheer us with high music, who shall sing, if thou depart?

**Page 124**

  Silence here—­for love is silent, gazing on the lessening sail;
  Silence here—­for grief is voiceless when the mighty minstrels fail;
  Silence here—­but far beyond us, many voices crying, Hail!

“IN MEMORIAM”

  The record of a faith sublime,
    And hope, through clouds, far-off discerned;
    The incense of a love that burned
  Through pain and doubt defying Time:

  The story of a soul at strife
    That learned at last to kiss the rod,
    And passed through sorrow up to God,
  From living to a higher life:

  A light that gleams across the wave
    Of darkness, down the rolling years,
    Piercing the heavy mist of tears—­
  A rainbow shining o’er a grave.

**VICTOR HUGO**

1802-1902

  Heart of France for a hundred years,
    Passionate, sensitive, proud, and strong,
  Quick to throb with her hopes and fears,
    Fierce to flame with her sense of wrong!
    You, who hailed with a morning song
  Dream-light gilding a throne of old:
  You, who turned when the dream grew cold,
  Singing still, to the light that shone
  Pure from Liberty’s ancient throne,
      Over the human throng!
  You, who dared in the dark eclipse,—­
    When the pygmy heir of a giant name
    Dimmed the face of the land with shame,—­
  Speak the truth with indignant lips,
  Call him little whom men called great,
      Scoff at him, scorn him, deny him,
  Point to the blood on his robe of state,
      Fling back his bribes and defy him!

  You, who fronted the waves of fate
    As you faced the sea from your island home,
  Exiled, yet with a soul elate,
    Sending songs o’er the rolling foam,
  Bidding the heart of man to wait
      For the day when all should see
    Floods of wrath from the frowning skies
    Fall on an Empire founded in lies,
      And France again be free!
  You, who came in the Terrible Year
    Swiftly back to your broken land,
  Now to your heart a thousand times more dear,—­
    Prayed for her, sung to her, fought for her,
    Patiently, fervently wrought for her,
          Till once again,
    After the storm of fear and pain,
  High in the heavens the star of France stood clear!

    You, who knew that a man must take
  Good and ill with a steadfast soul,
  Holding fast, while the billows roll
    Over his head, to the things that make
  Life worth living for great and small,
      Honour and pity and truth,
      The heart and the hope of youth,
  And the good God over all!
      You, to whom work was rest,
    Dauntless Toiler of the Sea,
      Following ever the joyful quest
  Of beauty on the shores of old Romance,
      Bard of the poor of France,
    And warrior-priest of world-wide

**Page 125**

charity!
      You who loved little children best
    Of all the poets that ever sung,
        Great heart, golden heart,
    Old, and yet ever young,
        Minstrel of liberty,
    Lover of all free, winged things,
      Now at last you are free,—­
    Your soul has its wings!
  Heart of France for a hundred years,
    Floating far in the light that never fails you,
  Over the turmoil of mortal hopes and fears
    Victor, forever victor, the whole world hails you!

March, 1902.

**LONGFELLOW**

In a great land, a new land, a land full of labour and riches and
confusion,
Where there were many running to and fro, and shouting, and striving
together,
In the midst of the hurry and the troubled noise, I heard the voice of
one singing.

“What are you doing there, O man, singing quietly amid all this tumult?
This is the time for new inventions, mighty shoutings, and blowings of
the trumpet.”
But he answered, “I am only shepherding my sheep with music.”

So he went along his chosen way, keeping his little flock around him;
And he paused to listen, now and then, beside the antique fountains,
Where the faces of forgotten gods were refreshed with musically falling

                    waters;

Or he sat for a while at the blacksmith’s door, and heard the cling-clang
of the anvils;
Or he rested beneath old steeples full of bells, that showered their
chimes upon him;
Or he walked along the border of the sea, drinking in the long roar of
the billows;

Or he sunned himself in the pine-scented shipyard, amid the tattoo of
the mallets;
Or he leaned on the rail of the bridge, letting his thoughts flow with
the whispering river;
He hearkened also to ancient tales, and made them young again with his
singing.

Then a flaming arrow of death fell on his flock, and pierced the heart
of his dearest!
Silent the music now, as the shepherd entered the mystical temple of
sorrow:
Long he tarried in darkness there:  but when he came out he was singing.

And I saw the faces of men and women and children silently turning toward
him;
The youth setting out on the journey of life, and the old man waiting
beside the last mile-stone;
The toiler sweating beneath his load; and the happy mother rocking her
cradle;

The lonely sailor on far-off seas; and the gray-minded scholar in his
book-room;
The mill-hand bound to a clacking machine; and the hunter in the forest;
And the solitary soul hiding friendless in the wilderness of the city;

Many human faces, full of care and longing, were drawn irresistibly
toward him,
By the charm of something known to every heart, yet very strange and
lovely,
And at the sound of his singing wonderfully all their faces were
lightened.

**Page 126**

“Why do you listen, O you people, to this old and world-worn music?
This is not for you, in the splendour of a new age, in the democratic
triumph!
Listen to the clashing cymbals, the big drums, the brazen trumpets of
your poets.”

But the people made no answer, following in their hearts the simpler
music:
For it seemed to them, noise-weary, nothing could be better worth the
hearing
Than the melodies which brought sweet order into life’s confusion.

So the shepherd sang his way along, until he came unto a mountain:
And I know not surely whether the mountain was called Parnassus,
But he climbed it out of sight, and still I heard the voice of one

                    singing.

January, 1907.

**THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH**

**I**

**BIRTHDAY VERSES, 1906**

  Dear Aldrich, now November’s mellow days
    Have brought another *Festa* round to you,
  You can’t refuse a loving-cup of praise
    From friends the fleeting years have bound to you.

  Here come your Marjorie Daw, your dear Bad Boy,
    Prudence, and Judith the Bethulian,
  And many more, to wish you birthday joy,
    And sunny hours, and sky cerulean!

  Your children all, they hurry to your den,
    With wreaths of honour they have won for you,
  To merry-make your threescore years and ten.
    You, old?  Why, life has just begun for you!

  There’s many a reader whom your silver songs
    And crystal stories cheer in loneliness.
  What though the newer writers come in throngs?
    You’re sure to keep your charm of only-ness.

  You do your work with careful, loving touch,—­
    An artist to the very core of you,—­
  You know the magic spell of “not-too-much”:
    We read,—­and wish that there was more of you.

  And more there is:  for while we love your books
    Because their subtle skill is part of you;
  We love *you* better, for our friendship looks
    Behind them to the human heart of you.

**II**

**MEMORIAL SONNET, 1908**

  This is the house where little Aldrich read
    The early pages of Life’s wonder-book
    With boyish pleasure:  in this ingle-nook
  He watched the drift-wood fire of Fancy shed
  Bright colour on the pictures blue and red:
    Boy-like he skipped the longer words, and took
    His happy way, with searching, dreamful look
  Among the deeper things more simply said.

  Then, came his turn to write:  and still the flame
    Of Fancy played through all the tales he told,
  And still he won the laurelled poet’s fame
    With simple words wrought into rhymes of gold.
  Look, here’s the face to which this house is frame,—­
    A man too wise to let his heart grow old!

**Page 127**

**EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN**

(Read at His Funeral, January 21, 1908)

  Oh, quick to feel the lightest touch
    Of beauty or of truth,
  Rich in the thoughtfulness of age,
    The hopefulness of youth,
  The courage of the gentle heart,
    The wisdom of the pure,
  The strength of finely tempered souls
    To labour and endure!

  The blue of springtime in your eyes
    Was never quenched by pain;
  And winter brought your head the crown
    Of snow without a stain.
  The poet’s mind, the prince’s heart,
    You kept until the end,
  Nor ever faltered in your work,
    Nor ever failed a friend.

  You followed, through the quest of life,
    The light that shines above
  The tumult and the toil of men,
    And shows us what to love.
  Right loyal to the best you knew,
    Reality or dream,
  You ran the race, you fought the fight,
    A follower of the Gleam.

  We lay upon your folded hands
    The wreath of asphodel;
  We speak above your peaceful face
    The tender word *Farewell!*
  For well you fare, in God’s good care,
    Somewhere within the blue,
  And know, to-day, your dearest dreams
    Are true,—­and true,—­and true!

**TO JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY**

ON HIS “BOOK OF JOYOUS CHILDREN”

  Yours is a garden of old-fashioned flowers;
    Joyous children delight to play there;
  Weary men find rest in its bowers,
    Watching the lingering light of day there.

  Old-time tunes and young love-laughter
    Ripple and run among the roses;
  Memory’s echoes, murmuring after,
    Fill the dusk when the long day closes.

  Simple songs with a cadence olden—­
    These you learned in the Forest of Arden:
  Friendly flowers with hearts all golden—­
    These you borrowed from Eden’s garden.

  This is the reason why all men love you;
    Truth to life is the finest art:
  Other poets may soar above you—­
    You keep close to the human heart.

December, 1903.

**RICHARD WATSON GILDER**

**IN MEMORIAM**

  Soul of a soldier in a poet’s frame,
      Heart of a hero in a body frail;
      Thine was the courage clear that did not quail
  Before the giant champions of shame
  Who wrought dishonour to the city’s name;
      And thine the vision of the Holy Grail
      Of Love, revealed through Music’s lucid veil,
  Filling thy life with heavenly song and flame.

  Pure was the light that lit thy glowing eye,
      And strong the faith that held thy simple creed.
      Ah, poet, patriot, friend, to serve our need
  Thou leavest two great gifts that will not die:
  Above the city’s noise, thy lyric cry,—­
      Amid the city’s strife, thy noble deed.

**Page 128**

November, 1909.

**THE VALLEY OF VAIN VERSES**

  The grief that is but feigning,
  And weeps melodious tears
  Of delicate complaining
  From self-indulgent years;
  The mirth that is but madness,
  And has no inward gladness
  Beneath its laughter straining,
  To capture thoughtless ears;

  The love that is but passion
  Of amber-scented lust;
  The doubt that is but fashion;
  The faith that has no trust;
  These Thamyris disperses,
  In the Valley of Vain Verses
  Below the Mount Parnassian,—­
  And they crumble into dust.

**MUSIC**

**MUSIC**

**I**

**PRELUDE**

1

    Daughter of Psyche, pledge of that wild night
    When, pierced with pain and bitter-sweet delight,
    She knew her Love and saw her Lord depart,
    Then breathed her wonder and her woe forlorn
    Into a single cry, and thou wast born!
    Thou flower of rapture and thou fruit of grief;
    Invisible enchantress of the heart;
      Mistress of charms that bring relief
      To sorrow, and to joy impart
    A heavenly tone that keeps it undefined,—­
        Thou art the child
      Of Amor, and by right divine
        A throne of love is thine,
  Thou flower-folded, golden-girdled, star-crowned Queen,
  Whose bridal beauty mortal eyes have never seen!

2

    Thou art the Angel of the pool that sleeps,
    While peace and joy lie hidden in its deeps,
    Waiting thy touch to make the waters roll
    In healing murmurs round the weary soul.
      Ah, when wilt thou draw near,
    Thou messenger of mercy robed in song?
    My lonely heart has listened for thee long;
      And now I seem to hear
  Across the crowded market-place of life,
    Thy measured foot-fall, ringing light and clear
  Above unmeaning noises and unruly strife.
      In quiet cadence, sweet and slow,
      Serenely pacing to and fro,
    Thy far-off steps are magical and dear,—­
    Ah, turn this way, come close and speak to me!
  From this dull bed of languor set my spirit free,
  And bid me rise, and let me walk awhile with thee.

**II**

**INVOCATION**

Where wilt thou lead me first?
In what still region
Of thy domain,
Whose provinces are legion,
Wilt thou restore me to myself again,
And quench my heart’s long thirst?
I pray thee lay thy golden girdle down,
And put away thy starry crown:
For one dear restful hour
Assume a state more mild.
Clad only in thy blossom-broidered gown
That breathes familiar scent of many a flower,
Take the low path that leads through pastures green;
And though thou art a Queen,
Be Rosamund awhile, and in thy bower,
By tranquil love and simple joy beguiled,
Sing to my soul, as mother to her child.

**Page 129**

**III**

**PLAY SONG**

    O lead me by the hand,
    And let my heart have rest,
  And bring me back to childhood land,
  To find again the long-lost band
    Of playmates blithe and blest.

    Some quaint, old-fashioned air,
    That all the children knew,
  Shall run before us everywhere,
  Like a little maid with flying hair,
    To guide the merry crew.

    Along the garden ways
    We chase the light-foot tune,
  And in and out the flowery maze,
  With eager haste and fond delays,
    In pleasant paths of June.

    For us the fields are new,
    For us the woods are rife
  With fairy secrets, deep and true,
  And heaven is but a tent of blue
    Above the game of life.

    The world is far away:
    The fever and the fret,
  And all that makes the heart grow gray,
  Is out of sight and far away,
  Dear Music, while I hear thee play
  That olden, golden roundelay,
    “Remember and forget!”

**IV**

**SLEEP SONG**

Forget, forget!
The tide of life is turning;
The waves of light ebb slowly down the west:
Along the edge of dark some stars are burning
To guide thy spirit safely to an isle of rest.
A little rocking on the tranquil deep
Of song, to soothe thy yearning,
A little slumber and a little sleep,
And so, forget, forget!

Forget, forget,—­
The day was long in pleasure;
Its echoes die away across the hill;
Now let thy heart beat time to their slow measure,
That swells, and sinks, and faints, and falls, till all is still.
Then, like a weary child that loves to keep
Locked in its arms some treasure,
Thy soul in calm content shall fall asleep,
And so forget, forget.

Forget, forget,—­
And if thou hast been weeping,
Let go the thoughts that bind thee to thy grief:
Lie still, and watch the singing angels, reaping
The golden harvest of thy sorrow, sheaf by sheaf;
Or count thy joys like flocks of snow-white sheep
That one by one come creeping
Into the quiet fold, until thou sleep,
And so forget, forget!

Forget, forget,—­
Thou art a child and knowest
So little of thy life!  But music tells
The secret of the world through which thou goest
To work with morning song, to rest with evening bells:
Life is in tune with harmony so deep
That when the notes are lowest
Thou still canst lay thee down in peace and sleep,
For God will not forget.

**V**

**HUNTING SONG**

Out of the garden of playtime, out of the bower of rest,
Fain would I follow at daytime, music that calls to a quest.
Hark, how the galloping measure
Quickens the pulses of pleasure;
Gaily saluting the morn
With the long, clear note of the hunting-horn,
Echoing up from the valley,
Over the mountain side,—­
Rally, you hunters, rally,
Rally, and ride!

**Page 130**

  Drink of the magical potion music has mixed with her wine,
  Full of the madness of motion, joyful, exultant, divine!
        Leave all your troubles behind you,
        Ride where they never can find you,
          Into the gladness of morn,
  With the long, clear note of the hunting-horn,
        Swiftly o’er hillock and hollow,
          Sweeping along with the wind,—­
        Follow, you hunters, follow,
          Follow and find!

  What will you reach with your riding?  What is the charm of the chase?
  Just the delight and the striding swing of the jubilant pace.
        Danger is sweet when you front her,—­
        In at the death, every hunter!
        Now on the breeze the mort is borne
  In the long, clear note of the hunting-horn,
        Winding merrily, over and over,—­
          Come, come, come!
        Home again, Ranger! home again, Rover!
          Turn again, home!

**VI**

**DANCE-MUSIC**

1

  Now let the sleep-tune blend with the play-tune,
  Weaving the mystical spell of the dance;
  Lighten the deep tune, soften the gay tune,
  Mingle a tempo that turns in a trance.
  Half of it sighing, half of it smiling,
  Smoothly it swings, with a triplicate beat;
  Calling, replying, yearning, beguiling,
  Wooing the heart and bewitching the feet.
        Every drop of blood
        Rises with the flood,
    Rocking on the waves of the strain;
        Youth and beauty glide
        Turning with the tide—­
      Music making one out of twain,
  Bearing them away, and away, and away,
        Like a tone and its terce—­
  Till the chord dissolves, and the dancers stay,
          And reverse.

  Violins leading, take up the measure,
  Turn with the tune again,—­clarinets clear
  Answer their pleading,—­harps full of pleasure
  Sprinkle their silver like light on the mere.
        Semiquaver notes,
        Merry little motes,
        Tangled in the haze
        Of the lamp’s golden rays,
        Quiver everywhere
          In the air,
          Like a spray,—­
  Till the fuller stream of the might of the tune,
  Gliding like a dream in the light of the moon,
  Bears them all away, and away, and away,
      Floating in the trance of the dance.

2

  Then begins a measure stately,
      Languid, slow, serene;
  All the dancers move sedately,
  Stepping leisurely and straitly,
      With a courtly mien;
  Crossing hands and changing places,
      Bowing low between,
  While the minuet inlaces
  Waving arms and woven paces,—­
      Glittering damaskeen.
  Where is she whose form is folden
      In its royal sheen?
  From our longing eyes withholden
  By her mystic girdle golden,
      Beauty sought but never seen,
  Music walks the maze, a queen.

