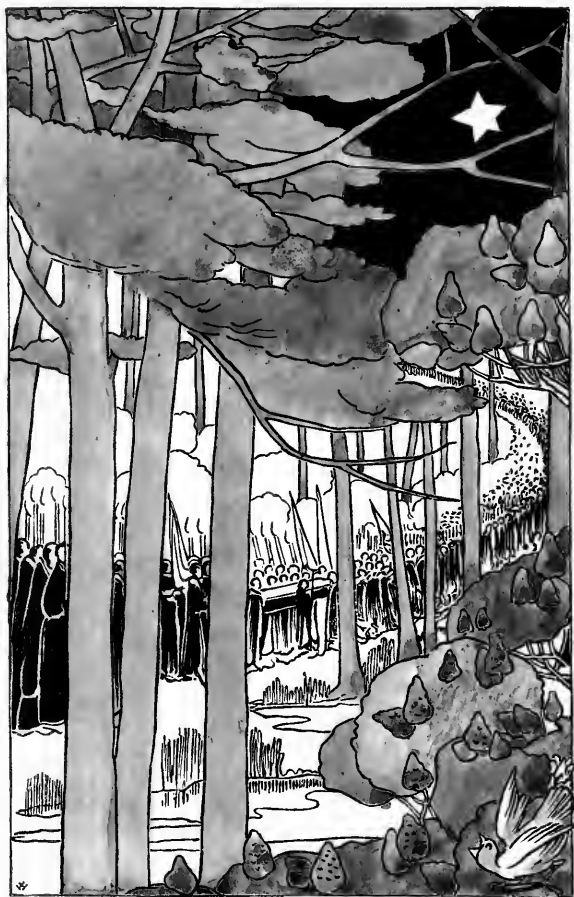




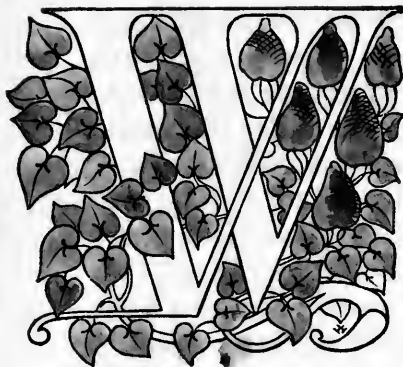
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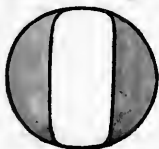
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I.

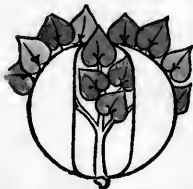


WHEN LILACS last in the door-yard bloomed, And the great star early drooped in the western sky in the night, I mourned,  & yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.



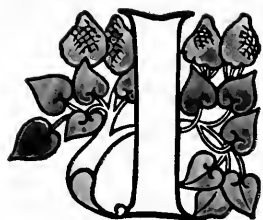
EVER - RETURNING spring! trinity sure to me you bring; Lilac blooming perennial, and drooping star in the west, And thought of him I love.

II.



POWERFUL, western, fallen star! O shades of night! O moody, tearful night! O great star disappeared! O the black murk that hides the star! O cruel hands that hold me powerless! O helpless soul of me! O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul!

III.



IN the door-yard fronting
an old farm-house near
the white-washed palings,
Stands the lilac bush tall-
growing with heart-shap-
ed leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising deli-
cate, with the perfume strong I love, With
every leaf a miracle—and from this bush
in the door-yard, With delicate-coloured
blossoms, and heart-shaped leaves of rich
green, A sprig with its flower, I break.

IV.



IN the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling
a song.

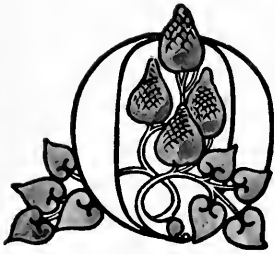


SOLITARY the thrush, The
hermit withdrawn to himself,
avoiding the settlements, Sings
by himself a song.



