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A STORY OF THE PAST

OR

THE ROMANCE OF SCIENCE

BY

CHARLES H. STERNBERG



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No. 1.

TO
MY FRIEND
AND THE FRIEND OF PALÆONTOLOGY
PROFESSOR H. F. OSBORN, LL.D.
PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY, NEW YORK CITY

WITH THE HOPE THAT IT WILL LEAD THE
READER TO VISIT THIS GREAT MUSEUM
AND OTHERS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA
WHERE ARE BEAUTIFULLY PRESERVED THE
ANIMALS AND PLANTS OF OTHER DAYS
AND ALSO WITH THE HOPE THAT IT MAY
LEAD OTHERS TO GIVE THEIR LIVES TO THE
WORK OF A FOSSIL HUNTER IN THE GREAT
FIELDS OF THE WEST WHERE THE HARVEST
TRULY IS GREAT AND THE LABORERS FEW

CONTENTS

	PAGE
A STORY OF THE PAST	1
A SONG OF LOVE	35
CHRISTMAS	37
WHERE THE SUNFLOWERS GROW	39
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH PSALM	41
GRACE	46
CHRISTMAS—1909	49
CALVARY	51
AND THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE	53
NEW YEAR'S EVE	55
MAUDE	57
THINGS NOT SEEN	59
THE PERMIAN BEDS OF TEXAS	61
IN THE LARAMIE	80

A STORY OF THE PAST

From childhood's days I've longed to know
The wonders of the past;
And as I into manhood grow,
I choose my work at last.

I then resolved that, come what may,
I'd give my brawn and brain
From manhood till I'm old and grey,
To lengthen out the chain

Of life upon the earth we tread
Since early dawn of life.
Now, I think that I've been led
To enter this great strife.

As child, on old Otsego's hill
I found a limestone ledge
That shells of many species fill,
Far, far from ocean's edge.

And yet they once were living shells,
That laved in ocean's brine;
They cast on me a wondering spell,
When did they live? the time?

I ever loved the rocks, and hills
With deep green hemlock crowned;
I loved to listen to the rills,
That gurgling, pleasant sound.

I loved as child to trace a brook
From mouth at river's edge,
Up to the very furthest nook
Where springs burst from the ledge.

I loved on Susquehanna's shore
To cast the baited hook,
Entice the speckled trout once more;
I loved old Nature's book

That ever lies wide open here,
With vaulted sky above,
Those painted pictures ever dear,
How can one help but love?

I'd rather sit in birch-bark boat
'Mong water lilies sweet,
And listen to the warbling note
Of bird I love to greet,

Than in the richest galleries look,
Hung with the works of art;
There's beauty in the wayside brook
That art cannot impart.

I loved the placid lake so deep,
Beneath the neighboring hill,
I loved to watch the Lion* sleep
So solemn and so still.

* At the head of Otsego Lake, N. Y., is a bluff called the Sleeping Lion, from a fancied resemblance to a lion.

When from Otsego's smiling hill
I went to Western Plain,
Fresh beauties there my bosom fill,
And wealth of travel gain.

Who made men's minds, if not our God?
Who gives him power to think?
Are we but creatures of the sod?
Naught but a simple link

In the great chain of life He's riven,
As helpless as the clay?
Are we but like the cattle driven,
Live only our short day?

O no! though rulers of our fate,
Our God will use us still
To bring about His plans so great,
Still subject to His will.

And I believe that God chose me,
Unworthy though I am,
To add my mite to Life's Great Tree,
To carry out His plan;

To show to man His wondrous work
Through all the scenes of time,
Since life in humble beings lurk:
Rich facts for us to mine.

I here profess my strong belief
In my revealed Lord;
I've found Him in the rocky leaf,
And his inspired word.

For forty years I've lived with God,
Oft from the haunts of men.
I've thought upon His wondrous word
And scenes beyond our ken.

I've found the crust of our old earth
A mighty funeral urn
Where countless forms of life had birth;
Then others took their turn

And left in sepulchers of stone
The dead He buried there.
But they are not dry bones alone;
I see them as they were

When plants and creatures waged the war
That from the first they wrought
For daily bread, or offspring care,
Or love's sweet battles fought.

So will you go with me, dear friend,
To the Cretaceous shore,
That sea that seems to have no end,
Its mysteries explore?

I stand now in the distant past
Beneath the stars of heaven,
Dark shadows o'er the earth are cast,
The clouds with thunder riven ;

But all at once, the rounded sun
Through darkened clouds of night ;
The sparkling light its way has won,
And shines o'er islands bright.

It makes the sea a burnished shield,
There, mirrored in the deep,
The fleeing clouds on azure field
With the isles and forests meet.

I stood upon a limestone ridge,
Cretaceous seas below.
The islands seem a distant bridge
Round which the ebb-tide flow.

Upon those isles of emerald green,
Great red-woods raise their heads :
Magnolias glimmered o'er the scene,
Each one its fragrance sheds.

The oak, and myrtle trees, unite
To form a canopy of green,
While trunks of beech and birch-wood bright
Gleam o'er the enchanted scene.

Here too a clump of evergreen
Adds color to the view;
Beneath the trees great aisles are seen,
There rain has left its dew.

The shining sarsaparilla vine
Twines round the gnarled bole
Of oak, whose branches intertwine
Where swift air currents roll.

The gorgeous flowers of every shade
Of purple, violet, blue,
Enrich the green of opening glade,
With tints of many a hue.

Within the lovely sheltered park,
With green grass carpet floored,
Encircled by the wooded arc,
The birds in splendor soared.

Now level rays of glowing west
Shine o'er these distant scenes,
And daylight lingers, till to rest
Has sunk the sun's last beams.

The red bars of departing day
Are spread across the skies,
And in a sea of glorious spray
The daylight slowly dies.

The burning globe sinks in the sea,
The twilight floods the deep;
The wind now rises on the lea
Where sea and island meet.

And now the Queen of night appears
In distant eastern sky,
O'er limestone cliffs, whose summit rears
Their towering buttes on high.