**Page 131**

**VII**

**WAR-MUSIC**

        Break off!  Dance no more!
          Danger is at the door.
          Music is in arms.
        To signal war’s alarms.

    Hark, a sudden trumpet calling
      Over the hill!
    Why are you calling, trumpet, calling?
      What is your will?

      Men, men, men!
    Men who are ready to fight
    For their country’s life, and the right
    Of a liberty-loving land to be
      Free, free, free!
    Free from a tyrant’s chain,
    Free from dishonor’s stain,
    Free to guard and maintain
    All that her fathers fought for,
    All that her sons have wrought for,
      Resolute, brave, and free!

      Call again, trumpet, call again,
          Call up the men!

    Do you hear the storm of cheers
    Mingled with the women’s tears
  And the tramp, tramp, tramp of marching feet?
    Do you hear the throbbing drum
    As the hosts of battle come
  Keeping time, time, time to its beat?
    O Music give a song
    To make their spirit strong
  For the fury of the tempest they must meet.

      The hoarse roar
      Of the monster guns;
      And the sharp bark
      Of the lesser guns;
      The whine of the shells,
      The rifles’ clatter
      Where the bullets patter,
      The rattle, rattle, rattle
      Of the mitrailleuse in battle,
      And the yells
      Of the men who charge through hells
      Where the poison gas descends,
      And the bursting shrapnel rends
      Limb from limb
      In the dim
      Chaos and clamor of the strife
      Where no man thinks of his life
      But only of fighting through,
      Blindly fighting through, through!

        ’Tis done
        At last!
        The victory won,
      The dissonance of warfare past!

        O Music mourn the dead
        Whose loyal blood was shed,
      And sound the taps for every hero slain;
        Then lead into the song
        That made their spirit strong,
      And tell the world they did not die in vain.

    Thank God we can see, in the glory of morn,
      The invincible flag that our fathers defended;
    And our hearts can repeat what the heroes have sworn,
      That war shall not end till the war-lust is ended.
    Then the bloodthirsty sword shall no longer be lord
    Of the nations oppressed by the conqueror’s horde,
      But the banners of Liberty proudly shall wave
      O’er the *world* of the free and the lands of the brave.

May, 1916.

**VIII**

**THE SYMPHONY**

**Page 132**

  Music, they do thee wrong who say thine art
      Is only to enchant the sense.
  For every timid motion of the heart,
      And every passion too intense
  To bear the chain of the imperfect word,
      And every tremulous longing, stirred
  By spirit winds that come we know not whence
        And go we know not where,
        And every inarticulate prayer
  Beating about the depths of pain or bliss,
        Like some bewildered bird
  That seeks its nest but knows not where it is,
  And every dream that haunts, with dim delight,
  The drowsy hour between the day and night,
  The wakeful hour between the night and day,—­
        Imprisoned, waits for thee,
        Impatient, yearns for thee,
    The queen who comes to set the captive free!
    Thou lendest wings to grief to fly away,
    And wings to joy to reach a heavenly height;
  And every dumb desire that storms within the breast
  Thou leadest forth to sob or sing itself to rest.

All these are thine, and therefore love is thine.
For love is joy and grief,
And trembling doubt, and certain-sure belief,
And fear, and hope, and longing unexpressed,
In pain most human, and in rapture brief
Almost divine.
Love would possess, yet deepens when denied;
And love would give, yet hungers to receive;
Love like a prince his triumph would achieve;
And like a miser in the dark his joys would hide.
Love is most bold,
He leads his dreams like armed men in line;
Yet when the siege is set, and he must speak,
Calling the fortress to resign
Its treasure, valiant love grows weak,
And hardly dares his purpose to unfold.
Less with his faltering lips than with his eyes
He claims the longed-for prize:
Love fain would tell it all, yet leaves the best untold.
But thou shalt speak for love.  Yea, thou shalt teach
The mystery of measured tone,
The Pentecostal speech
That every listener heareth as his own.
For on thy head the cloven tongues of fire,—­
Diminished chords that quiver with desire,
And major chords that glow with perfect peace,—­
Have fallen from above;
And thou canst give release
In music to the burdened heart of love.

Sound with the ‘cellos’ pleading, passionate strain
The yearning theme, and let the flute reply
In placid melody, while violins complain,
And sob, and sigh,
With muted string;
Then let the oboe half-reluctant sing
Of bliss that trembles on the verge of pain,
While ’cellos plead and plead again,
With throbbing notes delayed, that would impart
To every urgent tone the beating of the heart.
So runs the andante, making plain
The hopes and fears of love without a word.
Then comes the adagio, with a yielding theme
Through which the violas flow soft as in a dream,
While horns and mild bassoons are heard
In tender tune, that seems to float

 **Page 133**

Like an enchanted boat
Upon the downward-gliding stream,
Toward the allegro’s wide, bright sea
Of dancing, glittering, blending tone,
Where every instrument is sounding free,
And harps like wedding-chimes are rung, and trumpets blown
Around the barque of love
That rides, with smiling skies above,
A royal galley, many-oared,
Into the happy harbour of the perfect chord.

**IX**

**IRIS**

          Light to the eye and Music to the ear,—­
      These are the builders of the bridge that springs
      From earth’s dim shore of half-remembered things
          To reach the heavenly sphere
      Where nothing silent is and nothing dark.
          So when I see the rainbow’s arc
      Spanning the showery sky, far-off I hear
          Music, and every colour sings:
      And while the symphony builds up its round
      Full sweep of architectural harmony
      Above the tide of Time, far, far away I see
      A bow of colour in the bow of sound.
          Red as the dawn the trumpet rings;
          Blue as the sky, the choir of strings
      Darkens in double-bass to ocean’s hue,
      Rises in violins to noon-tide’s blue,
  With threads of quivering light shot through and through;
      Green as the mantle that the summer flings
      Around the world, the pastoral reeds in tune
      Embroider melodies of May and June.
            Purer than gold,
          Yea, thrice-refined gold,
      And richer than the treasures of the mine,
        Floods of the human voice divine
      Along the arch in choral song are rolled.
          So bends the bow complete:
          And radiant rapture flows
      Across the bridge, so full, so strong, so sweet,
      That the uplifted spirit hardly knows
        Whether the Music-Light that glows
    Within the arch of tones and colours seven,
  Is sunset-peace of earth or sunrise-joy of Heaven.

**X**

**SEA AND SHORE**

        Music, I yield to thee
        As swimmer to the sea,
  I give my spirit to the flood of song!
        Bear me upon thy breast
        In rapture and at rest,
  Bathe me in pure delight and make me strong;
        From strife and struggle bring release,
  And draw the waves of passion into tides of peace.

        Remembered songs most dear
        In living songs I hear,
  While blending voices gently swing and sway,
        In melodies of love,
        Whose mighty currents move
  With singing near and singing far away;
        Sweet in the glow of morning light,
  And sweeter still across the starlit gulf of night.

**Page 134**

        Music, in thee we float,
        And lose the lonely note
  Of self in thy celestial-ordered strain,
        Until at last we find
        The life to love resigned
  In harmony of joy restored again;
        And songs that cheered our mortal days
  Break on the shore of light in endless hymns of praise.

December, 1901—­May, 1903—­May, 1916.

**MASTER OF MUSIC**

(In memory of Theodore Thomas, 1905)

Glory architect, glory of painter, and sculptor, and bard,
Living forever in temple and picture and statue and song,—­
Look how the world with the lights that they lit is illumined and
starred;
Brief was the flame of their life, but the lamps of their art burn
long!

Where is the Master of Music, and how has he vanished away?
Where is the work that he wrought with his wonderful art in the air?
Gone,—­it is gone like the glow on the cloud at the close of the day!
The Master has finished his work and the glory of music is—­where?

Once, at the wave of his wand, all the billows of musical sound
Followed his will, as the sea was ruled by the prophet of old:
Now that his hand is relaxed, and his rod has dropped to the ground,
Silent and dark are the shores where the marvellous harmonies rolled!

  Nay, but not silent the hearts that were filled by that life-giving sea;
    Deeper and purer forever the tides of their being will roll,
  Grateful and joyful, O Master, because they have listened to thee;
    The glory of music endures in the depths of the human soul.

**THE PIPES O’ PAN**

  Great Nature had a million words,
  In tongues of trees and songs of birds,
  But none to breathe the heart of man,
  Till Music filled the pipes o’ Pan.

1909.

**TO A YOUNG GIRL SINGING**

  Oh, what do you know of the song, my dear,
      And how have you made it your own?
  You have caught the turn of the melody clear,
      And you give it again with a golden tone,
      Till the wonder-word and the wedded note
      Are flowing out of your beautiful throat
      With a liquid charm for every ear:
      And they talk of your art,—­but for you alone
      The song is a thing, unheard, unknown;
      You only have learned it by rote.

  But when you have lived for awhile, my dear,
      I think you will learn it anew!
  For a joy will come, or a grief, or a fear,
      That will alter the look of the world for you;
      And the lyric you learned as a bit of art,
      Will wake to life as a wonderful part
      Of the love you feel so deep and true;
      And the thrill of a laugh or the throb of a tear,
      Will come with your song to all who hear;
      For then you will know it by heart.

**Page 135**

April, 1911.

**THE OLD FLUTE**

  The time will come when I no more can play
  This polished flute:  the stops will not obey
  My gnarled fingers; and the air it weaves
  In modulations, like a vine with leaves
  Climbing around the tower of song, will die
  In rustling autumn rhythms, confused and dry.
  My shortened breath no more will freely fill
  This magic reed with melody at will;
  My stiffened lips will try and try in vain
  To wake the liquid, leaping, dancing strain;
  The heavy notes will falter, wheeze, and faint,
  Or mock my ear with shrillness of complaint.

  Then let me hang this faithful friend of mine
  Upon the trunk of some old, sacred pine,
  And sit beneath the green protecting boughs
  To hear the viewless wind, that sings and soughs
  Above me, play its wild, aerial lute,
  And draw a ghost of music from my flute!

  So will I thank the gods; and most of all
  The Delian Apollo, whom men call
  The mighty master of immortal sound,—­
  Lord of the billows in their chanting round,
  Lord of the winds that fill the wood with sighs,
  Lord of the echoes and their sweet replies,
  Lord of the little people of the air
  That sprinkle drops of music everywhere,
  Lord of the sea of melody that laves
  The universe with never silent waves,—­
  Him will I thank that this brief breath of mine
  Has caught one cadence of the song divine;
  And these frail fingers learned to rise and fall
  In time with that great tune which throbs thro’ all;
  And these poor lips have lent a lilt of joy
  To songless men whom weary tasks employ!
  My life has had its music, and my heart
  In harmony has borne a little part,
  And now I come with quiet, grateful breast
  To Death’s dim hall of silence and of rest.

Freely rendered from the French of Auguste Angellier, 1911.

**THE FIRST BIRD O’ SPRING**

**TO OLIVE WHEELER**

  Winter on Mount Shasta,
  April down below;
  Golden hours of glowing sun,
  Sudden showers of snow!
  Under leafless thickets
  Early wild-flowers cling;
  But, oh, my dear, I’m fain to hear
  The first bird o’ Spring!

  Alders are in tassel,
  Maples are in bud;
  Waters of the blue McCloud
  Shout in joyful flood;
  Through the giant pine-trees
  Flutters many a wing;
  But, oh, my dear, I long to hear
  The first bird o’ Spring!

  Candle-light and fire-light
  Mingle at “the Bend;”
  ’Neath the roof of Bo-hai-pan
  Light and shadow blend.
  Sweeter than a wood-thrush
  A maid begins to sing;
  And, oh, my dear, I’m glad to hear
  The first bird o’ Spring!

The Bend, California, April 29, 1913.

**Page 136**

**THE HOUSE OF RIMMON**

**A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS**

**DRAMATIS PERSONAE**

BENHADAD:  King of Damascus.
REZON:  High Priest of the House of Rimmon.
SABALLIDIN:  A Noble.
HAZAEL }
IZDUBHAR } Courtiers.
RAKHAZ }
SHUMAKIM:  The King’s Fool.
ELISHA:  Prophet of Israel.
NAAMAN:  Captain of the Armies of Damascus.
RUAHMAH:  A Captive Maid of Israel.
TSARPI:  Wife to Naaman.
KHAMMA }
NUBTA } Attendants of Tsarpi.

Soldiers, Servants, Citizens, *etc*., *etc*.

SCENE:  *Damascus and the Mountains of Samaria.*

TIME:  850 *B.  C.*

**ACT I**

**SCENE I**

*Night, in the garden of NAAMAN at Damascus.  At the left the palace, with softly gleaming lights and music coming from the open latticed windows.  The garden is full of oleanders, roses, pomegranates, abundance of crimson flowers; the air is heavy with their fragrance:  a fountain at the right is plashing gently:  behind it is an arbour covered with vines.  Near the centre of the garden stands a small, hideous image of the god Rimmon.  Beyond the arbour rises the lofty square tower of the House of Rimmon, which casts a shadow from the moon across the garden.  The background is a wide, hilly landscape, with the snow-clad summit of Mount Herman in the distance.  Enter by the palace door, the lady TSARPI, robed in red and gold, and followed by her maids, KHAMMA and NUBTA.  She remains on the terrace:  they go down into the garden, looking about, and returning to her.*

KHAMMA:
    There’s no one here; the garden is asleep.

NUBTA:
    The flowers are nodding, all the birds abed,—­
    Nothing awake except the watchful stars!

KHAMMA:
    The stars are sentinels discreet and mute:
    How many things they know and never tell!

TSARPI:  [Impatiently.]
    Unlike the stars, how many things you tell
    And do not know!  When comes your master home?

NUBTA:
    Lady, his armour-bearer brought us word,—­
    At moonset, not before.

TSARPI:
                    He haunts the camp
    And leaves me much alone; yet I can pass
    The time of absence not unhappily,
    If I but know the time of his return.
    An hour of moonlight yet!  Khamma, my mirror!
    These curls are ill arranged, this veil too low,—­
    So,—­that is better, careless maids!  Withdraw,—­
    But bring me word if Naaman appears!

KHAMMA:
    Mistress, have no concern; for when we hear
    The clatter of his horse along the street,
    We’ll run this way and lead your dancers down
    With song and laughter,—­you shall know in time.

**Page 137**

[Exeunt KHAMMA and NUBTA laughing, TSARPI descends
the steps.]

TSARPI:
    My guest is late; but he will surely come!
    The man who burns to drain the cup of love,
    The priest whose greed of glory never fails,
    Both, both have need of me, and he will come.
    And I,—­what do I need?  Why everything
    That helps my beauty to a higher throne;
    All that a priest can promise, all a man
    Can give, and all a god bestow, I need:
    This may a woman win, and this will I.

[Enter REZON quietly from the shadow of the trees.
He stands behind TSARPI and listens, smiling,
to her last words.  Then he drops his mantle of
leopard-skin, and lifts his high priest’s rod of
bronze, shaped at one end like a star.]

REZON:
    Tsarpi!

TSARPI:  [Bowing low before him.]
              The mistress of the house of Naaman
    Salutes the master of the House of Rimmon.

REZON:
    Rimmon receives you with his star of peace,
    For you were once a handmaid of his altar.

[He lowers the star-point of the rod, which glows
for a moment with rosy light above her head.]

And now the keeper of his temple asks
The welcome of the woman for the man.

TSARPI:  [Giving him her hand, but holding off his embrace.]
    No more,—­till I have heard what brings you here
    By night, within the garden of the one
    Who scorns you most and fears you least in all
    Damascus.

REZON:
              Trust me, I repay his scorn
    With double hatred,—­Naaman, the man
    Who stands against the nobles and the priests,
    This powerful fool, this impious devotee
    Of liberty, who loves the people more
    Than he reveres the city’s ancient god:
    This frigid husband who sets you below
    His dream of duty to a horde of slaves:
    This man I hate, and I will humble him.

TSARPI:
    I think I hate him too.  He stands apart
    From me, ev’n while he holds me in his arms,
    By something that I cannot understand.
    He swears he loves his wife next to his honour!
    Next?  That’s too low!  I will be first or nothing.

REZON:
    With me you are the first, the absolute!
    When you and I have triumphed you shall reign;
    And you and I will bring this hero down.

TSARPI:
    But how?  For he is strong.

REZON:
                            By this, the hand
    Of Tsarpi; and by this, the rod of Rimmon.

TSARPI:
    Your plan?