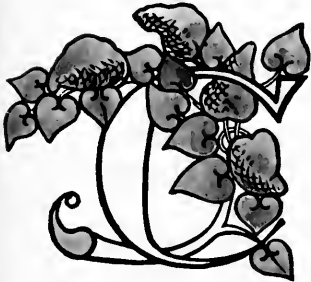
SONG of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life, (for
well dear brother, I know, If
thou wast not gifted to sing, thou
wouldst surely die.)

V.



VER the breast of the
spring, the land, amid cit-
ies, Amid lanes & through
old woods, where lately the
violets peeped from the
ground, spotting the grey
debris, Amid the grass in the fields each
side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-speared wheat, every
grain from its shroud in the dark-brown
fields uprisen, Passing the apple-tree blows
of white & pink in the orchards, Carrying
a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

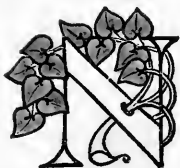
VI.



OFFIN THAT passes
through lanes and streets,
Through day and night,
with the great cloud dark-
ening the land, With the
pomp of the inlooped flags
with the cities draped in black, With the
show of the States themselves as of crape-
veiled women standing, With processions
long and winding and the flambeaus of the

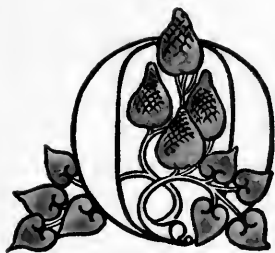
the night, With the countless torches lit,
 with the silent sea of faces and the unbared
 heads, With the waiting depot, the arriving
 coffin, and the sombre faces, With dirges
 through the night, with the thousand voices
 rising strong & solemn, With all the mourn-
 ful voices of the dirges, poured around the
 coffin, The dim-lit churches & the shudder-
 ing organs—Where amid these you jour-
 ney, With the tolling, tolling bells' perpet-
 ual clang, Here, coffin that slowly passes,
 I give you my sprig of lilac.

VII.




NOT for you, for one, alone;
 Blossoms and branches green
 to coffins all I bring: For fresh
 as the morning, thus would I
 chant a song for you, O sane and sacred
 Death. All over bouquets of roses, O Death!
 I cover you over with roses and early lilies;
 But mostly and now the lilac that blooms
 the first, Copious, I break, I break the
 sprigs from the bushes! With loaded arms
 I come, pouring for you, For you and the
 coffins all of you, O Death.

VIII.

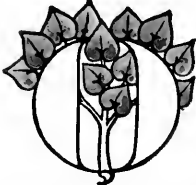



WESTERN orb, sailing
the heaven! Now I know
what you must have meant,
as a month since we walk-
ed, As we walked up and
down in the dark blue so
mystic, As we walked in silence the trans-
parent shadowy night, As I saw you had
something to tell, as you bent to me night
after night, As you drooped from the sky
low down, as if to my side, while the other
stars all looked on; As we wandered toge-
ther the solemn night, (for something, I
know not what, kept me from sleep,) As the
night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the
west, ere you went, how full you were of
woe; As I stood on the rising ground in the
breeze, in the cool transparent night, As
I watched where you passed and was lost
in the netherward black of the night, As
my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as
where you, sad orb, Concluded, dropped in
the night, and was gone.

IX.

ING on there in the swamp! O singer bashful and tender! I hear your notes, I hear your call; I hear, I come presently, I understand you, But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detained me, The star, my comrade departing, holds and detains me.

X.

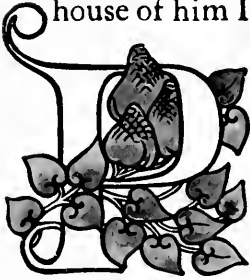
OW shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved? And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone? And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

EA-WINDS, blown from east and west, Blown from the Eastern Sea, & blown from the Western Sea, till there on the prairies meeting, These, and with these, and the breath of my chant, I perfume the grave of him I love.

XI.





WHAT shall I hang on the chamber walls? And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls, To adorn the burial-house of him I love?




PICTURES of growing spring and farms & homes, With the Fourth-month eve at sun down, and the grey smoke lucid & bright, With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning, expanding the air; With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, & the pale green leaves of the trees prolific, In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here and there, With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows, And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys, And all the scenes of life, and the workshops, & the workmen homeward returning.