I walk among the darkening trees,
I hear the rustling leaves,
And shadows flicker in the breeze,
From silver moon that weaves

Bright patterns on the wood and park,
That wave in trembling plane,
More beautiful than the works of art
We try to sketch in vain.

The moon sails silently along,
Her image in the deep,
The stars creep out in countless throng,
The world below, asleep.

I'm sleepy, and my bed will seek
In jutting crag's sea cave,
That faces on the murmuring deep,
Whose floor the waters lave.

When morning sun streams in my eyes
I rise from bed of leaves,
I look around, lost in surprise,
There is no sea, no trees.

'Twas but a day dream of my mind,—
They come so often now,
For thus imagination'll find
What has occurred, and how.

But now a rolling prairie lay
Like map there all unfurled,
And sandstone bluffs of red and grey,
A common work-day world.

For the Cretaceous ocean life
These cliffs are but the grave,
No more in earthly paradise
The forest branches wave.

Living creatures, plants as well,
Left relics in the sand;
Of hundreds, thousands could I tell
That died on sea or land.

With bag across my shoulder slung
And pick in eager hand,
To every dizzy cliff I clung
And scanned the hardened sand.

I searched each crevice, every nook
O'er numerous miles of land,
On every slope or butte I look.
Oh! for a fairy hand

To point out Nature's secret cells
I seek in beds of sand,
In which her buried treasure dwells;
Those guarded secrets grand,

More rare than gold or gems of earth,
Are often hid from sight,
More valued than the storied worth
Of diamonds shining bright.

Ah! if I find those fossils rare
Within the sandstone brown,
I walk, as if I tread on air;
'Tis glory and renown

For me to add to human store
A link in life's great chain,
And trace it back to the dim lore
Of ancient days again.

At first, Dakota's sandstone hoar
Repeats the story past,
And tell in lines not read before
Of groves on islands cast.

Fort Benton then with limestone white
Below its jet black shale,
While stony posts,—they shine so bright
Along the hill and vale.

And so we climb that mighty stair
A thousand feet in height,
To Niobrara chalk draw near
With shades of yellow, white.

But on the very western line
Of Kansas' raised plains,
Fort Pierre, with darkest shales to mine,
And search for gold again.

Then stony Fox Hills rear their heads
Of yellow shining sand,
With miry clay mixed through the beds
That cover all the land.

While higher still, the Judith bed,
That bleak and barren land,
Where the fired lignite has burned red
The shale beds, close at hand.

And then the land from ocean free,
Finds room for waters sweet:
And leaves the far famed Laramie,
A basin broad and deep.

And so we climb ten thousand feet,
Up through the rising floor,
And find entombed a countless fleet,
That moor on seas no more.

Now I to central Kansas plain
And with eager footsteps turn
To dig in sandstone's solid grain,
For leaves in its dark urn.

In nodules of the hardest stone
I find a leaf entombed,
A leaf that on green tree has grown
Where once the ocean roamed.

The leaf fell in the yielding silt,
In edge of sloping beach,
No wind, or sun, or frost can wilt,
It's buried out of reach.

Time rolls along, old ocean goes,
Its streams run off our shore;
The land on every side arose,
The billows beat no more.

And sandstones toward heaven reach
A thousand feet or more
Since that leaf fell upon the beach
Of the broad ocean's floor.

In the red sandstone buried deep
Lay stem and printed line
Of the rich forests, now asleep
In sands laid down by time.

For here beneath the soil we tread
Are traces everywhere
Of leaves, of fruit, of trees now dead,
These rocky bosoms bear,

Fig, Birch, Magnolia, and Pine
The Plane tree's lovely flower,
The Cedar and Aralia vine,
Green Myrtle forms a bower.

So I might name four hundred trees
That under Kansas sky
Made music in the passing breeze,
And raised their crowns on high.

But I must climb through other rocks,
And leave these sands behind ;
I skip the Benton's limestone blocks,
The chalk of Kansas find.

For twenty years my feet have trod
The red and yellow chalk
All buried 'neath the short grass sod,
And of it now I'll talk.

Presto change! We're back once more
Upon an inland sea's broad shore;
We walk along a sheltered cave,
And hear the white caps furious rave

Outside the wind and wave swept bar,
Far as the eye can reach, far, far.
The tide is coming quickly in,
And rolls along with muttered din,

As o'er the rocks that line the shore
It constant beats in ceaseless roar;
I see the waves thrown mountain high,
Thrust up athwart the northern sky,

And as they constant beat on shore,
They push the floxam on before,
As far as angry waves can lap,
With white foam which the wavelets cap,

Far as the human eye can scan,
The southern winds, the billows ran,
Until they cast in sullen roar
Great heaps of water on the shore.

But now the wind's sharp edge is dulled,
The wild waves into sleep are lulled:
So ere a clock has ceased to go,
We hear its tick so still and slow.

We scarcely know it goes at all;
And so the billows gently fall,
Until as far as eye can reach
A burnished flood throbs on the beach.

And what were troublous waves before,
Lie level as a dancer's floor.
While a broad belt of shining light,
Engendered by the sun's beam bright,

Spread out across the level sea,
And even brighten green wood tree.
But watch and see, far to the right
A wondrous fleet now heaves in sight.

At first, like steamer's masts they seem,
All bared to recent winds so keen,
But as they near and nearer come,
Now racing in on home bound run,

We see long arching necks arise,
Heads stretched upward to the skies,
While graceful forms on waters lie,
And with huge paddles swiftly ply,

They rush along at rapid gait,
And leave broad pathways in their wake;
And towering there above them all,
A giant, with his head so tall,

Full twenty feet it's raised on high,
Ambitious he to reach the sky,
This leader safely guides his fleet
Where still and calm the waters sleep.

And as we gain a closer view
We long to shout for all that crew,
Of that great fishing fleet so rare,
Who sail up to the banks with care.

No racing yacht, with lines for speed,
And manned by men of any breed,
Could ever equal them for grace,
Or ride beside in ocean race.

They move along with perfect ease,
But now their laboring paddles cease,
And we behold each beauteous line
Reflected on the silent brine.