REZON:
                You know the host of Nineveh
    Is marching now against us.  Envoys come
    To bid us yield before a hopeless war.
    Our king is weak:  the nobles, being rich,
    Would purchase peace to make them richer still:
    Only the people and the soldiers,

**Page 138**

led
    By Naaman, would fight for liberty.
    Blind fools!  To-day the envoys came to me,
    And talked with me in secret.  Promises,
    Great promises!  For every noble house
    That urges peace, a noble recompense:
    The King, submissive, kept in royal state
    And splendour:  most of all, honour and wealth
    Shall crown the House of Rimmon, and his priest,—­
    Yea, and his priestess!  For we two will rise
    Upon the city’s fall.  The common folk
    Shall suffer; Naaman shall sink with them
    In wreck; but I shall rise, and you shall rise
    Above me!  You shall climb, through incense-smoke,
    And days of pomp, and nights of revelry,
    Unto the topmost room in Rimmon’s tower,
    The secret, lofty room, the couch of bliss,
    And the divine embraces of the god.

TSARPI:  [Throwing out her arms in exultation.]
    All, all I wish!  What must I do for this?

REZON:
    Turn Naaman away from thoughts of war.

TSARPI:
    But if I fail?  His will is proof against
    The lure of kisses and the wile of tears.

REZON:
    Where woman fails, woman and priest succeed.
    Before the King decides, he must consult
    The oracle of Rimmon.  This my hands
    Prepare,—­and you shall read the signs prepared
    In words of fear to melt the brazen heart
    Of Naaman.

TSARPI:
                But if it flame instead?

REZON:
    I know a way to quench that flame.  The cup,
    The parting cup your hand shall give to him!
    What if the curse of Rimmon should infect
    That sacred wine with poison, secretly
    To work within his veins, week after week
    Corrupting all the currents of his blood,
    Dimming his eyes, wasting his flesh?  What then?
    Would he prevail in war?  Would he come back
    To glory, or to shame?  What think you?

TSARPI:
                                          I?—­
    I do not think; I only do my part.
    But can the gods bless this?

REZON:
                                  The gods can bless
    Whatever they decree; their will makes right;
    And this is for the glory of the House
    Of Rimmon,—­and for thee, my queen.  Come, come!
    The night grows dark:  we’ll perfect our alliance.

[REZON draws her with him, embracing her, through
the shadows of the garden.  RUAHMAH, who has been
sleeping in the arbour, has been awakened during
the dialogue, and has been dimly visible in her
white dress, behind the vines.  She parts them and
comes out, pushing back her long, dark hair from
her temples.]

RUAHMAH:
    What have I heard?  O God, what shame is this
    Plotted beneath Thy pure and silent stars!
    Was it for this that I was brought away
    A captive from the hills of

**Page 139**

Israel
    To serve the heathen in a land of lies?
    Ah, treacherous, shameful priest!  Ah, shameless wife
    Of one too noble to suspect thy guilt!
    The very greatness of his generous heart
    Betrays him to their hands.  What can I do!
    Nothing,—­a slave,—­hated and mocked by all
    My fellow-slaves!  O bitter prison-life!
    I smother in this black, betraying air
    Of lust and luxury; I faint beneath
    The shadow of this House of Rimmon.  God
    Have mercy!  Lead me out to Israel.
    To Israel!

[Music and laughter heard within the palace.  The
doors fly open and a flood of men and women,
dancers, players, flushed with wine, dishevelled,
pour down the steps, KHAMMA and NUBTA with them.
They crown the image with roses and dance around
it.  RUAHMAH is discovered crouching beside the
arbour.  They drag her out beside the image.]

NUBTA:
                Look!  Here’s the Hebrew maid,—­
    She’s homesick; let us comfort her!

KHAMMA:  [They put their arms around her.]
    Yes, dancing is the cure for homesickness.
    We’ll make her dance.

RUAHMAH:  [She slips away.]
                          I pray you, let me go!
    I cannot dance, I do not know your measures.

KHAMMA:
    Then sing for us,—­a song of Israel!

RUAHMAH:
    How can I sing the songs of Israel
    In this strange country?  O my heart would break!

A SERVANT:
    A stubborn and unfriendly maid!  We’ll whip her.

[They circle around her, striking her with
rose-branches; she sinks to her knees, covering
her face with her bare arms, which bleed.]

NUBTA:
    Look, look!  She kneels to Rimmon, she is tamed.

RUAHMAH:  [Springing up and lifting her arms.]
    Nay, not to this dumb idol, but to Him
    Who made Orion and the seven stars!

ALL:
    She raves,—­she mocks at Rimmon!  Punish her!
    The fountain!  Wash her blasphemy away!

[They push her toward the fountain, laughing and
shouting.  In the open door of the palace NAAMAN
appears, dressed in blue and silver, bareheaded
and unarmed.  He comes to the top of the steps
and stands for a moment, astonished and angry.]

NAAMAN:
    Silence!  What drunken rout is this?  Begone,
    Ye barking dogs and mewing cats!  Out, all!
    Poor child, what have they done to thee?

[Exeunt all except RUAHMAH, who stands with her
face covered by her hands.  NAAMAN comes to her,
laying his hand on her shoulder.]

RUAHMAH:  [Looking up in his face.]
                                              Nothing,
    My lord and master!  They have harmed me not.

NAAMAN:  [Touching her arm.]
    Dost call this nothing?

RUAHMAH:
                            Since my lord is come!

**Page 140**

NAAMAN:
    I do not know thy face,—­who art thou, child?

RUAHMAH:
    The handmaid of thy wife.

NAAMAN:
                              Whence comest thou?
    Thy voice is like thy mistress, but thy looks
    Have something foreign.  Tell thy name, thy land.

RUAHMAH:
    Ruahmah is my name, a captive maid,
    The daughter of a prince in Israel,
    Where once, in olden days, I saw my lord
    Ride through our highlands, when Samaria
    Was allied with Damascus to defeat
    Our common foe.

NAAMAN:
                    And thou rememberest this?

RUAHMAH:
    As clear as yesterday!  Master, I saw
    Thee riding on a snow-white horse beside
    Our king; and all we joyful little maids
    Strewed boughs of palm along the victors’ way,
    For you had driven out the enemy,
    Broken; and both our lands were friends and free.

NAAMAN:  [Sadly.]
    Well, they are past, those noble days!  The days
    When nations would imperil all to keep
    Their liberties, are only memories now.
    The common cause is lost,—­and thou art brought,
    The captive of some mercenary raid,
    Some skirmish of a gold-begotten war,
    To serve within my house.  Dost thou fare well?

RUAHMAH:
    Master, thou seest.

NAAMAN:
                        Yes, I see!  My child,
    Why do they hate thee so?

RUAHMAH:
                              I do not know,
    Unless because I will not bow to Rimmon.

NAAMAN:
    Thou needest not.  I fear he is a god
    Who pities not his people, will not save.
    My heart is sick with doubt of him.  But thou
    Shalt hold thy faith,—­I care not what it is,—­
    Worship thy god; but keep thy spirit free.

        [He takes the amulet from his neck and gives it to her.]

    Here, take this chain and wear it with my seal,
    None shall molest the maid who carries this.
    Thou hast found favour in thy master’s eyes;
    Hast thou no other gift to ask of me?

RUAHMAH:  [Earnestly.]
    My lord, I do entreat thee not to go
    To-morrow to the council.  Seek the King
    And speak with him in secret; but avoid
    The audience-hall.

NAAMAN:
                        Why, what is this?  Thy wits
    Are wandering.  My honour is engaged
    To speak for war, to lead in war against
    The Assyrian Bull and save Damascus.

RUAHMAH:  [With confused earnestness.]
    Then, lord, if thou must go, I pray thee speak,—­
    I know not how,—­but so that all must hear.
    With magic of unanswerable words
    Persuade thy foes.  Yet watch,—­beware,—­

NAAMAN:
                                              Of what?

**Page 141**

RUAHMAH:  [Turning aside.]
    I am entangled in my speech,—­no light,—­
    How shall I tell him?  He will not believe.
    O my dear lord, thine enemies are they
    Of thine own house.  I pray thee to beware,—­
    Beware,—­of Rimmon!

NAAMAN:
                        Child, thy words are wild:
    Thy troubles have bewildered all thy brain.
    Go, now, and fret no more; but sleep, and dream
    Of Israel!  For thou shalt see thy home
    Among the hills again.

RUAHMAH:
                            Master, good-night.
    And may thy slumber be as sweet and deep
    As if thou camped at snowy Hermon’s foot,
    Amid the music of his waterfalls.
    There friendly oak-trees bend their boughs above
    The weary head, pillowed on earth’s kind breast,
    And unpolluted breezes lightly breathe
    A song of sleep among the murmuring leaves.
    There the big stars draw nearer, and the sun
    Looks forth serene, undimmed by city’s mirk
    Or smoke of idol-temples, to behold
    The waking wonder of the wide-spread world.
    There life renews itself with every morn
    In purest joy of living.  May the Lord
    Deliver thee, dear master, from the nets
    Laid for thy feet, and lead thee out along
    The open path, beneath the open sky!

        [Exit RUAHMAH:  NAAMAN stands looking after her.]

**SCENE II**

TIME:  *The following morning*

*The audience-hall in BENHADAD’S palace.  The sides of the hall are lined with lofty columns:  the back opens toward the city, with descending steps:  the House of Rimmon with its high tower is seen in the background.  The throne is at the right in front:  opposite is the royal door of entrance, guarded by four tall sentinels.
 Enter at the rear between the columns, RAKHAZ, SABALLIDIN, HAZAEL,
 IZDUBHAR.*

IZDUBHAR:  [An excited old man.]
    The city is all in a turmoil.  It boils like a pot of lentils.
      The people are foaming and bubbling round and round like
      beans in the pottage.

HAZAEL:  [A lean, crafty man.]
    Fear is a hot fire.

RAKHAZ:  [A fat, pompous man.]
    Well may they fear, for the Assyrians are not three days
      distant.  They are blazing along like a waterspout to
      chop Damascus down like a pitcher of spilt milk.

SABALLIDIN:  [Young and frank.]
    Cannot Naaman drive them back?

RAKHAZ:  [Puffing and blowing.]
    Ho!  Naaman?  Where have you been living?  Naaman is a broken
      reed whose claws have been cut.  Build no hopes on that
      foundation, for it will run away and leave you all adrift
      in the conflagration.

SABALLIDIN:
    He clatters like a windmill.  What would he say, Hazael?

**Page 142**

HAZAEL:
    Naaman can do nothing without the command of the King; and
      the King fears to order the army to march without the
      approval of the gods.  The High Priest is against it.  The
      House of Rimmon is for peace with Asshur.

RAKHAZ:
    Yes, and all the nobles are for peace.  We are the men whose
      wisdom lights the rudder that upholds the chariot of state.
      Would we be rich if we were not wise?  Do we not know better
      than the rabble what medicine will silence this fire that
      threatens to drown us?

IZDUBHAR:
    But if the Assyrians come, we shall all perish; they will
      despoil us all.

HAZAEL:
    Not us, my lord, only the common people.  The envoys have
      offered favourable terms to the priests, and the nobles,
      and the King.  No palace, no temple, shall be plundered.
      Only the shops, and the markets, and the houses of the
      multitude shall be given up to the Bull.  He will eat
      his supper from the pot of lentils, not from our golden
      plate.

RAKHAZ:
    Yes, and all who speak for peace in the council shall be
      enriched; our heads shall be crowned with seats of honour
      in the procession of the Assyrian king.  He needs wise
      counsellors to help him guide the ship of empire onto the
      solid rock of prosperity.  You must be with us, my lords
      Izdubhar and Saballidin, and let the stars of your wisdom
      roar loudly for peace.

IZDUBHAR:
    He talks like a tablet read upside down,—­a wild ass braying
      in the wilderness.  Yet there is policy in his words.

SABALLIDIN:
    I know not.  Can a kingdom live without a people or an army?
      If we let the Bull in to sup on the lentils, will he not
      make his breakfast in our vineyards?

[Enter other courtiers following SHUMAKIM, a hump-backed
jester, in blue, green and red, a wreath of poppies
around his neck and a flagon in his hand.  He walks
unsteadily, and stutters in his speech.]

HAZAEL:
    Here is Shumakim, the King’s fool, with his legs full of
      last night’s wine.

SHUMAKIM:  [Balancing himself in front of them and chuckling.]
    Wrong, my lords, very wrong!  This is not last night’s wine,
      but a draught the King’s physician gave me this morning
      for a cure.  It sobers me amazingly!  I know you all,
      my lords:  any fool would know you.  You, master, are a
      statesman; and you are a politician; and you are a patriot.

RAKHAZ:
    Am I a statesman?  I felt something of the kind about me.
      But what is a statesman?

SHUMAKIM:
    A politician that is stuffed with big words; a fat man in a
      mask; one that plays a solemn tune on a sackbut full o’ wind.

**Page 143**

HAZAEL:
    And what is a politician?

SHUMAKIM:
    A statesman that has dropped his mask and cracked his sackbut.
      Men trust him for what he is, and he never deceives them,
      because he always lies.

IZDUBHAR:
    Why do you call me a patriot?

SHUMAKIM:
    Because you know what is good for you; you love your country
      as you love your pelf.  You feel for the common people,—­as
      the wolf feels for the sheep.

SABALLIDIN:
    And what am I?

SHUMAKIM:
    A fool, master, just a plain fool; and there is hope of thee
      for that reason.  Embrace me, brother, and taste this; but
      not too much,—­it will intoxicate thee with sobriety.

[The hall has been slowly filling with courtiers and
soldiers; a crowd of people begin to come up the steps
at the rear, where they are halted by a chain guarded
by servants of the palace.  A bell tolls; the royal door
is thrown open; the aged King totters across the hall
and takes his seat on the throne with the four tall
sentinels standing behind him.  All bow down shading
their eyes with their hands.]

BENHADAD:
    The hour of royal audience is come.
    I’ll hear the envoys.  Are my counsellors
    At hand?  Where are the priests of Rimmon’s house?

[Gongs sound.  REZON comes in from the side, followed
by a procession of priests in black and yellow.  The
courtiers bow; the King rises; REZON takes his stand
on the steps of the throne at the left of the King.]

BENHADAD:
    Where is my faithful servant Naaman,
    The captain of my host?

[Trumpets sound from the city.  The crowd on the steps
divide; the chain is lowered; NAAMAN enters, followed
by six soldiers.  He is dressed in chain-mail with a
silver helmet and a cloak of blue.  He uncovers, and
kneels on the steps of the throne at the King’s right.]

NAAMAN:
                            My lord the King,
    The bearer of thy sword is here.

BENHADAD:  [Giving NAAMAN his hand, and sitting down.]
                                      Welcome,
    My strong right arm that never me failed yet!
    I am in doubt,—­but stay thou close to me
    While I decide this cause.  Where are the envoys?
    Let them appear and give their message.

[Enter the Assyrian envoys; one in white and the other
in red; both with the golden Bull’s head embroidered
on their robes.  They come from the right, rear, bow
slightly before the throne, and take the centre of
the hall.]

WHITE ENVOY:  [Stepping forward.]
    Greeting from Shalmaneser, Asshur’s son,
    Who rules the world from Nineveh,
    Unto Benhadad, monarch in Damascus!
    The conquering Bull has led his army forth;
    The south has fallen before

**Page 144**

him, and the west
    His feet have trodden; Hamath is laid waste;
    He pauses at your gate, invincible,—­
    To offer peace.  The princes of your court,
    The priests of Rimmon’s house, and you, the King,
    If you pay homage to your Overlord,
    Shall rest secure, and flourish as our friends.
    Assyria sends to you this gilded yoke;
    Receive it as the sign of proffered peace.

        [He lays a yoke on the steps of the throne.]

BENHADAD:
    What of the city?  Said your king no word
    Of our Damascus, and the many folk
    That do inhabit her and make her great?
    What of the soldiers who have fought for us?

WHITE ENVOY:
    Of these my royal master did not speak.

BENHADAD:
    Strange silence!  Must we give them up to him?
    Is this the price at which he offers us
    The yoke of peace?  What if we do refuse?

RED ENVOY:  [Stepping forward.]
    Then ruthless war!  War to the uttermost.
    No quarter, no compassion, no escape!
    The Bull will gore and trample in his fury
    Nobles and priests and king,—­none shall be spared!
    Before the throne we lay our second gift;
    This bloody horn, the symbol of red war.

[He lays a long bull’s horn, stained with blood, on
the steps of the throne.]

WHITE ENVOY:
    Our message is delivered.  We return
    Unto our master.  He will wait three days
    To know your royal choice between his gifts.
    Keep which you will and send the other back.
    The red bull’s horn your youngest page may bring;
    But with the yoke, best send your mightiest army!

[The ENVOYS retire, amid confused murmurs of the
people, the King silent, his head, sunken on his
breast.]

BENHADAD:
    Proud words, a bitter message, hard to endure!
    We are not now that force which feared no foe:
    Our old allies have left us.  Can we face the Bull
    Alone, and beat him back?  Give me your counsel.

[Many speak at once, confusedly.]