XII.

 O! body and soul! this land!
Mighty Manhattan, with spires,
and the sparkling and hurrying
tides, and the ships, The varied
and ample land, the South and the North
in the light, Ohio's shores, & flashing Mis-
souri, And ever the far-spreading prairies,
covered with grass and corn.

 O! the most excellent sun, so
calm and haughty, The violet
and purple morn, with just-felt
breezes; The gentle, soft-born,
measureless light, The miracle spreading
bathing all, the fulfilled noon, The com-
ing eve, delicious, the welcome night and
the stars, Over my cities shining all, envel-
oping man and land.

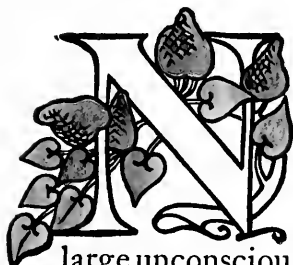
XIII.

 ING on! sing on you grey-brown
bird! Sing from the swamps, the
recesses, pour your chant from
the bushes, Limitless out of the
dusk, out of the cedars & pines.



ING on, dearest brother—warble your reedy song, Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe, O liquid, and free, and tender! O wild and loose to my soul! O wondrous singer! You only I hear, . . . yet the star holds me, (but will soon depart;) Yet the lilac, with mastering odour, holds me.

XIV.



OW while I sat in the day, and looked forth, In the close of the day, with its light, and the fields of spring, & the farmer preparing his crops, In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests, In the heavenly aerial beauty, after the perturbed winds and the storms; Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of children & women, The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sailed, And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labour, And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and minu-

tiæ of daily usages, And the streets, how
their throbbings throbbed, and the cities
pent—lo! then & there, Falling upon them
all, & among them all, enveloping me with
the rest, Appeared the cloud, appeared the
long black trail, And I knew Death, its
thought, & the sacred knowledge of Death.

XV.



HEN with the Knowledge
of Death as walking one side
of me, And the Thought of
Death close-walking the oth-
er side of me, And I in the middle, as with
companions, and as holding the hands of
companions, I fled forth to the hiding re-
ceiving night, that talks not, Down to the
shores of the water, the path by the swamp
in the dimness, To the solemn shadowy ce-
dars, and ghostly pines so still.



AND the singer so shy to the rest
received me, The grey-brown
bird I know received us Com-
rades three, And he sang what
seemed the song of Death, and a verse for
him I love.

FROM deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars and
the ghostly pines so still, Came
the carol of the bird.

AND the charm of the singing
rapt me, As I held, as if by their
hands, my Comrades in the
night; And the voice of my
spirit tallied the song of the bird.

XVI.

COME, lovely and soothing
Death, Undulate round the
world, serenely arriving, arriv-
ing, In the day, in the night,
to all, to each, Sooner or later delicate
Death.

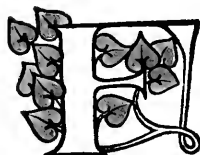
RAISED be the fathomless
universe, For life and joy, and
for objects & knowledge curi-
ous; And for love, sweet love
—But praise! praise! praise! For the
sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding
Death.



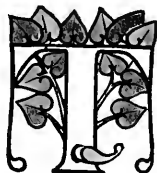
ARK Mother always gliding near with soft feet, Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome? Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all, I bring thee a song that, when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.



PPROACH, encompassing Death — strong deliveress! When it is so, when thou hast taken them, I joyously sing the dead, Lost in the loving, floating ocean of thee, Laved in the flood of thy bliss O Death.

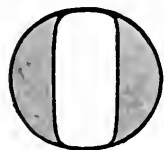


ROM me to thee glad serenades, Dances for thee I propose, saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee, And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky, are fitting, And life & the fields, & the huge and thoughtful night.

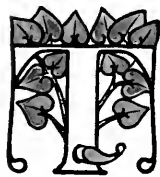


HE night, in silence, under many a star, The ocean shore, & the husky whispering wave whose voice I know, And the

soul turning to thee, O vast & well-veiled
Death, And the body gratefully nestling
close to thee.