A great broad body like a boat,
In storm or calm 'twill safely float,
And four great oars on either side,
The power to move the boat supplied,

A short tail, that as rudder act,
To keep the floating mass intact
So it may ride the ocean's crest,
With the same ease it lies at rest:

A neck is raised with swan-like grace,
Pushed out, when rushing in the chase;
A shapely head rides over all,
With eyes that shine like tapers tall,

So large and round they seem to glow
Like polished diamonds in a row.
These graceful sailors swing around
Until they reach their hunting ground.

Then heads on arched necks that bow,
Dash in the watery depth below;
Impaled upon their glistening teeth,
A scaly fish, that far beneath

Had seen that shadowy mass on high,
But could not from that terror fly:
These fishers find prey in their lair,
And toss it high into the air,

And as it falls on teeth so bright,
Burnished like the rays of light,
Jaws close down with greatest ease,
It passes down to help appease

An appetite, gained in the chase,
Where fifty saurians joined the race.
Oh, shall I dare to give the name
Of ancient mariner known to fame,

Who lived up through Cretaceous Time,
And then he perished, all the line,
The greatest swimming lizard they
That ever braved the ocean way.

For fifty feet of length or more
Have strewed their bones on ocean's floor.
Saurian in Greek for lizard, and
Plesiosaur, for all the band

Of all the short-tailed, long-necked crew,
Those sailors whose dead bodies strew
The ocean's upturned floor, their home,
Alas! those seas no more they roam.

But we must move along the shore
To other scenes, so rich the store
Of the rich life, that reveled free
In the warm flood of tropic sea.

And as we walk along the beach,
The tide has left beyond its reach
Great shells, that stand four feet or more,
Lie helpless, stranded on the shore:

A feast for some titanic race,
Who'd use these shells, their feast to grace.
Now as we turn a bluff's smooth curve,
And find a nook, that well may serve

To shelter us from wind and sun,
(For the hot rays have just begun
To make us feel the need of shade),
And so these towering rocks will aid;

But see, out on the waters still
A monstrous body moves at will,
And now at rest, he seems asleep,
Lies stiff there, on the shining deep,

Enormous head four feet in size,
With rings of bone enclosing eyes,
At end of snout, a ram of bone,
The whole head like a flattened cone,

Broad behind where arches strong
From the head wide bones prolong,
To give a sure and solid base
On which the jaws will fall and raise,

Like lever pressed on fulcrum strong,
We move enormous weights along;
While a great flattened swimming tail,
Used as a scull or as a flail,

Much like a serpent he'd appear
To any eyes appalled with fear,
But I who know this lizard race
Will eager watch him in the chase,

Yes! look across the level mere
And see that monster dark and drear;
He lifts his head above the sea,
An echoing hiss is borne to me,

“A note of wild defiance pours”
That echo on the limestone shores:
See, now he raises neck and head,
While tongue lolls out, a glowing red.

His dark eyes gleam like roaring flame,
We hear his echoing hiss again;
Far in the distance near the shore,
He sees his enemy once more,

Who, proud extended on the wave,
Returns the challenge just as brave.
But see! the monsters churn the deep,
Like leashed hounds that bay and leap

And strain their ropes the tension straight,
That threaten every time to break.
But now, our saurians work up speed,
Ah! all their nerve and strength they'll need,

For thirty feet they span in length,
Lithe bodies, wrapt in sinewy strength;
Both seem so eager for the fight;
Watch close, 'twill be a glorious sight,

The saurian's stretch upon the wave,
Great crests of foam their bodies lave,
A whitened wake behind them glows,
With pointed head, aimed at their foes ;

Their paddles now are moving fast,
In rapid undulations cast ;
While tail's vibrating force is spent,
To force the mass to battle bent :

And so we watch with bated breath,
Knowing that one must meet his death :
They come like engines end on end,
Each would the other's vitals rend.

The victim rolls upon his side,
His lifeblood dyes the shining tide :
While victor raised his head on high,
And hisses forth his conquering cry.

And now they gather large and least,
And meet together for the feast,
For they are on a hunting trip.
Where schools of fishes skim and skip

Along the ocean's surface bright ;
Their shining scales gleam in the light,
They fly to 'scape the hungry crew
Of reptiles coming into view.

No claw armed finger hands have they
To firmly hold their frightened prey.
But see, above their opening jaws
Two rows of teeth to act as claws

Are firmly planted in the head,
Recurving from their bony bed;
And when they catch their evening fare,
The struggling fish impaneled there

Cannot escape the throat, I know,
For lower jaws expand below
And force the food through open throat
While they on scurrying fishes gloat;

To them in eager rushing race
Hundreds succumb ere ends the chase.
But let us climb that bluffly chain,
And a fresh view of ocean gain.

But ere we reach that cliff so tall
Great shadows all around us pall.
We look aloft and there on high
Huge forms stretched out all safely lie;

The wings span twenty feet or more.
Who ever saw such wings before?
Now hurried by the passing breeze,
Our dragon lizard drops in seas,

And reappears with fish in jaws,
That nicely take the place of claws,
Or else, these reptiles soar on high
Like eagles mounting in the sky.

And when at night they seek their rest
They cling to some tall hillock's crest;
But we have climbed the hillside o'er,
Again find shelter on the shore,

That forms just here a horse shoe bend;
Please now your kind attention lend.
A scurrying school of fishes small,
Urged on by fear (a moving wall),

Of a great fish. I see him well;
He rises on the evening swell;
The white foam gurgles off his back,
And leaves behind a shining track.

His forked tail four feet across,
That either side the salt foam toss,
His total length, twelve feet or more,
Have any seen such fish before?

His great head armed with teeth, a crest
That just above the wave is prest.
His fins, three feet in length, or more,
Now urge him on, as towards the shore

The school is rushing for the shoal,
Oh! can they reach that sheltered goal?
We hope they reach it; yet, alas,
See down his maw the fishes pass

Of that huge fish, so hungry he
Notes not the tide runs out to the sea.
He turns at last. Ah! 'tis too late,
And he himself has met his fate.