What babblement is this?  Were ye born at Babel?
Give me clear words and reasonable speech.

RAKHAZ:  [Pompously.]
    O King, I am a reasonable man!
    And there be some who call me very wise
    And prudent; but of this I will not speak,
    For I am also modest.  Let me plead,
    Persuade, and reason you to choose for peace.
    This golden yoke may be a bitter draught,
    But better far to fold it in our arms,
    Than risk our cargoes in the savage horn
    Of war.  Shall we imperil all our wealth,
    Our valuable lives?  Nobles are few,
    Rich men are rare, and wise men rarer still;
    The precious jewels on the tree of life,
    Wherein the common people are but bricks
    And clay and rubble.  Let the city go,
    But save the corner-stones that float the ship!
    Have I not spoken well?

**Page 145**

BENHADAD:  [Shaking his head.]
                            Excellent well!
    Most eloquent!  But misty in the meaning.

HAZAEL:  [With cold decision.]
    Then let me speak, O King, in plainer words!
    The days of independent states are past:
    The tide of empire sweeps across the earth;
    Assyria rides it with resistless power
    And thunders on to subjugate the world.
    Oppose her, and we fight with Destiny;
    Submit to her demands, and we shall ride
    With her to victory.  Therefore accept
    The golden yoke, Assyria’s gift of peace.

NAAMAN:  [Starting forward eagerly.]
    There is no peace beneath a conqueror’s yoke!
    For every state that barters liberty
    To win imperial favour, shall be drained
    Of her best blood, henceforth, in endless wars
    To make the empire greater.  Here’s the choice,
    My King, we fight to keep our country free,
    Or else we fight forevermore to help
    Assyria bind the world as we are bound.
    I am a soldier, and I know the hell
    Of war!  But I will gladly ride through hell
    To save Damascus.  Master, bid me ride!
    Ten thousand chariots wait for your command;
    And twenty thousand horsemen strain the leash
    Of patience till you let them go; a throng
    Of spearmen, archers, swordsmen, like the sea
    Chafing against a dike, roar for the onset!
    O master, let me launch your mighty host
    Against the Bull,—­we’ll bring him to his knees!

[Cries of “war!” from the soldiers and the people;
“peace!” from the courtiers and the priests.  The
King rises, turning toward NAAMAN, and seems about
to speak.  REZON lifts his rod.]

REZON:
    Shall not the gods decide when mortals doubt?
    Rimmon is master of the city’s fate;
    We read his will, by our most ancient-faith,
    In omens and in signs of mystery.
    Must we not hearken to his high commands?

BENHADAD:  [Sinking back on the throne, submissively.]
    I am the faithful son of Rimmon’s House.
    Consult the oracle.  But who shall read?

REZON:
    Tsarpi, the wife of Naaman, who served
    Within the temple in her maiden years,
    Shall be the mouth-piece of the mighty god,
    To-day’s high-priestess.  Bring the sacrifice!

[Gongs and cymbals sound:  enter priests carrying
an altar on which a lamb is bound.  The altar is
placed in the centre of the hall.  TSARPI follows
the priests, covered with a long transparent veil
of black, sown with gold stars; RUAHMAH, in white,
bears her train.  TSARPI stands before the altar,
facing it, and lifts her right hand holding a
knife.  RUAHMAH steps back, near the throne, her
hands crossed on her breast, her head bowed.  The
priests close in around TSARPI and the altar.  The
knife is seen to strike downward.  Gongs and cymbals
sound:  cries of “Rimmon, hear us!” The circle of
priests opens, and TSARPI turns slowly to face the
King.]

**Page 146**

TSARPI:  [Monotonously.]
   *Black is the blood of the victim,
    Rimmon is unfavourable,
    Asratu is unfavourable;
    They will not war against Asshur,
    They will make a league with the God of Nineveh.
    Evil is in store for Damascus,
    A strong enemy will lay waste the land.
    Therefore make peace with the Bull;
    Hearken to the voice of Rimmon.*

[She turns again to the altar, and the priests close
in around her.  REZON lifts his rod toward the tower
of the temple.  A flash of lightning followed by
thunder; smoke rises from the altar; all except
NAAMAN and RUAHMAH cover their faces.  The circle
of priests opens again, and TSARPI comes forward
slowly, chanting.]

CHANT:

*Hear the words of Rimmon!  Thus your Maker speaketh:
I, the god of thunder, riding on the whirlwind,
I, the god of lightning leaping from the storm-cloud,
I will smite with vengeance him who dares defy me!
He who leads Damascus into war with Asshur,
Conquering or conquered, bears my curse upon him.
Surely shall my arrow strike his heart in secret,
Burn his flesh with fever, turn his blood to poison.
Brand him with corruption, drive him into darkness;
He shall surely perish by the doom of Rimmon.*

[All are terrified and look toward NAAMAN,
shuddering.  RUAHMAH alone seems not to heed the
curse, but stands with her eyes fixed on NAAMAN.]

RUAHMAH:
    Be not afraid!  There is a greater God
    Shall cover thee with His almighty wings:
    Beneath his shield and buckler shalt thou trust.

BENHADAD:
    Repent, my son, thou must not brave this curse.

NAAMAN:
    My King, there is no curse as terrible
    As that which lights a bosom-fire for him
    Who gives away his honour, to prolong
    A craven life whose every breath is shame!
    If I betray the men who follow me,
    The city that has put her trust in me,
    What king can shield me from my own deep scorn
    What god release me from that self-made hell?
    The tender mercies of Assyria
    I know; and they are cruel as creeping tigers.
    Give up Damascus, and her streets will run
    Rivers of innocent blood; the city’s heart,
    That mighty, labouring heart, wounded and crushed
    Beneath the brutal hooves of the wild Bull,
    Will cry against her captain, sitting safe
    Among the nobles, in some pleasant place.
    I shall be safe,—­safe from the threatened wrath
    Of unknown gods, but damned forever by
    The men I know,—­that is the curse I fear.

BENHADAD:
    Speak not so high, my son.  Must we not bow
    Our heads before the sovereignties of heaven?
    The unseen rulers are Divine.

**Page 147**

NAAMAN:
                                  O King,
    I am unlearned in the lore of priests;
    Yet well I know that there are hidden powers
    About us, working mortal weal and woe
    Beyond the force of mortals to control.
    And if these powers appear in love and truth,
    I think they must be gods, and worship them.
    But if their secret will is manifest
    In blind decrees of sheer omnipotence,
    That punish where no fault is found, and smite
    The poor with undeserved calamity,
    And pierce the undefended in the dark
    With arrows of injustice, and foredoom
    The innocent to burn in endless pain,
    I will not call this fierce almightiness
    Divine.  Though I must bear, with every man,
    The burden of my life ordained, I’ll keep
    My soul unterrified, and tread the path
    Of truth and honour with a steady heart!
    Have ye not heard, my lords?  The oracle
    Proclaims to me, to me alone, the doom
    Of vengeance if I lead the army out.
    “Conquered or conquering!” I grip that chance!
    Damascus free, her foes all beaten back,
    The people saved from slavery, the King
    Upheld in honour on his ancient throne,—­
    O what’s the cost of this?  I’ll gladly pay
    Whatever gods there be, whatever price
    They ask for this one victory.  Give me
    This gilded sign of shame to carry back;
    I’ll shake it in the face of Asshur’s king,
    And break it on his teeth.

BENHADAD:  [Rising.]
    Then go, my never-beaten captain, go!
    And may the powers that hear thy solemn vow
    Forgive thy rashness for Damascus’ sake,
    Prosper thy fighting, and remit thy pledge.

REZON:  [Standing beside the altar.]
    The pledge, O King, this man must seal his pledge
    At Rimmon’s altar.  He must take the cup
    Of soldier-sacrament, and bind himself
    By thrice-performed libation to abide
    The fate he has invoked.

NAAMAN:  [Slowly.]
                              And so I will.

[He comes down the steps, toward the altar, where
REZON is filling the cup which TSARPI holds.
RUAHMAH throws herself before NAAMAN, clasping
his knees.]

RUAHMAH:  [Passionately and wildly.]
    My lord, I do beseech you, stay!  There’s death
    Within that cup.  It is an offering
    To devils.  See, the wine blazes like fire,
    It flows like blood, it is a cursed cup,
    Fulfilled of treachery and hate.
    Dear master, noble master, touch it not!

NAAMAN:
    Poor maid, thy brain is still distraught.  Fear not,
    But let me go!  Here, treat her tenderly!

        [Gives her into the hands of SABALLIDIN.]

    Can harm befall me from the wife who bears
    My name?  I take the cup of fate from her.
    I greet the unknown powers; [Pours libation.]
    I will perform my vow; [Again.]
    I will abide my fate; [Again.]
    I pledge my life to keep Damascus free.

**Page 148**

        [He drains the cup, and lets it fall.]

*CURTAIN.*

**ACT II**

TIME:  *A week later*

*The fore-court of the House of Rimmon.  At the back the broad steps and double doors of the shrine; above them the tower of the god, its summit invisible.  Enter various groups of citizens, talking, laughing, shouting:  RAKHAZ, HAZAEL, SHUMAKIM and others.*

FIRST CITIZEN:
    Great news, glorious news, the Assyrians are beaten!

SECOND CITIZEN:
    Naaman is returning, crowned with victory.  Glory to our noble
      captain!

THIRD CITIZEN:
    No, he is killed.  I had it from one of the camp-followers who
      saw him fall at the head of the battle.  They are bringing
      his body to bury it with honour.  O sorrowful victory!

RAKHAZ:
    Peace, my good fellows, you are ignorant, you have not been
      rightly informed, I will misinform you.  The accounts of
      Naaman’s death are overdrawn.  He was killed, but his life
      has been preserved.  One of his wounds was mortal, but the
      other three were curable, and by these the physicians have
      saved him.

SHUMAKIM:  [Balancing himself before RAKHAZ in pretended admiration.]
    O wonderful!  Most admirable logic!  One mortal, and three
      curable, therefore he must recover as it were, by three
      to one.  Rakhaz, do you know that you are a marvelous man?

RAKHAZ:
    Yes, I know it, but I make no boast of my knowledge.

SHUMAKIM:
    Too modest, for in knowing this you know more than any other
      in Damascus!

[Enter, from the right, SABALLIDIN in armour:  from
the left, TSARPI with her attendants, among whom
is RUAHMAH.]

HAZAEL:
    Here is Saballidin, we’ll question him;
    He was enflamed by Naaman’s wild words,
    And rode with him to battle.  Give us news,
    Of your great captain!  Is he safe and well?
    When will he come?  Or will he come at all?

[All gather around him listening eagerly.]

SABALLIDIN:
    He comes but now, returning from the field
    Where he hath gained a crown of deathless fame!
    Three times he led the charge; three times he fell
    Wounded, and the Assyrians beat us back.
    Yet every wound was but a spur to urge
    His valour onward.  In the last attack
    He rode before us as the crested wave
    That leads the flood; and lo, our enemies
    Were broken like a dam of river-reeds.
    The flying King encircled by his guard
    Was lodged like driftwood on a little hill.
    Then Naaman, who led our foremost band
    Of whirlwind riders, hammered through the hedge
    Of spearmen, brandishing the golden yoke.
    “Take back this gift,” he cried; and shattered it

 **Page 149**

    On Shalmaneser’s helmet.  So the fight
    Dissolved in universal rout; the King,
    His chariots and his horsemen fled away;
    Our captain stood the master of the field,
    And saviour of Damascus!  Now he brings,
    First to the King, report of this great triumph.

        [Shouts of joy and applause.]

RUAHMAH:  [Coming close to SABALLIDIN.]
    But what of him who won it?  Fares he well?
    My mistress would receive some word of him.

SABALLIDIN:
    Hath she not heard?

RUAHMAH:
                        But one brief message came:
    A letter saying, “We have fought and conquered,”
    No word of his own person.  Fares he well?

SABALLIDIN:
    Alas, most ill!  For he is like a man
    Consumed by some strange sickness:  wasted, wan,—­
    His eyes are dimmed so that he scarce can see;
    His ears are dulled; his fearless face is pale
    As one who walks to meet a certain doom
    Yet will not flinch.  It is most pitiful,—­
    But you shall see.

RUAHMAH:
                        Yea, we shall see a man
    Who dared to face the wrath of evil powers
    Unknown, and hazard all to save his country.

[Enter BENHADAD with courtiers.]

BENHADAD:
    Where is my faithful servant Naaman,
    The captain of my host?

SABALLIDIN:
                            My lord, he comes.

[Trumpet sounds.  Enter company of soldiers in
armour.  Then four soldiers bearing captured
standards of Asshur.  NAAMAN follows, very pale,
armour dinted and stained; he is blind, and
guides himself by cords from the standards on
each side, but walks firmly.  The doors of the
temple open slightly, and REZON appears at the
top of the steps.  NAAMAN lets the cords fall,
and gropes his way for a few paces.]

NAAMAN:  [Kneeling.]
                      Where is my King?
    Master, the bearer of thy sword returns.
    The golden yoke thou gavest me I broke
    On him who sent it.  Asshur’s Bull hath fled
    Dehorned.  The standards of his host are thine!
    Damascus is all thine, at peace, and free!

BENHADAD:  [Holding out his arms.]
    Thou art a mighty man of valour!  Come,
    And let me fold thy courage to my heart.

REZON:  [Lifting his rod.]
    Forbear, O King!  Stand back from him, all men!
    By the great name of Rimmon I proclaim
    This man a leper!  See, upon his brow,
    This little mark, the death-white seal of doom!
    That tiny spot will spread, eating his flesh,
    Gnawing his fingers bone from bone, until
    The impious heart that dared defy the gods
    Dissolves in the slow death which now begins.
    Unclean! unclean!  Henceforward he is dead:
    No human hand shall touch him, and no home

 **Page 150**

    Of men shall give him shelter.  He shall walk
    Only with corpses of the selfsame death
    Down the long path to a forgotten tomb.
    Avoid, depart, I do adjure you all,
    Leave him to god,—­the leper Naaman!

[All shrink back horrified.  REZON retires into the
temple; the crowd melts away, wailing; TSARPI is
among the first to go, followed by her attendants,
except RUAHMAH, who crouches, with her face
covered, not far from NAAMAN.]

BENHADAD:  [Lingering and turning back.]
    Alas, my son!  O Naaman, my son!
    Why did I let thee go?  I must obey.
    Who can resist the gods?  Yet none shall take
    Thy glorious title, captain of my host!
    I will provide for thee, and thou shalt dwell
    With guards of honour in a house of mine
    Always.  Damascus never shall forget
    What thou hast done!  O miserable words
    Of crowned impotence!  O mockery of power
    Given to kings who cannot even defend
    Their dearest from the secret wrath of heaven!
    O Naaman, my son, my son! [Exit.]

NAAMAN:  [Slowly passing his hand over his eyes, and looking up.]
                              Am I alone
    With thee, inexorable one, whose pride
    Offended takes this horrible revenge?
    I must submit my mortal flesh to thee,
    Almighty, but I will not call thee god!
    Yet thou hast found the way to wound my soul
    Most deeply through the flesh; and I must find
    The way to let my wounded soul escape!

        [Drawing his sword.]

    Come, my last friend, thou art more merciful
    Than Rimmon.  Why should I endure the doom
    He sends me?  Irretrievably cut off
    From all dear intercourse of human love,
    From all the tender touch of human hands,
    From all brave comradeship with brother-men,
    With eyes that see no faces through this dark,
    With ears that hear all voices far away,
    Why should I cling to misery, and grope
    My long, long way from pain to pain, alone?

RUAHMAH:  [At his feet.]
    Nay, not alone, dear lord, for I am here;
    And I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee!

NAAMAN:
    What voice is that?  The silence of my tomb
    Is broken by a ray of music,—­whose?

RUAHMAH:  [Rising.]
    The one who loves thee best in all the world.

NAAMAN:
    Why that should be,—­O dare I dream it true?
    Tsarpi, my wife?  Have I misjudged thy heart
    As cold and proud?  How nobly thou forgivest!
    Thou com’st to hold me from the last disgrace,—­
    The coward’s flight into the dark.  Go back
    Unstained, my sword!  Life is endurable
    While there is one alive on earth who loves us.

RUAHMAH:
    My lord,—­my lord,—­O listen!  You have erred,—­
    You do mistake me now,—­this dream—­

**Page 151**

NAAMAN:
    Ah, wake me not!  For I can conquer death
    Dreaming this dream.  Let me at last believe,
    Though gods are cruel, a woman can be kind.
    Grant me but this!  For see,—­I ask so little,—­
    Only to know that thou art faithful,
    That thou art near me, though I touch thee not,—­
    O this will hold me up, though it be given
    From pity more than love.

RUAHMAH:  [Trembling, and speaking slowly.]
                              Not so, my lord!
    My pity is a stream; my pride of thee
    Is like the sea that doth engulf the stream;
    My love for thee is like the sovereign moon
    That rules the sea.  The tides that fill my soul
    Flow unto thee and follow after thee;
    And where thou goest I will go; and where
    Thou diest I will die,—­in the same hour.