VER the tree-tops I float thee
a song, Over the rising & sink-
ing waves, over the myriad
fields and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-packed cities all, and the
teeming wharves & ways, I float this carol
with joy, with joy to thee O Death!

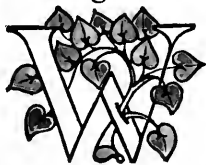


XVII.

O the tally of my soul, Loud
and strong kept up the grey-
brown bird, With pure, deli-
berate notes spreading filling
the night.

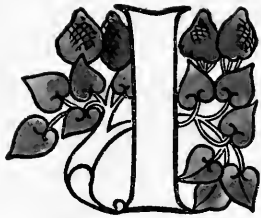


LOUD in the pines & cedars dim,
Clear in the freshness moist,
and the swamp-perfume, And
I with my Comrades there in
the night.

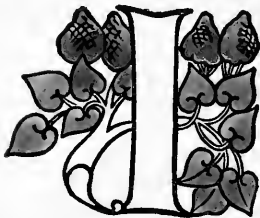


HILE my sight that was
bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of
visions.

XVIII.



SAW the vision of armies,
And I saw, as in noiseless
dreams, hundreds of battle-
flags, Borne through the
smoke of the battles, and
pierced with missiles, I saw
them, And carried hither & yon through
the smoke, and torn and bloody, And at last
but a few shreds of the flags left on the staffs,
(and all in silence,) And the staffs all splint-
ered and broken.



SAW battle-corpses, my-
riads of them, And the
white skeletons of young
men—I saw them; I saw
the debris and debris of all
the slain soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought;
They themselves were fully at rest, they
suffered not, The living remained and suf-
fered, the mother suffered, And the wife
and the child, and the musing comrade
suffered, And the armies that remained
suffered.



XIX.

LASSING the visions, passing the night, Passing, unloosing the hold of my Comrades' hands, Passing the song of the hermit bird, & the tallying song of my soul, Victorious song, Death's outlet song, yet varying, ever altering song; As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night, Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning & warning, and yet again bursting with joy, Covering the earth & filling the spread of the heaven, As that powerful psalm in the night, I heard from recesses.

XX.



MUST I leave thee, lilac with heart-shaped leaves? Must I leave thee there in the doorway, blooming, returning with spring?



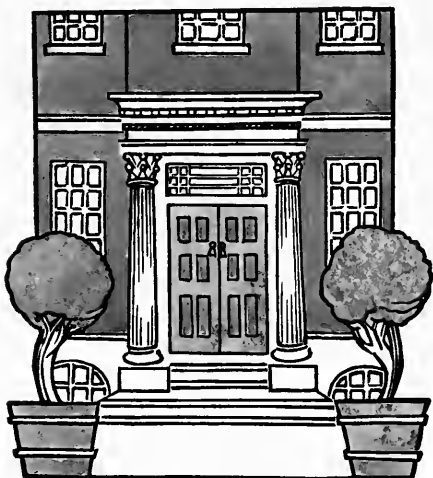
MUST I pass from my song for thee—From my gaze on thee, in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee, O comrade lustrous, with silver face in the night?



XXI.

ET each I keep, and all, re-
trievements out of the night,
The song, the wondrous
chant of the grey-brown
bird, And the tallying chant,
the echo aroused in my soul,
With the lustrous and drooping star with
the countenance full of woe, With the lilac
tall, and its blossoms of mastering odour,
With the holders holding my hand near-
ing the call of the bird, Comrades mine,
and I in the midst, and their memory ever
I keep, for the dead I loved so well, For
the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and
lands—and this for his dear sake, Lilac
and star and bird, twined with the chant
of my soul, With the holders holding my
hand, nearing the call of the bird, There
in the fragrant pines, and the cedars dusk
and dim.

HERE ENDS PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S FUNERAL HYMN, REPRINTED IN LOVE OF THE POET & ADMIRATION FOR THE SUBJECT, AMONG THE GREAT POEMS OF THE LANGUAGE, AT THE ESSEX HOUSE PRESS, UNDER THE CARE OF C. R. ASHBEE, WHO HAS DRAWN THE FRONTISPIECE & CAPITALS.



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