See, struggling now, with many a gasp,
And smeared with slime, his life is past,
He's buried there on ocean floor.
He'll hunt the foolish fish no more.

But now a change comes o'er our dream,
Things are not always what they seem.
The ocean floods have passed away,
The Plains of Kansas, there they lay;

Here the green wheat fields gently wave
Above the old Cretaceous grave,
Where many forms in mouldering heap,
Are resting here, in their long sleep,

No more to swarm the watery way,
Or safely rest in sheltered bay;
Raised where our weary feet may walk
Upon the sculptured beds of chalk.

The rains of ages have laid bare
The ancient dead once buried there,
Far, far below in limestone vault.
But ere we go on let us halt

And think of what has gone before,
Ere we explore the ocean's floor.
From Mississippi's turgid flood,
With flood plain covered o'er with wood,

To treeless prairies of the west,
And mountains vast, where now they rest,
Until the broad Pacific spread
Its thundering waters o'er its bed.

How different now, from long ago,
Since the salt ocean billows throw
Its flood of water on the beach,
And far across the sandy reach.

What else within Time's store appears,
Through all these long five million years
Since that same sea so grim and hoar
Had ceased to beat on eastern shore.

It reached from Mexico's warm stream,
Up, where great icebergs yearly gleam.
As the broad land rose from the deep,
A river's born, its course will keep

Through all the changes wrought by time,
Since Kansas saw the old coast line,
And Colorado's canyon deep
Was carved by floods that never sleep;

And with sharp tools of rock and sand
Has sculptured out the rising land.
At the same rate, that land has risen
In efforts made to reach to heaven.

So now a gorge six thousand feet,
Cut broad above, below 'tis steep,
Through full three hundred miles or more
Of the old ocean's rising floor,

And yet the water rushes by,
On the same plane it used to fly,
As when the right of way it gains,
Upon the lifting central plains;

Through all the changing scenes of time,
The river works to jingling rhyme,
Of water running over rocks
That line the floor in mighty blocks.

Slowly the land was raised on high,
A barrier 'thwart the deep blue sky,
Gashed either side by canyons deep,
Where water far below can creep,

Or rush with mighty roar along,
Where echoing wall the sounds prolong,
Far towards the center of the earth
Where the eternal fires have birth,

Bold gashes cut through solid rock,
While here and there great masses block,
But waters ceaseless, wearing flow
Cut out the dam and flood below.

If I should thread this rapid stream
'Twould seem the river of my dream,
The river called by ancients Styx.
It bears me on through gates of death,

Where I shall all forgotten be,
As voyager on life's troubled sea.
But on the great eternal shore
I wake to LIFE forevermore.

And thus our minds run here and there
On Kansas plains and everywhere.
As I've led parties oft before
I'll fit a party to explore

Old ocean's bed so grim and bold,
Raised from the sea, laid down of old;
We'll need two horses young and strong
To carry tents and food along,

With picks and shovels, tools galore,
Canned food, salt meat, and still much more
Of sundries added to our stock.
We'll need to dig in chalky rock.

With feed for horses, plaster too,
Lumber and nails and beds a few,
Composed of oil cloth for the ground,
And blankets warm, to wrap around

Our bodies, to keep out the chill,
Of Kansas winds we'll have our fill.
A stove of course we'll surely take,
And in it our corn bread will bake.

With biscuits hot, and coffee strong
To urge our lazy bones along—
Now "all aboard" our drivers cry,
And off we go, so quick and spry.

Before us lies a simmering plain,
Dashed here and there with growing grain,
But chiefly, with short prairie grass,
That thickly strews the ground in mass.

One thing so strange to eastern men,
The mirage, we will notice, when
Far as the eye the plain can scan,
Are houses rare, of curious plan,

Distorted by the burning rays
Of the hot sun on summer days.
And now at last we reach the brakes,
Long devious trails our driver takes;

Until at last we reach a spring
And here our work, will soon begin.
But wait; we first must stake our tent;
So your assistance should be lent.

I've traveled oft before this way,
So please to follow me, I pray.
Ravines have gashed the southern side
Of the low hills, that lie beside

The valley of the Smoky Hill,
Whose flood plain is a chalky fill.
But let us search with well trained eyes
Each bit of chalk bared to the skies,

For many an acre we will find
Of soil bereft, by rain and wind;
And sculptured, too, in strangest form
Here ruined cities have been worn,

Chiseled from out the yielding chalk,
And through these ruins let us walk.
We find a castle shape so grim
With battlements upon its rim,

With towers here, of every shape,
That help monotony to break,
Of beds of blue and yellow chalk
That crumble 'neath us as we walk ;

Or strewn with shells on every side
That once laved in the rising tide.
But now a shout is raised on high,
And we return an answering cry,

Well knowing by the exultant sound
That a rich fossil has been found.
And so we reach the place at last ;
There lies a form whose life is past,

A grinning skull first comes in sight,
Armed with strong teeth, all shining bright.
The spinal column follows fast,
On either side great paddles cast,

While a long tail of swimming form,
Like screw propeller it is born.
The mended bones, show us the place,
Where he was injured in the chase.

And now you ask the reptile's name,
A MOSASAUR now known to fame,
Since, in Austria's quarries deep,
The first was found, in its long sleep.

In Maestricht on the banks of Meuse,
In the great quarries, still in use,
Beneath Saint Peter's Rocky mount:
More passages than we can count,

That lead to broader chambers, where,
The stony slabs are cut with care.
Then lifted up to light of day
In house or fortress, there they lay.

A resident of this old town
Gave the first mosasaur renown;
For, when a blast had bared the roof,
Impaneled there, a form, forsooth,

A skeleton without a flaw,
The bewildered miners saw,
Hoffman cut from the roof his prize,
And brought delight to Cuvier's eyes,

The reptile of the river Meuse,
Is English for the name we use
For all this short necked swimming crew
Whose bones cretaceous rocks oft strew.