        [She lays her hand on his arm.  He draws back.]

NAAMAN:
    O touch me not!  Thou shalt not share my doom.

RUAHMAH:
    Entreat me not to go.  I will obey
    In all but this; but rob me not of this,—­
    The only boon that makes life worth the living,—­
    To walk beside thee day by day, and keep
    Thy foot from stumbling; to prepare thy food
    When thou art hungry, music for thy rest,
    And cheerful words to comfort thy black hour;
    And so to lead thee ever on, and on,
    Through darkness, till we find the door of hope.

NAAMAN:
    What word is that?  The leper has no hope.

RUAHMAH:
    Dear lord, the mark upon thy brow is yet
    No broader than my little finger-nail.
    Thy force is not abated, and thy step
    Is firm.  Wilt thou surrender to the enemy
    Before thy strength is touched?  Why, let me put
    A drop of courage from my breast in thine!
    There is a hope for thee.  The captive maid
    Of Israel who dwelt within thy house
    Knew of a god very compassionate,
    Long-suffering, slow to anger, one who heals
    The sick, hath pity on the fatherless,
    And saves the poor and him who has no helper.
    His prophet dwells nigh to Samaria;
    And I have heard that he hath brought the dead
    To life again.  We’ll go to him.  The King,
    If I beseech him, will appoint a guard
    Of thine own soldiers and Saballidin,
    Thy friend, to convoy us upon our journey.
    He’ll give us royal letters to the King
    Of Israel to make our welcome sure;
    And we will take the open road, beneath
    The open sky, to-morrow, and go on
    Together till we find the door of hope.
    Come, come with me!

[She grasps his hand.]

NAAMAN:  [Drawing back.]
    Thou must not touch me!

RUAHMAH:  [Unclasping her girdle and putting the end in his hand.]
                            Take my girdle, then!

NAAMAN:  [Kissing the clasp of the girdle.]
    I do begin to think there is a God,
    Since love on earth can work such miracles:

**Page 152**

*CURTAIN.*

**ACT III**

TIME:  *A month later:  dawn*

**SCENE I**

*NAAMAN’S tent, on high ground among the mountains near Samaria:  the city below.  In the distance, a wide and splendid landscape.
 SABALLIDIN and soldiers on guard below the tent.  Enter RUAHMAH in hunter’s dress, with a lute slung from her shoulder.*

RUAHMAH:
    Peace and good health to you, Saballidin.
    Good morrow to you all.  How fares my lord?

SABALLIDIN:
    The curtains of his tent are folded still:
    They have not moved since we returned, last night,
    And told him what befell us in the city.

RUAHMAH:
    Told him!  Why did you make report to him
    And not to me?  Am I not captain here,
    Intrusted by the King’s command with care
    Of Naaman until he is restored?
    ’Tis mine to know the first of good or ill
    In this adventure:  mine to shield his heart
    From every arrow of adversity.
    What have you told him?  Speak!

SABALLIDIN:
                                    Lady, we feared
    To bring our news to you.  For when the King
    Of Israel had read our monarch’s letter,
    He rent his clothes, and cried, “Am I a god,
    To kill and make alive, that I should heal
    A leper?  Ye have come with false pretence,
    Damascus seeks a quarrel with me.  Go!”
    But when we told our lord, he closed his tent,
    And there remains enfolded in his grief.
    I trust he sleeps; ’twere kind to let him sleep!
    For now he doth forget his misery,
    And all the burden of his hopeless woe
    Is lifted from him by the gentle hand
    Of slumber.  Oh, to those bereft of hope
    Sleep is the only blessing left,—­the last
    Asylum of the weary, the one sign
    Of pity from impenetrable heaven.
    Waking is strife; sleep is the truce of God!
    Ah, lady, wake him not.  The day will be
    Full long for him to suffer, and for us
    To turn our disappointed faces home
    On the long road by which we must return.

RUAHMAH:
    Return!  Who gave you that command?  Not I!
    The King made me the leader of this quest,
    And bound you all to follow me, because
    He knew I never would return without
    The thing for which he sent us.  I’ll go on
    Day after day, unto the uttermost parts
    Of earth, if need be, and beyond the gates
    Of morning, till I find that which I seek,—­
    New life for Naaman.  Are ye ashamed
    To have a woman lead you?  Then go back
    And tell the King, “This huntress went too far
    For us to follow:  she pursues the trail
    Of hope alone, refusing to forsake
    The quarry:  we grew weary of the chase;

 **Page 153**

    And so we left her and retraced our steps,
    Like faithless hounds, to sleep beside the fire.”
    Did Naaman forsake his soldiers thus
    When you went forth to hunt the Assyrian Bull?
    Your manly courage is less durable
    Than woman’s love, it seems.  Go, if you will,—­
    Who bids me now farewell?

SOLDIERS:
                              Not I, not I!

SABALLIDIN:
    Lady, lead on, we’ll follow you forever!

RUAHMAH:
    Why, now you speak like men!  Brought you no word
    Out of Samaria, except that cry
    Of impotence and fear from Israel’s King?

SABALLIDIN:
    I do remember while he spoke with us
    A rustic messenger came in, and cried
    “Elisha saith, bring Naaman to me
    At Dothan, he shall surely know there is
    A God in Israel.”

RUAHMAH:
                      What said the King?

SABALLIDIN:
    He only shouted “Go!” more wildly yet,
    And rent his clothes again, as if he were
    Half-maddened by a coward’s fear, and thought
    Only of how he might be rid of us.
    What comfort could there be for him, what hope
    For us, in the rude prophet’s misty word?

RUAHMAH:
    It is the very word for which I prayed!
    My trust was not in princes; for the crown,
    The sceptre, and the purple robe are not
    Significant of vital power.  The man
    Who saves his brother-men is he who lives
    His life with Nature, takes deep hold on truth,
    And trusts in God.  A prophet’s word is more
    Than all the kings on earth can speak.  How far
    Is Dothan?

SOLDIER:
                Lady, ‘tis but three hours’ ride
    Along the valley southward.

RUAHMAH:
                                Near! so near?
    I had not thought to end my task so soon!
    Prepare yourselves with speed to take the road.
    I will awake my lord.

[Exeunt all but SABALLIDIN and RUAHMAH.  She goes
toward the tent.]

SABALLIDIN:
                          Ruahmah, stay! [She turns back.]
    I’ve been your servant in this doubtful quest,
    Obedient, faithful, loyal to your will,—­
    What have I earned by this?

RUAHMAH:
                                The gratitude
    Of him we both desire to serve:  your friend,—­
    My master and my lord.

SABALLIDIN:
                            No more than this?

RUAHMAH:
    Yes, if you will, take all the thanks my hands
    Can hold, my lips can speak.

SABALLIDIN:
                                  I would have more.

**Page 154**

RUAHMAH:
    My friend, there’s nothing more to give to you.
    My service to my lord is absolute.
    There’s not a drop of blood within my veins
    But quickens at the very thought of him;
    And not a dream of mine but he doth stand
    Within its heart and make it bright.  No man
    To me is other than his friend or foe.
    You are his friend, and I believe you true!

SABALLIDIN:
    I have been true to him,—­now, I am true
    To you.

RUAHMAH:
            Why, then, be doubly true to him.
    O let us match our loyalties, and strive
    Between us who shall win the higher crown!
    Men boast them of a friendship stronger far
    Than love of woman.  Prove it!  I’ll not boast,
    But I’ll contend with you on equal terms
    In this brave race:  and if you win the prize
    I’ll hold you next to him:  and if I win
    He’ll hold you next to me; and either way
    We’ll not be far apart.  Do you accept
    My challenge?

SABALLIDIN:
                  Yes!  For you enforce my heart
    By honour to resign its great desire,
    And love itself to offer sacrifice
    Of all disloyal dreams on its own altar.
    Yet love remains; therefore I pray you, think
    How surely you must lose in our contention.
    For I am known to Naaman:  but you
    He blindly takes for Tsarpi.  ’Tis to her
    He gives his gratitude:  the praise you win
    Endears her name.

RUAHMAH:
                      Her name?  Why, what is that?
    A name is but an empty shell, a mask
    That does not change the features of the face
    Beneath it.  Can a name rejoice, or weep,
    Or hope?  Can it be moved by tenderness
    To daily services of love, or feel the warmth
    Of dear companionship?  How many things
    We call by names that have no meaning!  Kings
    That cannot rule; and gods that are not good;
    And wives that do not love!  It matters not
    What syllables he utters when he calls,
    ’Tis I who come,—­’tis I who minister
    Unto my lord, and mine the living heart
    That feels the comfort of his confidence,
    The thrill of gladness when he speaks to me,—­
    I do not hear the name!

SABALLIDIN:
                            And yet, be sure
    There’s danger in this error,—­and no gain!

RUAHMAH:
    I seek no gain:  I only tread the path
    Marked for me daily by the hand of love.
    And if his blindness spared my lord one pang
    Of sorrow in his black, forsaken hour,—­
    And if this error makes his burdened heart
    More quiet, and his shadowed way less dark,
    Whom do I rob?  Not her who chose to stay
    At ease in Rimmon’s House!  Surely not him!
    Only myself!  And that enriches me.
    Why trouble we the master?  Let it go,—­
    To-morrow he must know the truth,—­and then
    He shall dispose of me e’en as he will!

**Page 155**

SABALLIDIN:
    To-morrow?

RUAHMAH:
                Yes, for I will tarry here,
    While you conduct him to Elisha’s house
    To find the promised healing.  I forebode
    A sudden danger from the craven King
    Of Israel, or else a secret ambush
    From those who hate us in Damascus.  Go,
    But leave me twenty men:  this mountain-pass
    Protects the road behind you.  Make my lord
    Obey the prophet’s word, whatever he commands,
    And come again in peace.  Farewell!

[Exit SABALLIDIN.  RUAHMAH goes toward the tent, then
pauses and turns back.  She takes her lute and sings.]

SONG

*Above the edge of dark appear the lances of the sun;
Along the mountain-ridges clear his rosy heralds run;
The vapours down the valley go
Like broken armies, dark and low.
Look up, my heart, from every hill
In folds of rose and daffodil
The sunrise banners flow.*

   *O fly away on silent wing, ye boding owls of night!
    O welcome little birds that sing the coming-in of light!
        For new, and new, and ever-new,
        The golden bud within the blue;
        And every morning seems to say:
        “There’s something happy on the way,
        And God sends love to you!"*

NAAMAN:  [Appearing at the entrance of his tent.]
    O let me ever wake to music!  For the soul
    Returns most gently then, and finds its way
    By the soft, winding clue of melody,
    Out of the dusky labyrinth of sleep,
    Into the light.  My body feels the sun
    Though I behold naught that his rays reveal.
    Come, thou who art my daydawn and my sight,
    Sweet eyes, come close, and make the sunrise mine!

RUAHMAH:  [Coming near.]
    A fairer day, dear lord, was never born
    In Paradise!  The sapphire cup of heaven
    Is filled with golden wine:  the earth, adorned
    With jewel-drops of dew, unveils her face
    A joyful bride, in welcome to her king.
    And look!  He leaps upon the Eastern hills
    All ruddy fire, and claims her with a kiss.
    Yonder the snowy peaks of Hermon float
    Unmoving as a wind-dropt cloud.  The gulf
    Of Jordan, filled with violet haze, conceals
    The river’s winding trail with wreaths of mist.
    Below us, marble-crowned Samaria thrones
    Upon her emerald hill amid the Vale
    Of Barley, while the plains to northward change
    Their colour like the shimmering necks of doves.
    The lark springs up, with morning on her wings,
    To climb her singing stairway in the blue,
    And all the fields are sprinkled with her joy!

NAAMAN:
    Thy voice is magical:  thy words are visions!
    I must content myself with them, for now
    My only hope is lost:  Samaria’s King
    Rejects our monarch’s message,—­hast thou heard?
    “Am I a god that I should cure a leper?”
    He sends me home unhealed, with angry words,
    Back to Damascus and the lingering death.

**Page 156**

RUAHMAH:
    What matter where he sends?  No god is he
    To slay or make alive.  Elisha bids
    You come to him at Dothan, there to learn
    There is a God in Israel.

NAAMAN:
                              I fear
    That I am grown mistrustful of all gods;
    Their secret counsels are implacable.

RUAHMAH:
    Fear not!  There’s One who rules in righteousness
    High over all.

NAAMAN:
                    What knowest thou of Him?

RUAHMAH:
    Oh, I have heard,—­the maid of Israel,—­
    Rememberest thou?  She often said her God
    Was merciful and kind, and slow to wrath,
    And plenteous in forgiveness, pitying us
    Like as a father pitieth his children.

NAAMAN:
    If there were such a God, I’d worship Him
    Forever!

RUAHMAH:
              Then make haste to hear the word
    His prophet promises to speak to thee!
    Obey it, my dear lord, and thou shalt find
    Healing and peace.  The light shall fill thine eyes.
    Thou wilt not need my leading any more,—­
    Nor me,—­for thou wilt see me, all unveiled,—­
    I tremble at the thought.

NAAMAN:
                              Why, what is this?
    Why shouldst thou tremble?  Art thou not mine own?

RUAHMAH:  [Turning to him and speaking in broken words.]
    I am,—­thy handmaid,—­all and only thine,—­
    The very pulses of my heart are thine!
    Feel how they throb to comfort thee to-day—­
    To-day!  Because it is thy time of trouble.

[She takes his hand and puts it to her forehead and
her lips, but before she can lay it upon her heart,
he draws away from her.]

NAAMAN:
    Thou art too dear to injure with a kiss,—­
    How should I take a gift may bankrupt thee,
    Or drain the fragrant chalice of thy love
    With lips that may be fatal?  Tempt me not
    To sweet dishonour; strengthen me to wait
    Until thy prophecy is all fulfilled,
    And I can claim thee with a joyful heart.

RUAHMAH:  [Turning away.]
    Thou wilt not need me then,—­and I shall be
    No more than the faint echo of a song
    Heard half asleep.  We shall go back to where
    We stood before this journey.

NAAMAN:
                                  Never again!
    For thou art changed by some deep miracle.
    The flower of womanhood hath bloomed in thee,—­
    Art thou not changed?

RUAHMAH:
                          Yea, I am changed,—­and changed
    Again,—­bewildered,—­till there’s nothing clear
    To me but this:  I am the instrument
    In an Almighty hand to rescue thee
    From death.  This will I do,—­and afterward—­

[A trumpet is blown without.]

Hearken, the trumpet sounds, the chariot waits.
Away, dear lord, follow the road to light!

**Page 157**

**SCENE II [3]**

*The house of Elisha, upon a terraced hillside.  A low stone cottage with vine-trellises and flowers; a flight of steps, at the foot of which is NAAMAN’S chariot.  He is standing in it; SABALLIDIN beside it.  Two soldiers come down the steps.*

FIRST SOLDIER:
    We have delivered my lord’s greeting and his message.

SECOND SOLDIER:
    Yes, and near lost our noses in the doing of it!  For
      the servant slammed the door in our faces.  A most
      unmannerly reception!

FIRST SOLDIER:
    But I take that as a good omen.  It is a mark of holy
      men to keep ill-conditioned servants.  Look, the
      door opens, the prophet is coming.

SECOND SOLDIER:
    No, by my head, it is that notable mark of his master’s
      holiness, that same lantern-jawed lout of a servant.

[GEHAZI loiters down the steps and comes to NAAMAN
with a slight obeisance.]

GEHAZI:
    My master, the prophet of Israel, sends word to Naaman
      the Syrian,—­are you he?—–­“Go wash in Jordan seven
      times and be healed.”

[GEHAZI turns and goes slowly up the steps.]

NAAMAN:
    What insolence is this?  Am I a man
    To be put off with surly messengers?
    Has not Damascus rivers more renowned
    Than this rude muddy Jordan?  Crystal streams,
    Abana!  Pharpar! flowing smoothly through
    A paradise of roses?  Might I not
    Have bathed in them and been restored at ease?
    Come up, Saballidin, and guide me home!

SABALLIDIN:
    Bethink thee, master, shall we lose our quest
    Because a servant is uncouth?  The road
    That seeks the mountain leads us through the vale.
    The prophet’s word is friendly after all;
    For had it been some mighty task he set,
    Thou wouldst perform it.  How much rather then
    This easy one?  Hast thou not promised her
    Who waits for thy return?  Wilt thou go back
    To her unhealed?

NAAMAN:
                      No! not for all my pride!
    I’ll make myself most humble for her sake,
    And stoop to anything that gives me hope
    Of having her.  Make haste, Saballidin,
    Bring me to Jordan.  I will cast myself
    Into that river’s turbulent embrace
    A hundred times, until I save my life
    Or lose it!

[Exeunt.  The light fades:  musical interlude.
The light increases again with ruddy sunset
shining on the door of ELISHA’S house.  The
prophet appears and looks off, shading his
eyes with his hand as he descends the steps.
Trumpet blows,—­NAAMAN’S call;—­sound of
horses galloping and men shouting.  NAAMAN
enters joyously, followed by SABALLIDIN and
soldiers, with gifts.]

**Page 158**

NAAMAN:
    Behold a man delivered from the grave
    By thee!  I rose from Jordan’s waves restored
    To youth and vigour, as the eagle mounts
    Upon the sunbeam and renews his strength!
    O mighty prophet deign to take from me
    These gifts too poor to speak my gratitude;
    Silver and gold and jewels, damask robes,—­

ELISHA:  [Interrupting.]
    As thy soul liveth I will not receive
    A gift from thee, my son!  Give all to Him
    Whose mercy hath redeemed thee from thy plague.

NAAMAN:
    He is the only God!  I worship Him!
    Grant me a portion of the blessed soil
    Of this most favoured land where I have found
    His mercy; in Damascus will I build
    An altar to His name, and praise Him there
    Morning and night.  There is no other God
    In all the world.

ELISHA:
                      Thou needst not
    This load of earth to build a shrine for Him;
    Yet take it if thou wilt.  But be assured
    God’s altar is in every loyal heart,
    And every flame of love that kindles there
    Ascends to Him and brightens with His praise.
    There is no other God!  But evil Powers
    Make war against Him in the darkened world;
    And many temples have been built to them.

NAAMAN:
    I know them well!  Yet when my master goes
    To worship in the House of Rimmon, I
    Must enter with him; for he trusts me, leans
    Upon my hand; and when he bows himself
    I cannot help but make obeisance too,—­
    But not to Rimmon!  To my country’s King
    I’ll bow in love and honour.  Will the Lord
    Pardon thy servant in this thing?

ELISHA:
                                      My son,
    Peace has been granted thee.  ’Tis thine to find
    The only way to keep it.  Go in peace.

NAAMAN:
    Thou hast not answered me,—­may I bow down?

ELISHA:
    The answer must be thine.  The heart that knows
    The perfect peace of gratitude and love,
    Walks in the light and needs no other rule.
    When next thou comest into Rimmon’s House,
    Thy heart will tell thee how to go in peace.

*CURTAIN.*

[3] Note that this scene is not intended to be put upon the stage,
    the effect of the action upon the drama being given at the
    beginning of Act IV.

**ACT IV**

**SCENE I**

*The interior of NAAMAN’S tent, at night.  RUAHMAH alone, sleeping on the ground.  A vision appears to her through the curtains of the tent:  ELISHA standing on the hillside at Dothan:  NAAMAN, restored to sight, comes in and kneels before him.  ELISHA blesses him, and he goes out rejoicing.  The vision of the prophet turns to RUAHMAH and lifts his hand in warning.*

**Page 159**

ELISHA:
    Daughter of Israel, what dost thou here?
    Thy prayer is granted.  Naaman is healed:
    Mar not true service with a selfish thought.
    Nothing remains for thee to do, except
    Give thanks, and go whither the Lord commands.
    Obey,—­obey!  Ere Naaman returns
    Thou must depart to thine own house in Shechem.

        [The vision vanishes.]

RUAHMAH:  [Waking and rising slowly.]
    A dream, a dream, a messenger of God!
    O dear and dreadful vision, art thou true?
    Then am I glad with all my broken heart.
    Nothing remains,—­nothing remains but this,—­
    Give thanks, obey, depart,—­and so I do.
    Farewell, my master’s sword!  Farewell to you,
    My amulet!  I lay you on the hilt
    His hand shall clasp again:  bid him farewell
    For me, since I must look upon his face
    No more for ever!—­Hark, what sound was that?

        [Enter soldier hurriedly.]

SOLDIER:
    Mistress, an armed troop, footmen and horse,
    Mounting the hill!

RUAHMAH:
                        My lord returns in triumph.

SOLDIER:
    Not so, for these are enemies; they march
    In haste and silence, answering not our cries.

RUAHMAH:
    Our enemies?  Then hold your ground,—­on guard!
    Fight! fight!  Defend the pass, and drive them down.

[Exit soldier.  RUAHMAH draws NAAMAN’S sword from
the scabbard and hurries out of the tent.  Confused
noise of fighting outside.  Three or four soldiers
are driven in by a troop of men in disguise.
RUAHMAH follows:  she is beaten to her knees,
and her sword is broken.]

REZON:  [Throwing aside the cloth which covers his face.]
    Hold her!  So, tiger-maid, we’ve found your lair
    And trapped you.  Where is Naaman,
    Your master?

RUAHMAH:  [Rising, her arms held by two of REZON’S followers.]
                  He is far beyond your reach.

REZON:
    Brave captain!  He has saved himself, the leper,
    And left you here?

RUAHMAH:
                        The leper is no more.

REZON:
    What mean you?

RUAHMAH:
                    He has gone to meet his God.

REZON:
    Dead?  Dead?  Behold how Rimmon’s wrath is swift!
    Damascus shall be mine; I’ll terrify
    The King with this, and make my terms.  But no!
    False maid, you sweet-faced harlot, you have lied
    To save him,—­speak.

RUAHMAH:
                          I am not what you say,
    Nor have I lied, nor will I ever speak
    A word to you, vile servant of a traitor-god.

REZON:
    Break off this little flute of blasphemy,
    This ivory neck,—­twist it, I say!
    Give her a swift despatch after her leper!
    But stay,—­if he

**Page 160**

still lives he’ll follow her,
    And so we may ensnare him.  Harm her not!
    Bind her!  Away with her to Rimmon’s House!
    Is all this carrion dead?  There’s one that moves,—­
    A spear,—­fasten him down!  All quiet now?
    Then back to our Damascus!  Rimmon’s face
    Shall be made bright with sacrifice.

[Exeunt, forcing RUAHMAH with them.  Musical
interlude.  A wounded soldier crawls from a
dark corner of the tent and finds the chain
with NAAMAN’S seal, which has fallen to the
ground in the struggle.]

WOUNDED SOLDIER:
    The signet of my lord, her amulet!
    Lost, lost!  Ah, noble lady,—­let me die
    With this upon my breast.

[The tent is dark.  Enter NAAMAN and his company
in haste, with torches.]

NAAMAN:
                              What bloody work
    Is here?  God, let me live to punish him
    Who wrought this horror!  Treacherously slain
    At night, by unknown hands, my brave companions:
    Tsarpi, my best beloved, light of my soul,
    Put out in darkness!  O my broken lamp
    Of life, where art thou?  Nay, I cannot find her.

WOUNDED SOLDIER:  [Raising himself on his arm.]
    Master!

NAAMAN:  [Kneels beside him.]
            One living?  Quick, a torch this way!
    Lift up his head,—­so,—­carefully!
    Courage, my friend, your captain is beside you.
    Call back your soul and make report to him.

WOUNDED SOLDIER:
    Hail, captain!  O my captain,—­here!

NAAMAN:
    Be patient,—­rest in peace,—­the fight is done.
    Nothing remains but render your account.

WOUNDED SOLDIER:
    They fell upon us suddenly,—­we fought
    Our fiercest,—­every man,—­our lady fought
    Fiercer than all.  They beat us down,—­she’s gone.
    Rezon has carried her away a captive.  See,—­
    Her amulet,—­I die for you, my captain.

NAAMAN:  [He gently lays the dead soldier on the ground, and rises.]
    Farewell.  This last report was brave; but strange
    Beyond my thought!  How came the High Priest here?
    And what is this? my chain, my seal!  But this
    Has never been in Tsarpi’s hand.  I gave
    This signet to a captive maid one night,—­
    A maid of Israel.  How long ago?
    Ruahmah was her name,—­almost forgotten!
    So long ago,—­how comes this token here?
    What is this mystery, Saballidin?

SABALLIDIN:
    Ruahmah is her name who brought you hither.

NAAMAN:
    Where then is Tsarpi?

SABALLIDIN:
                          In Damascus.
    She left you when the curse of Rimmon fell,—­
    Took refuge in his House,—­and there she waits
    Her lord’s return,—­Rezon’s return.

NAAMAN:
                                        ’Tis false!

**Page 161**

SABALLIDIN:
    The falsehood is in her.  She hath been friend
    With Rezon in his priestly plot to win
    Assyria’s favour,—­friend to his design
    To sell his country to enrich his temple,—­
    And friend to him in more,—­I will not name it.

NAAMAN:
    Nor will I credit it.  Impossible!

SABALLIDIN:
    Did she not plead with you against the war,
    Counsel surrender, seek to break your will?

NAAMAN:
    She did not love my work, a soldier’s task.
    She never seemed to be at one with me
    Until I was a leper.

SABALLIDIN:
                          From whose hand
    Did you receive the sacred cup?

NAAMAN:
                                    From hers.

SABALLIDIN:
    And from that hour the curse began to work.

NAAMAN:
    But did she not have pity when she saw
    Me smitten?  Did she not beseech the King
    For letters and a guard to make this journey?
    Has she not been the fountain of my hope,
    My comforter and my most faithful guide
    In this adventure of the dark?  All this
    Is proof of perfect love that would have shared
    A leper’s doom rather than give me up.
    Can I doubt her who dared to love like this?

SABALLIDIN:
    O master, doubt her not,—­but know her name;
    Ruahmah!  It was she alone who wrought
    This wondrous work of love.  She won the King
    To furnish forth this company.  She led
    Our march, kept us in heart, fought off despair,
    Watched over you as if you were her child,
    Prepared your food, your cup, with her own hands,
    Sang you asleep at night, awake at dawn,—­

NAAMAN:  [Interrupting.]
    Enough!  I do remember every hour
    Of that sweet comradeship!  And now her voice
    Wakens the echoes in my lonely breast.
    Shall I not see her, thank her, speak her name?
    Ruahmah!  Let me live till I have looked
    Into her eyes and called her my Ruahmah!

        [To his soldiers.]

    Away! away!  I burn to take the road
    That leads me back to Rimmon’s House,—­
    But not to bow,—­by God, never to bow!

**SCENE II**

TIME:  *Three days later*

*Inner court of the House of Rimmon; a temple with huge pillars at each side.  In the right foreground the seat of the King; at the left, of equal height, the seat of the High Priest.  In the background a broad flight of steps, rising to a curtain of cloudy gray, embroidered with two gigantic hands holding thunderbolts.
 The temple is in half darkness at first.  Enter KHAMMA and NUBTA, robed as Kharimati, or religious dancers, in gowns of black gauze with yellow embroideries and mantles.*

KHAMMA:
    All is ready for the rites of worship; our lady will play
      a great part in them.  She has put on her Tyrian robes,
      and all her ornaments.

**Page 162**

NUBTA:
    That is a sure sign of a religious purpose.  She is most
      devout, our lady Tsarpi!

KHAMMA:
    A favourite of Rimmon, too!  The High Priest has assured
      her of it.  He is a great man,—­next to the King, now
      that Naaman is gone.

NUBTA:
    But if Naaman should come back, healed of the leprosy?

KHAMMA:
    How can he come back?  The Hebrew slave that went away
      with him, when they caught her, said that he was dead.
      The High Priest has shut her up in the prison of the
      temple, accusing her of her master’s death.

NUBTA:
    Yet I think he does not believe it, for I heard him telling
      our mistress what to do if Naaman should return.

KHAMMA:
    What, then?

NUBTA:
    She will claim him as her husband.  Was she not wedded to
      him before the god?  That is a sacred bond.  Only the High
      Priest can loose it.  She will keep her hold on Naaman
      for the sake of the House of Rimmon.  A wife knows her
      husband’s secrets, she can tell—­

        [Enter SHUMAKIM, with his flagon, walking unsteadily.]

KHAMMA:
    Hush! here comes the fool Shumakim.  He is never sober.

SHUMAKIM:  [Laughing.]
    Are there two of you?  I see two, but that is no proof.
      I think there is only one, but beautiful enough for
      two.  What were you talking to yourself about, fairest
      one!

KHAMMA:
    About the lady Tsarpi, fool, and what she would do if
      her husband returned.

SHUMAKIM:
    Fie! fie!  That is no talk for an innocent fool to hear.
      Has she a husband?

NUBTA:
    You know very well that she is the wife of Lord Naaman.

SHUMAKIM:
    I remember that she used to wear his name and his jewels.
      But I thought he had exchanged her,—­for a leprosy.

KHAMMA:
    You must have heard that he went away to Samaria to look
      for healing.  Some say that he died on the journey; but
      others say he has been cured, and is on his way home
      to his wife.

SHUMAKIM:
    It may be, for this is a mad world, and men never know
      when they are well off,—­except us fools.  But he must
      come soon if he would find his wife as he parted from
      her,—­or the city where he left it.  The Assyrians have
      returned with a greater army, and this time they will
      make an end of us.  There is no Naaman now, and the Bull
      will devour Damascus like a bunch of leeks, flowers and
      all,—­flowers and all, my double-budded fair one!  Are
      you not afraid?

NUBTA:
    We belong to the House of Rimmon.  He will protect us.

**Page 163**

SHUMAKIM:
    What?  The mighty one who hides behind the curtain there,
      and tells his secrets to Rezon?  No doubt he will take
      care of you, and of himself.  Whatever game is played,
      the gods never lose.  But for the protection of the
      common people and the rest of us fools, I would rather
      have Naaman at the head of an army than all the sacred
      images between here and Babylon.

KHAMMA:
    You are a wicked old man.  You mock the god.  He will
      punish you.

SHUMAKIM:  [Bitterly.]
    How can he punish me?  Has he not already made me a fool?
      Hark, here comes my brother the High Priest, and my
      brother the King.  Rimmon made us all; but nobody knows
      who made Rimmon, except the High Priest; and he will
      never tell.

[Gongs and cymbals sound.  Enter REZON with priests, and the
 King with courtiers.  They take their seats.  A throng of Khali and Kharimati come in, TSARPI presiding; a sacred dance is performed with torches, burning incense, and chanting, in which TSARPI leads.]

CHANT

   *Hail, mighty Rimmon, ruler of the whirl-storm,
    Hail, shaker of mountains, breaker-down of forests,
    Hail, thou who roarest terribly in the darkness,
    Hail, thou whose arrows flame across the heavens!
    Hail, great destroyer, lord of flood and tempest,
    In thine anger almighty, in thy wrath eternal,
    Thou who delightest in ruin, maker of desolations,
    Immeru, Addu, Berku, Rimmon!
    See we tremble before thee, low we bow at thine altar,
    Have mercy upon us, be favourable unto us,
    Save us from our enemy, accept our sacrifice,
    Barku, Immeru, Addu, Rimmon!*

        [Silence follows, all bowing down.]

REZON:
    O King, last night the counsel from above
    Was given in answer to our divination.
    Ambassadors must go forthwith to crave
    Assyria’s pardon, and a second offer
    Of the same terms of peace we did reject
    Not long ago.

BENHADAD:
                  Dishonour!  Yet I see
    No other way!  Assyria will refuse,
    Or make still harder terms.  Disaster, shame
    For this gray head, and ruin for Damascus!

REZON:
    Yet may we trust Rimmon will favour us,
    If we adhere devoutly to his worship.
    He will incline his brother-god, the Bull,
    To spare us, if we supplicate him now
    With costly gifts.  Therefore I have prepared
    A sacrifice:  Rimmon shall be well pleased
    With the red blood that bathes his knees to-night!

BENHADAD:
    My mind is dark with doubt,—­I do forebode
    Some horror!  Let me go,—­I am an old man,—­
    If Naaman my captain were alive!
    But he is dead,—­the glory is departed!

[He rises, trembling, to leave the throne.  Trumpet
sounds,—­NAAMAN’S call;—­enter NAAMAN, followed
by soldiers; he kneels at the foot of the throne.]

**Page 164**

BENHADAD:  [Half-whispering.]
    Art thou a ghost escaped from Allatu?
    How didst thou pass the seven doors of death?
    O noble ghost I am afraid of thee,
    And yet I love thee,—­let me hear thy voice!

NAAMAN:
    No ghost, my King, but one who lives to serve
    Thee and Damascus with his heart and sword
    As in the former days.  The only God
    Has healed my leprosy:  my life is clean
    To offer to my country and my King.

BENHADAD:  [Starting toward him.]
    O welcome to thy King!  Thrice welcome!

REZON:  [Leaving his seat and coming toward NAAMAN.]
                                            Stay!
    The leper must appear before the priest,
    The only one who can pronounce him clean.

[NAAMAN turns; they stand looking each other in the face.]

Yea,—­thou art cleansed:  Rimmon hath pardoned thee,—­
In answer to the daily prayers of her
Whom he restores to thine embrace,—­thy wife.

[TSARPI comes slowly toward NAAMAN.]