Now we'll return to our own prize
On Kansas plain bared to the skies,
Stretched on the chalky floor we've made,
With muscles strong, and pick and spade,

The specimen is trenched around
A wooden frame raised from the ground,
And plaster now is poured within;
And thus the needed strength we bring,

Ere we may carry it away,
To Eastern Museum, there to lay
Admired by the Savant wise,
The unlettered too, lost in surprise

To read from leaf in Time's old book,
And on the mighty carcass look.
A monster that once lorded o'er
The sea along cretaceous shore.

And thus we labor early, late,
Among the smoky canyons great,
Until the sun's hot scorching ray
'Most forces us to stand at bay.

Reflected from the burning chalk,
The heated waves rise as we walk;
From every pore's wide open spout
The hot salt floods run swiftly out

And drench our clothes, until they cling
In sickening folds to either limb.
And oh, the thirst, so hard to bear,
There is no water anywhere.

We see the pail on pulley ride,
Cold water dripping from its side,
In the far eastern Kansas home,
While we in desert places roam.

No water in these heated brakes,
And so each thirsty hunter takes
Some pebbles, into mouth they go,
To force saliva glands to flow,

And moisten drying lips that crack,
While streams of sweat run down each back;
But the hot winds are rising high;
They fill with chalk each straining eye,

They burn as they had scalded been
Or quicklime had been sifted in.
And when at night our feet are bent
Towards our old heated canvas tent,

We see spread out upon our board
The canned foods that our mess afford.
The sickening beans and peas galore
We've feasted on so oft before;

The pail of water standing there
Is alkali. My friends, beware!
"Hash is ready," our cook cries,
And we sit down to fight off flies

That swarm, as from a hornet's nest ;
And when at last we seek our rest
On earth's uneven bosom bare,
And stretch our bones with greatest care,

Our broken dreams are thoughts of home,
Where women reign and comforts come ;
Where children play, and school bells ring ;
To Sunday Church our songs we bring.

But now the wind howls from the west,
That sadly breaks our needed rest.
At first, great clouds of dust arise,
Completely blot out earth and skies,

And fill our tent with smothering dust,
That into every place is thrust,
The canvas flaps, the guy ropes strain,
The storm is coming on amain.

Above the blast's wild throbbing roar
We hear the thunder's solemn roar ;
The lightnings flash in zigzag line ;
And now the streams of sleet beat time

Upon the canvas overhead,
The only shelter for our bed,
Where lie four hunters in a line,
In sheltering space nine feet by nine.

Our canvas flaps like tattered sail,
Racing before the howling gale.
Without, the elemental rage;
Within, beat manly hearts so brave;

Perhaps, some little trembling fear,
The blast our canvas thin may tear,
And pour on our devoted heads
The wrathful storm each bosom dreads.

Thank God, the storm has quickly passed,
The twinkling stars come out so fast
On blue expanse of heaven above,
And sparkle down God's wondrous love;

The moon lights up the glorious scene,
The storm seems now an idle dream.
A hunter a wise comment makes,
"Now we'll have water in the brakes."

Soon a wondrous change is seen ;
The grass puts on its robe of green.
Flower springs up on every hand,
And Nature's smiles gleam over the land.

A SONG OF LOVE

I will sing you a song of a wondrous love,
Excelling by far that of angels above;
For Jesus Himself came down to our earth,
And angels of heaven rejoiced at His birth.

He came to redeem us from death and despair,
A home for us all in His heaven prepare;
To show that to God we are reconciled,
If we only will come in the faith of a child:

If we'll only believe that Jesus is Lord,
Who in the beginning was known as the Word,
Who shed on the mountain His innocent blood,
That he might redeem us and bring us to God.

We all like lost sheep have wandered away,
Far out in the mountains of sin do we stray,
Until our dear Shepherd has sought for the
lost
And found us at last: Oh, think of the cost!

He came to His own, and His own knew Him
not,
But added still more to the deep crimson blot
In which man is dyed from birth to the grave.
He has opened a fountain in which we may
bathe,

And rise from that Jordan washed whiter than
snow
In the blood of the Lamb that men shed here
below.
They slew him: Thank God, He rose from
the grave,
And we fear no more the dark Jordan wave.

CHRISTMAS

Near the old town of David's line,
In grand Judean plain,
Some humble shepherds spent their time
With flocks, through storm and rain.
At once the blackest darkness
Was changed to brilliant light;
The men from fear and weakness
Lay prostrate at the sight.

"Fear not, for unto you we bring,"
(Said messengers of grace),
"Great joy and peace from heaven's king,
To you and all the race;
For on this ever blessed morn,
Of David's ancient line,
This day, in Bethlehem's born,
And this shall be the sign.

The Saviour of your fallen race
In swaddling garments girth,
The blood of God and David trace
In Prince of lowly birth."
Then Cherubim and Seraphim
In heavenly chorus sing,
"Peace to earth, good will to men
From heaven's Eternal King."

Glory, then, to God on high,
Glory and honor, praise,
To Him can earth-born children cry,
Oh wondrous are His ways,
God promised that the woman's seed
Should bruise the tempter's head;
The angels know, as back they speed,
The promise is fulfilled.

The promised heir of David's line,
Earth's Prophet, Priest, and King.
No wonder at this glorious time
Their joyous praise they bring.
The humble shepherds found the babe,
To earthly eyes laid bare,
All in a lowly manger laid,
A baby sweet and fair.

So let our joyous hearts keep rhyme,
With the blest angels' song,
As back we turn to Christmas time,
Through years that seem so long;
And at that little baby's feet
Lay all our treasures down;
With prayers, like incense, may we greet
Our Lord, our very own.

WHERE THE SUNFLOWERS GROW

We've been on Wyoming's ranches,
And we want the folks to know
That we're going back to Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

You may talk about this country,
With its goldenrod aglow,
But we're going back to Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

We'll admit her bergs are glorious,
Clad in everlasting snow,
But we'd rather be in Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

Yes! here's where the wool is growing
A million tons or so,
But our thoughts are oft in Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

So, with folded tents like Arabs,
We have left the hills you know,
And are bound for dear old Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

We run down along the Rockies,
Forty miles an hour or so
And are headed for old Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

So the Sternberg tribe has vanished
Like the migratory crow,
And we've all come back to Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

As we reach her western border
With our spirits all aglow,
We thank God we are in Kansas,
Where the sunflowers grow.