NAAMAN:
    From him who rules this House will I receive
    Nothing!  I seek no pardon from his priest,
    No wife of mine among his votaries!

TSARPI:  [Holding out her hands.]
    Am I not yours?  Will you renounce our vows?

NAAMAN:
    The vows were empty,—­never made you mine
    In aught but name.  A wife is one who shares
    Her husband’s thought, incorporates his heart
    With hers by love, and crowns him with her trust.
    She is God’s remedy for loneliness,
    And God’s reward for all the toil of life.
    This you have never been to me,—­and so
    I give you back again to Rimmon’s House
    Where you belong.  Claim what you will of mine,—­
    Not me!  I do renounce you,—­or release you,—­
    According to the law.  If you demand
    A further cause than what I have declared,
    I will unfold it fully to the King.

REZON:  [Interposing hurriedly.]
    No need of that!  This duteous lady yields
    To your caprice as she has ever done:
    She stands a monument of loyalty
    And woman’s meekness.

NAAMAN:
                          Let her stand for that!
    Adorn your temple with her piety!
    But you in turn restore to me the treasure
    You stole at midnight from my tent.

REZON:
    What treasure!  I have stolen none from you.

NAAMAN:
    The very jewel of my soul,—­Ruahmah!
    My King, the captive maid of Israel,
    To whom thou didst commit my broken life
    With letters to Samaria,—­my light,
    My guide, my saviour in this pilgrimage,—­
    Dost thou remember?

BENHADAD:
                        I recall the maid,—­
    But dimly,—­for my mind is old and weary,
    She was a fearless maid, I trusted her
    And gave thee to her charge.  Where is she now?

**Page 165**

NAAMAN:
    This robber fell upon my camp by night,—­
    While I was with Elisha at the Jordan,—­
    Slaughtered my soldiers, carried off the maid,
    And holds her somewhere in imprisonment.
    O give this jewel back to me, my King,
    And I will serve thee with a grateful heart
    For ever.  I will fight for thee, and lead
    Thine armies on to glorious victory
    Over all foes!  Thou shalt no longer fear
    The host of Asshur, for thy throne shall stand
    Encompassed with a wall of dauntless hearts,
    And founded on a mighty people’s love,
    And guarded by the God of righteousness.

BENHADAD:
    I feel the flame of courage at thy breath
    Leap up among the ashes of despair.
    Thou hast returned to save us!  Thou shalt have
    The maid; and thou shalt lead my host again!
    Priest, I command you give her back to him.

REZON:
    O master, I obey thy word as thou
    Hast ever been obedient to the voice
    Of Rimmon.  Let thy fiery captain wait
    Until the sacrifice has been performed,
    And he shall have the jewel that he claims.
    Must we not first placate the city’s god
    With due allegiance, keep the ancient faith,
    And pay our homage to the Lord of Wrath?

BENHADAD:  [Sinking back upon his throne in fear.]
    I am the faithful son of Rimmon’s House,—­
    And lo, these many years I worship him!
    My thoughts are troubled,—­I am very old,
    But still a King!  O Naaman, be patient!
    Priest, let the sacrifice be offered.

[The High Priest lifts his rod.  Gongs and cymbals
sound.  The curtain is rolled back, disclosing
the image of Rimmon; a gigantic and hideous idol,
with a cruel human face, four horns, the mane of
a lion, and huge paws stretched in front of him
enclosing a low altar of black stone.  RUAHMAH
stands on the altar, chained, her arms are bare
and folded on her breast.  The people prostrate
themselves in silence, with signs of astonishment
and horror.]

REZON:
    Behold the sacrifice!  Bow down, bow down!

NAAMAN:  [Stabbing him.]
    Bow thou, black priest!  Down,—­down to hell!
    Ruahmah! do not die!  I come to thee.

[NAAMAN rushes toward her, attacked by the priests,
crying “Sacrilege!  Kill him!” But the soldiers
stand on the steps and beat them back.  He springs
upon the altar and clasps her by the hand.  Tumult
and confusion.  The King rises and speaks with a
loud voice, silence follows.]

BENHADAD:
    Peace, peace!  The King commands all weapons down!
    O Naaman, what wouldst thou do?  Beware
    Lest thou provoke the anger of a god.

NAAMAN:
    There is no God but one, the Merciful,
    Who gave this perfect woman to my soul
    That I might learn through her to worship Him,
    And know the meaning of immortal Love.

**Page 166**

BENHADAD:  [Agitated.]
    Yet she is consecrated, bound, and doomed
    To sacrificial death; but thou art sworn
    To live and lead my host,—­Hast thou not sworn?

NAAMAN:
    Only if thou wilt keep thy word to me!
    Break with this idol of iniquity
    Whose shadow makes a darkness in the land;
    Give her to me who gave me back to thee;
    And I will lead thine army to renown
    And plant thy banners on the hill of triumph.
    But if she dies, I die with her, defying Rimmon.

[Cries of “Spare them!  Release her!  Give us back
our Captain!” and “Sacrilege!  Let them die!” Then
silence, all turning toward the King.]

BENHADAD:
    Is this the choice?  Must we destroy the bond
    Of ancient faith, or slay the city’s living hope!
    I am an old, old man,—­and yet the King!
    Must I decide?—­O let me ponder it!

[His head sinks upon his breast.  All stand eagerly
looking at him.]

NAAMAN:
    Ruahmah, my Ruahmah!  I have come
    To thee at last!  And art thou satisfied?

RUAHMAH:  [Looking into his face.]
    Beloved, my beloved, I am glad
    Of all, and glad for ever, come what may.
    Nothing can harm me,—­since my lord is come!

**APPENDIX**

**CARMINA FESTIVA**

**THE LITTLE-NECK CLAM**

A modern verse-sequence, showing how a native American subject, strictly realistic, may be treated in various manners adapted to the requirements of different magazines, thus combining Art-for-Art’s-Sake with Writing-for-the-Market.  Read at the First Dinner of the American Periodical Publishers’ Association, in Washington, April, 1904.

**I**

**THE ANTI-TRUST CLAM**

For *McClure’s Magazine*

  The clam that once, on Jersey’s banks,
  Was like the man who dug it, free,
  Now slave-like thro’ the market clanks
  In chains of corporate tyranny.

  The Standard Fish-Trust of New York
  Holds every clam-bank in control;
  And like base Beef and menial Pork,
  The free-born Clam has lost its soul.

  No more the bivalve treads the sands
  In freedom’s rapture, free from guilt:
  It follows now the harsh commands
  Of Morgiman and Rockabilt.

  Rise, freemen, rise!  Your wrath is just!
  Call on the Sherman Act to dam
  The floods of this devouring Trust,
  And liberate the fettered Clam.

**II**

**THE WHITMANIAC CLAM**

For the *Bookman*

  Not Dante when he wandered by the river Arno,
  Not Burns who plowed the banks and braes of bonnie Ayr,
  Not even Shakspere on the shores of Avon,—­ah, no!
  Not one of those great bards did taste true Poet’s Fare.

**Page 167**

  But Whitman, loafing in Long Island and New Jersey,
  Found there the sustenance of mighty ode and psalm,
  And while his rude emotions swam around in verse, he
  Fed chiefly on the wild, impassioned, sea-born clam.

  Thus in his work we feel the waves’ bewildering motion,
  And winds from mighty mud-flats, weird and wild:
  His clam-filled bosom answered to the voice of ocean,
  And rose and fell responsively with every tide.

**III**

**IL MERCATORE ITALIANO DELLA CLAMMA**

For the *Century Magazine*

  “Clam O!  Fres’ Clam!” How strange it sounds and sweet,
  The Dago’s cry along the New York street!
  “Dago” we call him, like the thoughtless crowd;
  And yet this humble man may well be proud
  To hail from Petrarch’s land, Boccaccio’s home,—­
  Firenze, Gubbio, Venezia, Rome,—­
  From fair Italia, whose enchanted soil
  Transforms the lowly cotton-seed to olive-oil.

  To me his chant, with alien accent sung,
  Brings back an echo of great Virgil’s tongue:
  It seems to cry against the city’s woe,
  In liquid Latin syllables,—­*Clamo*!
  As thro’ the crowded street his cart he jams
  And cries aloud, ah, think of more than clams!
  Receive his secret plaint with pity warm,
  And grant Italia’s plea for Tenement-House Reform!

**IV**

**THE SOCIAL CLAM**

For the *Smart Set*

  Fair Phyllis is another’s bride:
  Therefore I like to sit beside
  Her at a very smart set dinner,
  And whisper love, and try to win her.

  The little-necks,—­in number six,—­
  That from their pearly shells she picks
  And swallows whole,—­ah, is it selfish
  To wish my heart among those shell-fish?

  “But Phyllis is another’s wife;
  And if she should absorb thy life
  ’Twould leave thy bosom vacant.”—­Well,
  I’d keep at least the empty shell!

**V**

**THE RECREANT CLAM**

For the *Outlook*

  Low dost thou lie amid the languid ooze,
  Because thy slothful spirit doth refuse
  The bliss of battle and the strain of strife.
  Rise, craven clam, and lead the strenuous life!

**A FAIRY TALE**

For the Mark Twain Dinner, December 5, 1905

    Some three-score years and ten ago
    A prince was born at Florida, Mo.;
    And though he came *incognito*,
    With just the usual yells of woe,
    The watchful fairies seemed to know
          Precisely what the row meant;
    For when he was but five days old,
    (December fifth as I’ve been told,)
    They pattered through the midnight cold,
    And came around his crib, to hold
          A “Council of Endowment.”

**Page 168**

    “I give him Wit,” the eldest said,
    And stooped above the little bed,
    To touch his forehead round and red.
    “Within this bald, unfurnished head,
    Where wild luxuriant locks shall spread
          And wave in years hereafter,
    I kindle now the lively spark,
    That still shall flash by day and dark,
    And everywhere he goes shall mark
          His way with light and laughter.”

    The fairies laughed to think of it
    That such a rosy, wrinkled bit
    Of flesh should be endowed with Wit!
    But something serious seemed to hit
    The mind of one, as if a fit
          Of fear had come upon her.
    “I give him Truth,” she quickly cried,
    “That laughter may not lead aside
    To paths where scorn and falsehood hide,—­
          I give him Truth and Honour!”

    “I give him Love,” exclaimed the third;
    And as she breathed the mystic word,
    I know not if the baby heard,
    But softly in his dream he stirred,
    And twittered like a little bird,
          And stretched his hands above him.
    The fairy’s gift was sealed and signed
    With kisses twain the deed to bind:
    “A heart of love to human-kind,
          And human-kind to love him!”

    “Now stay your giving!” cried the Queen.
    “These gifts are passing rich I ween;
    And if reporters should be mean
    Enough to spy upon this scene,
    ’Twould make all other babies green
          With envy at the rumour.
    Yet since I love this child, forsooth,
    I’ll mix your gifts, Wit, Love and Truth,
    With spirits of Immortal Youth,
          And call the mixture Humour!”

  The fairies vanished with their glittering train;
  But here’s the Prince with all their gifts,—­*Mark Twain*.

**THE BALLAD OF THE SOLEMN ASS**

Recited at the Century Club, New York:  Twelfth Night. 1906

  Come all ye good Centurions and wise men of the times,
  You’ve made a Poet Laureate, now you must hear his rhymes.
  Extend your ears and I’ll respond by shortening up my tale:—­
  Man cannot live by verse alone, he must have cakes and ale.

  So while you wait for better things and muse on schnapps and salad,
  I’ll try my Pegasus his wings and sing a little ballad:
  A legend of your ancestors, the Wise Men of the East,
  Who brought among their baggage train a quaint and curious beast.

  Their horses were both swift and strong, and we should think it lucky
  If we could buy, by telephone, such horses from Kentucky;
  Their dromedaries paced along, magnificent and large,
  Their camels were as stately as if painted by La Farge.

  But this amazing little ass was never satisfied,
  He made more trouble every day than all the rest beside:
  His ears were long, his legs were short, his eyes were bleared and dim,
  But nothing in the wide, wide world was good enough for him.

**Page 169**

  He did not like the way they went, but lifted up his voice
  And said that any other way would be a better choice.
  He braced his feet and stood his ground, and made the wise men wait,
  While with his heels at all around he did recalcitrate.

  It mattered not how fair the land through which the road might run,
  He found new causes for complaint with every Morning Sun:
  And when the shades of twilight fell and all the world grew nappy,
  They tied him to his Evening Post, but still he was not happy.

  He thought his load was far too large, he thought his food was bad,
  He thought the Star a poor affair, he thought the Wise Men mad:
  He did not like to hear them laugh,—­’twas childish to be jolly;
  And if perchance they sang a hymn,—­’twas sentimental folly!

  So day by day this little beast performed his level best
  To make their life, in work and play, a burden to the rest:
  And when they laid them down at night, he would not let them sleep,
  But criticized the Universe with hee-haws loud and deep.

  One evening, as the Wise Men sat before their fire-lit tent,
  And ate and drank and talked and sang, in grateful merriment,
  The solemn donkey butted in, in his most solemn way,
  And broke the happy meeting up with a portentous bray.

  “Now by my head,” Balthazar said (his real name was Choate),
  “We’ve had about enough of this!  I’ll put it to the vote.
  I move the donkey be dismissed; let’s turn him out to grass,
  And travel on our cheerful way, without the solemn ass.”

  The vote was aye! and with a whack the Wise Men drove him out;
  But still he wanders up and down, and all the world about;
  You’ll know him by his long, sad face and supercilious ways,
  And likewise by his morning kicks and by his evening brays.

  But while we sit at Eagle Roost and make our Twelfth Night cheer,
  Full well we know the solemn ass will not disturb us here:
  For pleasure rules the roost to-night, by order of the King,
  And every one must play his part, and laugh, and likewise sing.

  The road of life is long, we know, and often hard to find,
  And yet there’s many a pleasant turn for men of cheerful mind:
  We’ve done our day’s work honestly, we’ve earned the right to rest,
  We’ll take a cup of friendship now and spice it with a jest.

  A silent health to absent friends, their memories are bright!
  A hearty health to all who keep the feast with us to-night!
  A health to dear Centuria, oh, may she long abide!
  A health, a health to all the world,—­and the solemn ass, *outside*!

**A BALLAD OF SANTA CLAUS**

For the St. Nicholas Society of New York

  Among the earliest saints of old, before the first Hegira,
  I find the one whose name we hold, St. Nicholas of Myra:
  The best-beloved name, I guess, in sacred nomenclature,—­
  The patron-saint of helpfulness, and friendship, and good-nature.

**Page 170**

  A bishop and a preacher too, a famous theologian,
  He stood against the Arian crew and fought them like a Trojan:
  But when a poor man told his need and begged an alms in trouble,
  He never asked about his creed, but quickly gave him double.

Three pretty maidens, so they say, were longing to be married;
But they were paupers, lack-a-day, and so the suitors tarried.
St. Nicholas gave each maid a purse of golden ducats chinking,
And then, for better or for worse, they wedded quick as winking.

Once, as he sailed, a storm arose; wild waves the ship surrounded;
The sailors wept and tore their clothes, and shrieked “We’ll all be
drownded!”
St. Nicholas never turned a hair; serenely shone his halo;
He simply said a little prayer, and all the billows lay low.

The wicked keeper of an inn had three small urchins taken,
And cut them up in a pickle-bin, and salted them for bacon.
St. Nicholas came and picked them out, and put their limbs together,—­
They lived, they leaped, they gave a shout, “St. Nicholas forever!”And thus it came to pass, you know, that maids without a nickel,
And sailor-lads when tempest blow, and children in a pickle,
And every man that’s fatherly, and every kindly matron,
In choosing saints would all agree to call St. Nicholas patron.

  He comes again at Christmas-time and stirs us up to giving;
  He rings the merry bells that chime good-will to all the living;
  He blesses every friendly deed and every free donation;
  He sows the secret, golden seed of love through all creation.

  Our fathers drank to Santa Claus, the sixth of each December,
  And still we keep his feast because his virtues we remember.
  Among the saintly ranks he stood, with smiling human features,
  And said, “*Be good!  But not too good to love your fellow-creatures!*”

December 6, 1907.

**ARS AGRICOLARIS**

An Ode for the “Farmer’s Dinner,” University Club, New York,
January 23, 1913

  All hail, ye famous Farmers!
  Ye vegetable-charmers,
  Who know the art of making barren earth
  Smile with prolific mirth
  And bring forth twins or triplets at a birth!
  Ye scientific fertilizers of the soil,
  And horny-handed sons of toil!
  To-night from all your arduous cares released,
  With manly brows no longer sweat-impearled,
  Ye hold your annual feast,
  And like the Concord farmers long ago,
  Ye meet above the “Bridge” below,
  And draw the cork heard round the world!