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH PSALM

O give thanks unto our God,
So merciful and good,
The loving kindness of our Lord,
Covers us like a rising flood.

He knows full well our lost estate,
And from His mighty throne
His mercy saves us from our fate,
His love brings wand'ers home.

For in this world of sin below
Our wandering footsteps roam
Far from the paths He'd have us go,
Far from our heavenly home.

In sin and sorrow we were born ;
None righteous, no, not one ;
From childhood, helpless and forlorn,
On earth our course we run.

Should we go down to the salt sea,
And circle earth in ships,
The glories of His majesty
Bring praises to our lips.

For there His wondrous works unfold,
The waves rise mountain high,
The lightnings flash, the thunders roll'd,
Jet black the lowering skies.

The bark on which we brave the sea
Moans like a wounded deer,
Her passengers crowd to the lee,
There trembling, groan with fear.

The gale howls round the bending mast,
The shrieking cordage groans ;
The stormy petrel's form is cast,
As through the foam he roams.

The whitecaps, lashed by furious storm,
Ride on the topmost wave,
Their dancing hillocks show the form
Of snow on human grave.

Except their restless heavings glow,
When lightnings flash, gleam bright,
And human eyes with terror flow,
Dazed by the fearful sight.

Hungry and faint our longing souls
Cried in distress to God,
And though the angry billow rolls,
Upon it walks the Lord.

He makes the angry sea a calm,
The frightened soul finds rest,
The ship into its haven ran,
We lean on Jesus' breast.

Children of men, praise ye the Lord
For all His goodness given,
On earth, His blessing He'll accord,
With promise of His heaven.

How oft, have I in dreamland been,
I've walked 'midst greenwood bowers,
'Mong towering trees, no sun is seen,
The earth perfumed with flowers.

I wander on through mighty aisles,
Of God's first temple reared,
Where lofty trunks, like soldiers file,
As though their God they feared.

The wind makes music overhead,
The murmuring waters flow,
In opening park the deer are fed,
The leaves of autumn glow.

With many a shade of red and brown,
Of crimson, violet, blue,
The dew, the trees with diamonds crown,
Fresh scenes come into view.

But now red boulders strew the way,
The plain begins to rise,
The underbrush shuts out the ray
Of sun from western sky.

The slippery moss falls often bring,
The grape vine snares the feet,
The thorns from bush and briar sting,
For us there's no retreat.

And now upon the ear is borne
The hurricane's dread roar.
Great branches from the spruce are torn,
The wind's broad shoulders bore.

Into illimitable space,
Trees, wringing, cringing hand
In vain, their mighty trunks they brace
With bases in the land.

Torn loose, and as a giant falls
With swift weight coming down,
Cover God's footstool with a pall
Before the tempest's frown.

The earth is shorn like sheep below,
The howling winds now roar.
And hark! the mighty waters flow
And flood the hillside floor.

Above, I hear the rush of floods,
God! must I be lost?
Swept by the streams that through the woods
With force of mighty host.

God rides on the stormy gale,
And says unto the winds, be still;
He leads me to a sheltered vale,
With joy my heart strings thrill.

He leads me up on Pisgah's mount,
Where shimmering in the west
Are glittering towers, none can count,
The Mansions of the blest.

No pain or sorrow enters there,
Nor wild tempestuous storm,
Peace, like a river ever fair,
From evening until morn.

Ah, there's no night or sorrow there;
Our Sun alone shall shine.
No sickness, pain or dwarfing care,
There's happiness sublime.

Oh, then, that men our God would praise,
Let all His mercies shine,
Endures e'en though a tempest rise,
Endures through earthly time.

Ah, yes! His mercies will endure
While countless ages roll,
Oh, sin-sick soul, He will cure
The weary burdened soul.

GRACE

Dedicated to Mrs. Marie Endacott, Ashburton, Devonshire, England, on her 70th Birthday.

I see a man and maiden fair
 'Neath Merry England's skies,
They seem to be both free from care.
 He looks in her blue eyes

For answer to a question grave,
 On which his hopes depend.
"Say yes, and you will heart throbs save,
 My happiness defend.

"For Marie, I would marry you
 To fill my lonesome heart,
I'm sure you'll never, never rue
 To be of me a part.

"So, let us both be joined in one,
 And climb the hill together,
We'll sleep together at the foot,
 Beneath Old England's heather."

It was a lovely night in June,
 The Musk and Lily White,
The Pansy, Bromptons Stock in bloom,
 Perfume the starry night.

They wander forth through arches green,
 Beneath the Chestnut shade,
The red Columbine forms a screen,
 Sweet Balm scents all the glade.

I see them coming from woodside,
 Air under footsteps hover,
Ah! he has gained his heart's desire,
 And she has gained a lover.

And so they trim their earthly bark,
 On life's broad sea they venture,
With sails set for the heavenly mark,
 Love, their greatest treasure.

They love their Father's beauteous earth,
 Love His trees and flowers,
They prize all the earth brings forth,
 They love Old England's bowers.

Their years pass in Victoria's reign,
 The queen beloved by all,
In Devonshire fresh friends they gain,
 And children grace their hall.

Seven sons are born in that dear home;
 One to His Father's gone,
And three across the ocean roam,
 Leave mother's heart forlorn.

But three brave sons remain at home
On England's rock-bound shore,
The father, mother often roam
Where waves beat evermore.

The brown of mother's shining hair
Is silvered now by Time,
Three score years and ten of care,—
Fruit ripening on the vine.

The double Mountain Snow, so white,
Forget-Me-Not so blue,
Narcissus, nodding head so bright,
Honesty's purple hue,—

All, all are blooming near the place,
Five and forty years ago,
When as a maid, Marie Grace
A bride was brought one morn.

And so we wish this loving pair
Years yet of happiness,
With freedom from earth's gnawing care,—
May God their labors bless.

CHRISTMAS

1909

For unto us a son is born,
To us a child is given;
He ushers in on Christmas morn,
The kingdom of God's heaven.

The government on Him shall be,
He'll rule forevermore,
Of David's line, a Prince is He,
Great King and Counsellor.

His glorious kingdom will increase,
Till earth's remotest shore
Shall know the wonders of His peace.
Praise Him, forevermore.

A Prince and Saviour He was born,
Of David's ancient line,
The Son of God in human form
Came at the promised time.

For Moses true to Israel said,
A prophet God will raise,
To be of human souls the aid,
Who'll well deserve their praise.

The herald angels' joyful song
"Good will and peace on earth,"
Resounding hills of earth prolong,
The song of His dear birth.

The Shepherds who beheld the sight
And heard the heavenly choir
Saw in the heavens a shining light,
And angels tune their lyre.

“Peace on the earth, good will to men”
Resound from sky to earth,
Angels lead forth their glorious train,
With joy proclaim His birth.

O'er the green hills of Palestine
Swing round the angelic host,
Sing in charmed voice, of heavenly rhyme,
Throughout Judea's coast.

The Shepherds hasten to the scene,
Where that blest babe was born,
Find Him there, in a manger mean,
On the first Christmas morn.

Time, roll back the hurrying years,
Since Christ a baby lay,
Through all the years, some dark and drear,
To that blest morning grey.

We stand before the virgin mild,
We bow ourselves to earth.
Before that blessed heaven-born child,
Pay honor to His birth.

CALVARY

For the world the Saviour's dying,
On the cruel cross He hangs,
With His precious life blood buying
Freedom from sin's fearful pangs,
For the law that knows no changing,
That "the soul that sins must die,"
Now finds perfect satisfaction
In that agonizing cry.

"My God, my God, why thus forsaken,
Righteous, why smitest Thou me?
Why am I, Thy Son, thus taken,
Nailed by Romans to the tree?
Why the sorrow in the garden
And the shame in Pilate's hall?"
By this sacrifice is pardon
For man ruined by the fall.

See, above His head is written,
This is Jesus, Israel's King.
Ah, for sinners He was smitten,
That salvation He can bring,
For in ancient Eden's garden
Where the serpent tempted man,
God himself then offered pardon,
And conceived the wondrous plan,

That the seed of Jewish woman,
Of the blood of David's line,
God Immaculate and human,
In His own appointed time
Should destroy death's awful wages,
Death of body and of soul,
Bring salvation to the ages,
While time's ceaseless course shall roll.

Thus, the crisis of the ages,
Now occurs on Calvary's brow,
And the vision of the Sages is fulfilled;
Not only now, but as long as men are human,
To that Cross they'll raise their eye,
To that blessed seed of Woman,
Sincere penitence will cry.

For the veil is rent asunder,
Man is reconciled to God,
And no more he fears the thunder
That at Sinai shook the sod;
For a fountain now is opened,
Filled with our Redeemer's blood,
Man's redemption has been purchased;
Plunge now, 'neath the crimson flood.

AND THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE

Rev. xxii, 4.

To him that overcometh
A crown of life shall wear,
Forever ever dwelleth
All free from pain and care,
A new name in his forehead
Blest by the God of grace,
For hath not Jesus promised
That "they shall see His face?"

Yes, see the face of Jesus,
The blessed Lamb of God,
Whose hand shall surely lead us
Through gardens of our Lord,
Where trees of life are blooming
And grass is ever green,
No darkness and no gloaming,
No heat, or cold is seen.

He who was slain on Calvary
Is now the power on high,
Is clothed in lasting glory,
For Human souls did die.
And human souls who conquer
Through that dear name of Grace
Shall be in glory ever,
And they shall see His face.

Yes, see His face. Oh, rapture!
How glorious is the thought,
To be with Christ our Saviour,
Whose precious blood has bought
And made us Kings and Princes,
To reign with Him for aye,
To sound abroad His praises
Through an eternal day.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

1892

The old year dies to-night,
With all its cares and fears,
Its visions bright and fair,
Its laughter and its tears.

Dies as an old man dies,
Just at the midnight bell,
To other worlds he flies,
The woes of life to tell.

We ne'er shall see him more,
His place is with the dead,
No sorrows to him pour,
Or listen to his tread.

Yet it's been a prosperous year,
So full of worth, and cheer,
No drouth for us to dread,
Nor bury battled dead.

The clouds have dropped their rain
Upon the fertile earth,
No castle built in Spain
Has ever held the worth,

That Kansas soils brought forth
To her industrious men.
Go to the south, go north,
Go east, or west, and then

Enquire on every hand,—
The same reply will come:
“This is a glorious land,”
And “hear the thrashers hum.”

Of wheat millions we've raised,
Bread plenty and to spare,
Where e'er our flag is raised
Our wheat will follow there.

Our land has been at peace,
No home or foreign foes,
No prisoners to release,
As out the old year goes.

Eventful's been the year.
The powers that be go out,
And others, with no fear
Of bloodshed, take their bout.

Old year! Old year! farewell,
The thoughts of the new year
Will all our sorrows quell,
And quiet every fear.

MAUDE

I knew a young girl to beauty allied,
The joy of my life, my comfort and pride;
She came like an angel in answer to prayer,
And I gave to her my love and my care:

As infant, when resting in Mamma's dear arm;
As child, when she followed me over the farm;
As schoolgirl, at evening returned with her
book;
As she bloomed into womanhood, like
flowers by the brook.

Her face gave me pleasure, her presence was
rest;
She was satisfied with me, and never in jest
Complained that I was not all that she
wished;—
Dear Maude, whom the glories of heaven
have kissed.

I will see you no more in my earthly career,
So dear to my heart,—God knows you were
dear!
I have laid you away in the depth of the tomb,
Your loved body to rest in its shadow and
gloom.

My Master once wept at Lazarus' grave,
And bade him awake and come forth from the
cave.