**Page 171**

  What memories are yours!  What tales
  Of triumph have your tongues rehearsed,
  Telling how ye have won your first
  Potatoes from the stubborn mead,
  (Almost as many as ye sowed for seed!)
  And how the luscious cabbages and kails
  Have bloomed before you in their bed
  At seven dollars a head!
  And how your onions took a prize
  For bringing tears into the eyes
  Of a hard-hearted cook!  And how ye slew
  The Dragon Cut-worm at a stroke!
        And how ye broke,
  Routed, and put to flight the horrid crew
  Of vile potato-bugs and Hessian flies!
       And how ye did not quail
  Before th’ invading armies of San Jose Scale,
      But met them bravely with your little pail
      Of poison, which ye put upon each tail
  O’ the dreadful beasts and made their courage fail!
        And how ye did acquit yourselves like men
        In fields of agricultural strife, and then,
        Like generous warriors, sat you down at ease
        And gently to your gardener said, “Let us have *Pease*!”

  But *were* there Pease?  Ah, no, dear Farmers, no!
  The course of Nature is not ordered so.
      For when we want a vegetable most,
          She holds it back;
          And when we boast
      To our week-endly friends
      Of what we’ll give them on our farm, alack,
  Those things the old dam, Nature, never sends.

  O Pease in bottles, Sparrow-grass in jars,
  How often have ye saved from scars
  Of shame, and deep embarrassment,
  The disingenuous farmer-gent,
      To whom some wondering guest has cried,
      “How *do* you raise such Pease and Sparrow-grass?”
      Whereat the farmer-gent has not denied
      The compliment, but smiling has replied,
      “To raise such things you must have lots of glass.”

  From wiles like these, true Farmers, hold aloof;
  Accept no praise unless you have the proof.
  If niggard Nature should withhold the green
  And sugary Pea, welcome the humble Bean.
  Even the easy Radish, and the Beet,
  If grown by your own toil are extra sweet.
  Let malefactors of great wealth and banker-felons
  Rejoice in foreign artichokes, imported melons;
  But you, my Farmers, at your frugal board
  Spread forth the fare your Sabine Farms afford.
  Say to Maecenas, when he is your guest,
  “No peaches! try this turnip, ’tis my best.”
  Thus shall ye learn from labors in the field
  What honesty a farmer’s life may yield,
  And like G. Washington in early youth,
  Though cherries fail, produce a crop of truth.

  But think me not too strict, O followers of the plough;
  Some place for fiction in your lives I would allow.
  In January when the world is drear,
  And bills come in, and no results appear,
      And snow-storms veil the skies,

 **Page 172**

      And ice the streamlet clogs,
  Then may you warm your heart with pleasant lies
  And revel in the seedsmen’s catalogues!
  What visions and what dreams are these
        Of cauliflower obese,—­
  Of giant celery, taller than a mast,—­
        Of strawberries
  Like red pincushions, round and vast,—­
      Of succulent and spicy gumbo,—­
      Of cantaloupes, as big as Jumbo,—­
      Of high-strung beans without the strings,—­
  And of a host of other wild, romantic things!

Why, then, should Doctor Starr declare
That modern habits mental force impair?
And why should H. Marquand complain
That jokes as good as his will never come again?
And why should Bridges wear a gloomy mien
About the lack of fiction for his Magazine?
The seedsman’s catalogue is all we need
To stir our dull imaginations
To new creations,
And lead us, by the hand
Of Hope, into a fairy-land.

So dream, my friendly Farmers, as you will;
And let your fancy all your garners fill
With wondrous crops; but always recollect
That Nature gives us less than we expect.
Scorn not the city where you earn the wealth
That, spent upon your farms, renews your health;
And tell your wife, whene’er the bills have shocked her,
“A country-place is cheaper than a doctor.”
May roses bloom for you, and may you find
Your richest harvest in a tranquil mind.

[Transcriber’s note:  “fertilizers” above was “fetilizers” in the original.]

**ANGLER’S FIRESIDE SONG**

  Oh, the angler’s path is a very merry way,
    And his road through the world is bright;
  For he lives with the laughing stream all day,
    And he lies by the fire at night.

        Sing hey nonny, ho nonny
        And likewise well-a-day!
        The angler’s life is a very jolly life
        And that’s what the anglers say!

  Oh, the angler plays for the pleasure of the game,
    And his creel may be full or light,
  But the tale that he tells will be just the same
    When he lies by the fire at night.

        Sing hey nonny, ho nonny
        And likewise well-a-day!
        We love the fire and the music of the lyre,
        And that’s what the anglers say!

To the San Francisco Fly-Casting Club, April, 1913.

**HOW SPRING COMES TO SHASTA JIM**

  I never seen no “red gods”; I dunno wot’s a “lure”;
  But if it’s sumpin’ takin’, then Spring has got it sure;
  An’ it doesn’t need no Kiplins, ner yet no London Jacks,
  To make up guff about it, w’ile settin’ in their shacks.

  It’s sumpin’ very simple ’at happens in the Spring,
  But it changes all the lookin’s of every blessed thing;
  The buddin’ woods look bigger, the mounting twice as high,
  But the house looks kindo smaller, tho I couldn’t tell ye why.

**Page 173**

  It’s cur’ous wot a show-down the month of April makes,
  Between the reely livin’, an’ the things ’at’s only fakes!
  Machines an’ barns an’ buildin’s, they never give no sign;
  But the livin’ things look lively w’en Spring is on the line.

  She doesn’t come too suddin, ner she doesn’t come too slow;
  Her gaits is some cayprishus, an’ the next ye never know,—­
  A single-foot o’ sunshine, a buck o’ snow er hail,—­
  But don’t be disapp’inted, fer Spring ain’t goin’ ter fail.

  She’s loopin’ down the hillside,—­the driffs is fadin’ out.
  She’s runnin’ down the river,—­d’ye see them risin’ trout?
  She’s loafin’ down the canyon,—­the squaw-bed’s growin’ blue,
  An’ the teeny Johnny-jump-ups is jest a-peekin’ thru.

  A thousan’ miles o’ pine-trees, with Douglas firs between,
  Is waitin’ fer her fingers to freshen up their green;
  With little tips o’ brightness the firs ’ill sparkle thick,
  An’ every yaller pine-tree, a giant candle-stick!

  The underbrush is risin’ an’ spreadin’ all around,
  Jest like a mist o’ greenness ’at hangs above the ground;
  A million manzanitas ‘ill soon be full o’ pink;
  So saddle up, my sonny,—­it’s time to ride, I think!

  We’ll ford er swim the river, becos there ain’t no bridge;
  We’ll foot the gulches careful, an’ lope along the ridge;
  We’ll take the trail to Nowhere, an’ travel till we tire,
  An’ camp beneath a pine-tree, an’ sleep beside the fire.

  We’ll see the blue-quail chickens, an’ hear ’em pipin’ clear;
  An’ p’raps we’ll sight a brown-bear, er else a bunch o’ deer;
  But nary a heathen goddess or god ’ill meet our eyes;
  For why?  There isn’t any!  They’re jest a pack o’ lies!

  Oh, wot’s the use o’ “red gods,” an’ “Pan,” an’ all that stuff?
  The natcheral facts o’ Springtime is wonderful enuff!
  An’ if there’s Someone made ’em, I guess He understood,
  To be alive in Springtime would make a man feel good.

California, 1913.

**A BUNCH OF TROUT-FLIES**

For Archie Rutledge

  Here’s a half-a-dozen flies,
  Just about the proper size
  For the trout of Dickey’s Run,—­
  Luck go with them every one!

  Dainty little feathered beauties,
  Listen now, and learn your duties:
  Not to tangle in the box;
  Not to catch on logs or rocks,
  Boughs that wave or weeds that float,
  Nor in the angler’s “pants” or coat!
  Not to lure the glutton frog
  From his banquet in the bog;
  Nor the lazy chub to fool,
  Splashing idly round the pool;
  Nor the sullen horned pout
  From the mud to hustle out!

  None of this vulgarian crew,
  Dainty flies, is game for you.
  Darting swiftly through the air
  Guided by the angler’s care,
  Light upon the flowing stream
  Like a winged fairy dream;
  Float upon the water dancing,
  Through the lights and shadows glancing,
  Till the rippling current brings you,
  And with quiet motion swings you,
  Where a speckled beauty lies
  Watching you with hungry eyes.

**Page 174**

Here’s your game and here’s your prize!  Hover near him, lure him, tease him, Do your very best to please him, Dancing on the water foamy, Like the frail and fair Salome, Till the monarch yields at last; Rises, and you have him fast!  Then remember well your duty,—­ Do not lose, but land, your booty; For the finest fish of all is *Salvelinus Fontinalis.*

  So, you plumed illusions, go,
  Let my comrade Archie know
  Every day he goes a-fishing
  I’ll be with him in well-wishing.
  Most of all when lunch is laid
  In the dappled orchard shade,
  With Will, Corinne, and Dixie too,
  Sitting as we used to do
  Round the white cloth on the grass
  While the lazy hours pass,
  And the brook’s contented tune
  Lulls the sleepy afternoon,—­
  Then’s the time my heart will be
  With that pleasant company!

June 17, 1913.

**INDEX OF FIRST LINES**

  A deeper crimson in the rose,
  A fir-tree standeth lonely
  A flawless cup:  how delicate and fine
  A little fir grew in the midst of the wood
  A mocking question!  Britain’s answer came
  A silent world,—­yet full of vital joy
  A silken curtain veils the skies,
  A tear that trembles for a little while
  Across a thousand miles of sea, a hundred leagues of land,
  Afterthought of summer’s bloom!
  Ah, who will tell me, in these leaden days,
  All along the Brazos River,
  All day long in the city’s canyon-street,
  All hail, ye famous Farmers!
  All night long, by a distant bell
  All the trees are sleeping, all the winds are still,
  Among the earliest saints of old, before the first Hegira
  At dawn in silence moves the mighty stream,
  At sunset, when the rosy light was dying

  Children of the elemental mother,
  “Clam O!  Fres’ Clam!” How strange it sounds and sweet,
  Come all ye good Centurions and wise men of the times,
  Come, give me back my life again, you heavy-handed Death!
  Come home, my love, come home!
  Could every time-worn heart but see Thee once again,
  Count not the cost of honour to the dead!

Daughter of Psyche, pledge of that wild night Dear Aldrich, now November’s mellow days Dear to my heart are the ancestral dwellings of America, *Deeds not Words*:  I say so too!  Deep in the heart of the forest the lily of Yorrow is growing; “Do you give thanks for this?—­or that?” No, God be thanked Do you remember, father,—­ Does the snow fall at sea?

  Ere thou sleepest gently lay

  Fair Phyllis is another’s bride:
  Fair Roslin Chapel, how divine
  Far richer than a thornless rose
  Flowers rejoice when night is done,
  For that thy face is fair I love thee not:
  Four things a man must learn to do
  From the misty shores of midnight, touched with splendours of the moon,
  Furl your sail, my little boatie:

**Page 175**

  Give us a name to fill the mind
  Glory of architect, glory of painter, and sculptor, and bard,
  God said, “I am tired of kings,”—­
  Great Nature had a million words,

Hear a word that Jesus spake Heart of France for a hundred years, Her eyes are like the evening air, Here’s a half-a-dozen flies, Here the great heart of France, Home, for my heart still calls me:  Honour the brave who sleep Hours fly, How blind the toil that burrows like the mole, “How can I tell,” Sir Edmund said, *How long is the night, brother,* How long the echoes love to play

  I count that friendship little worth
  I envy every flower that blows
  I have no joy in strife,
  I love thine inland seas,
  I never seen no “red gods”; I dunno wot’s a “lure”;
  I never thought again to hear
  I put my heart to school
  I read within a poet’s book
  I think of thee when golden sunbeams glimmer
  I would not even ask my heart to say
  If all the skies were sunshine,
  If I have erred in showing all my heart,
  If Might made Right, life were a wild-beasts’ cage:
  If on the closed curtain of my sight
  In a great land, a new land, a land full of labour and riches and
            confusion,
  In mirth he mocks the other birds at noon,
  In robes of Tynan blue the King was drest,
  In the blue heaven the clouds will come and go,
  In the pleasant time of Pentecost,
  Into the dust of the making of man,
  In warlike pomp, with banners flowing,
  It pleased the Lord of Angels (praise His name!)
  It’s little I can tell
  It was my lot of late to travel far

  “Joy is a Duty,”—­so with golden lore
  Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
  Just to give up, and trust

  Knight-Errant of the Never-ending Quest,

  Let me but do my work from day to day,
  Let me but feel thy look’s embrace,
  “Lights out” along the land,
  Like a long arrow through the dark the train is darting,
  Limber-limbed, lazy god, stretched on the rock,
  Lord Jesus, Thou hast known
  Long ago Apollo called to Aristaeus, youngest of the shepherds,
  Long had I loved this “Attic shape,” the brede
  Long, long ago I heard a little song,
  Long, long, long the trail
  Lover of beauty, walking on the height
  Low dost thou lie amid the languid ooze,

  March on, my soul, nor like a laggard stay!
  Mother of all the high-strung poets and singers departed,

  Not Dante when he wandered by the river Arno,
  Not to the swift, the race:
  Now in the oak the sap of life is welling,

  O dark the night and dim the day
  O garden isle, beloved by Sun and Sea,
  O Lord our God, Thy mighty hand
  O mighty river! strong, eternal Will,
  O Mother mountains! billowing far to the snow-lands,
  O Music hast thou only heard
  O who will walk a mile with me

 **Page 176**

  O wonderful!  How liquid clear
  O youngest of the giant brood
  Oh, gallantly they fared forth in khaki and in blue,
  Oh, quick to feel the lightest touch
  Oh, the angler’s path is a very merry way,
  Oh, was I born too soon, my dear, or were you born too late,
  Oh, what do you know of the song, my dear,
  Oh, why are you shining so bright, big Sun,
  Once, only once, I saw it clear,—­
  One sail in sight upon the lonely sea,
  Only a little shrivelled seed,

  Peace without Justice is a low estate,—­

  Read here, O friend unknown,
  Remember, when the timid light

  Saints are God’s flowers, fragrant souls
  Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul:
  Ship after ship, and every one with a high-resounding name,
  Sign of the Love Divine
  Some three-score years and ten ago
  Soul of a soldier in a poet’s frame,
  Stand back, ye messengers of mercy!  Stand
  Stand fast, Great Britain!

  The British bard who looked on Eton’s walls,
  The clam that once, on Jersey’s banks,
  The cornerstone in Truth is laid,
  The cradle I have made for thee
  The day returns by which we date our years:
  The fire of love was burning, yet so low
  The gabled roofs of old Malines
  The glory of ships is an old, old song,
  The grief that is but feigning,
  The heavenly hills of Holland,—­
  The laggard winter ebbed so slow
  The land was broken in despair,
  The melancholy gift Aurora gained
  The moonbeams over Arno’s vale in silver flood were pouring,
  The mountains that inclose the vale
  The nymphs a shepherd took
  The other night I had a dream, most clear
  The record of a faith sublime,
  The river of dreams runs quietly down
  The roar of the city is low,
  The rough expanse of democratic sea
  The shadow by my finger cast
  The tide, flows in to the harbour,—­
  The time will come when I no more can play
  The winds of war-news change and veer:
  The worlds in which we live at heart are one,
  There are many kinds of anger, as many kinds of fire:
  There are many kinds of love, as many kinds of light,
  There are songs for the morning and songs for the night,
  There is a bird I know so well,
  They tell me thou art rich, my country:  gold
  This is the soldier brave enough to tell
  This is the window’s message,
  Thou warden of the western gate, above Manhattan Bay,
  Thou who hast made thy dwelling fair
  “Through many a land your journey ran,
  ’Tis fine to see the Old World, and travel up and down
  To thee, plain hero of a rugged race,
  Two dwellings, Peace, are thine
  Two hundred years of blessing I record
  “Two things,” the wise man said, “fill me with awe:
  ’Twas far away and long ago,

  Under the cloud of world-wide war,

**Page 177**

  Waking from tender sleep,
  We men that go down for a livin’ in ships to the sea,—­
  We met on Nature’s stage,
  What hast thou done, O womanhood of France,
  What is Fortune, what is Fame?
  What makes the lingering Night so cling to thee?
  What shall I give for thee,
  What time the rose of dawn is laid across the lips of night,
  When down the stair at morning
  When May bedecks the naked trees
  When Staevoren town was in its prime
  When the frosty kiss of Autumn in the dark
  When tulips bloom in Union Square,
  When to the garden of untroubled thought
  Where’s your kingdom, little king?
  Who knows how many thousand years ago
  Who seeks for heaven alone to save his soul,
  Who watched the worn-out Winter die?
  Winter on Mount Shasta,
  With eager heart and will on fire,
  With memories old and wishes new
  With two bright eyes, my star, my love
  Wordsworth, thy music like a river rolls

  Ye gods of battle, lords of fear,
  Yes, it was like you to forget,
  You dare to say with perjured lips,
  You only promised me a single hour:
  Yours is a garden of old-fashioned flowers;