I believe that my darling, now free from earth's
clay,

On the wings of God's love has flitted
away

To the shores of the blessed, where safely she'll
roam,

Redeemed through His blood; in her glorified
home

She's telling the saints of her earthly abode,

Of that father who gives her up freely to
God,—

Who feels that if God spared not His own Son,
Who on the dread cross our ransom has won,
He will with him freely give all that is best,

And take him at last where Maude is at
rest.

THINGS NOT SEEN

While we look not on the things that are seen, but at
the things that are not seen. II Cor. iv, 18.

They that trust in earthly things
Trust not in things that last ;
Their worship pain and sorrow brings
When earthly things are past.

The lily blooms in radiant hues,
It only blooms to die,
As effervescent as the dews
That on the meadows lie.

And so the treasures men acquire
Through pain and toil and strife
Do not fulfill the heart's desire,
But part with parting life,

And leave the soul a worthless wreck
Upon a restless sea ;
Though earthly flowers his brow may deck,
Lost through eternity.

But he who trusts in the unseen,
With faith looks up to God,
Whose constant hope, with radiance beam,
Though unseen, love the Lord ;

Blessed indeed is such a soul,
Whose treasures are on high,
Whose soul His Saviour's blood has won,
This soul can never die.

What joy to him the coming day,
That brings him home at last;
Full well he knows his slumbering clay
Will quicken at the blast

That summons all the sons of men
Before the throne of grace.
What joy will be upon him then,
For he shall see His face:

The face of his Beloved Friend,
He's longed so oft to see,
Where joy and peace can never end
Through all eternity.

THE PERMIAN BEDS OF TEXAS

In Texas, where the Wichita
Enrodes a gash, both deep and raw,
Formed by a fault in this old earth,
Before humanity had birth,
Here Permian clays of Indian red,
And sandstones interlacing beds.
Time himself has bared the graves
Of Permian life, where mesquite waves
Its feathery leaflets in the air;
While short grass, with flowers so rare,
Carpets the red soil with its green,
Or rootlets, with their mesh, are seen
To circle bones in their embrace.
Or here and there an open space
Where grinning skull, or bones so white,
Lie helpless there, so sad their plight:
All that remains of giants who
In old lagoon or bayou grew,
Who once ruled over land and sea,
Leave speaking bones for you and me;
Who tell the story of the past,
Of victories won, at rest at last.
So God engraves in mouldering land
The works of His almighty hand.
Not Moses' tablets graved by God
Seem more wondrous than the word
He left recorded in the earth,
When rocky strata had their birth.

Yes! distant was the Permian time,
As man keeps record, line on line,
But through Jehovah's mighty reign,
To-day and yesterday the same.
A day in His almighty sight
Is like a vision of the night,
Or like a shadow on the lake,
Or ruffled flood, in steamer's wake;
To man, who measures three score ten,
How few his years, how short his ken!
He ever feels the God within
Would be more God-like but for sin.
God gave us minds to see the past
Or on the future visions cast;
So with that God-like power He's given
That's less of earth and more of heaven.

I sail down on the Tide of Time,
My oar-beats keeping gentle rhyme;
I enter lakes with wooded shore,
And hear the trumpet sound once more,
As when, in childhood's happy day,
I went to see the circus play.
There in a lovely sheltered glade
A trunkéd throng stand in the shade;
While horses gallop on the sand,
And herds of swine root up the land.
Here birds of every color shine—
Make melody almost divine.

Their music flits on passing breeze
As graceful forms dart through the trees,
For beauty here is not a sin.
Their feathers are not used to trim
The headgear of a barbarous sex
With borrowed plumes, or some pretext,
They hope to rival sisters fair,
While pluméd heads toss in the air:
Man's will is not the master here,
No rifled guns have they to fear.
I pass great herds of buffalo,
No Winchester to lay them low;
The duck leads out upon the lake
With brood of ducklings in her wake.
The wild goat climbs the steepest hill,
The wolf laps water from the rill.
Full half the forms that grace our land
Here live in peace on every hand,
Save for the fight that all must wage
For daily bread, their arts engage.
But man's destructive power's not known,
None "wade through blood to reach a throne."

And now fresh scenes break on my sight,
That fill my soul with fresh delight:
Flora and fauna now are new,
And quickly break on eager view,
As through the jungled rush and reed
My faithful boat is gaining speed.

The Mastodon, with tusks below,
Tear lily pads, where dense they grow;
Rhinoceroses plow the mire,
While three-toed horses never tire
Of testing moss beneath their feet.
There is no need of limbs so fleet;
If they can reach the swampy brink
Or some deep pool, they'll safely drink,
Saber toothed tiger stands at bay
And fears to try the watery way.
From glades or parks as I ride past,
The timid llama's glance is cast;
They gaze in wonder as I float
Before them in my birch-bark boat.
The trees and flowers I notice, too,
Are not like those that Kansas grew
When last I saw her shining shore
And bent my sinews to the oar.
I'm in the middle dawn, I see,
Of mammals and of greenwood tree,
Called *Miocene* by savant grave.
The palm and fig trees gently wave
Their crowning branches in the air.
Ah, see that serpent hanging there!
His glistening coils let me beware.
This is the age when mammals reign,
They fill the land and salty main;
As bats they fly from darkened tree;
Great whales are spouting out at sea;

While dolphins, seals and walrus fierce,
And Norwal, with drawn sword to pierce
His enemies who dare to brave
In mortal combat on the wave.
All the rich life of this rich age
Is graven on the rocky page.
And still my boat glides swiftly down
To early dawn, where mammals crown
The thickening ranks of life that's past:
We've reached the *Eocene* at last.
And now strange forms come into view,
None living like them now, 'tis true.
Great, lumbering beasts on every hand,
Five mighty toes are pressed to land.
They're plantigrade, like bear or man;
At least a foot their footsteps span;
And when your tale of horns is done,
I'll point out *Loxolophodon*.
Watch him there, at any rate,
And see those horns that are so great.
Three pairs adorn his mighty head,
On the green meadows he is fed;
His well fed body fat and sleek;
His re-curved tusks are quite unique.
I saw the type in Cope's old home,
When from Montana I had come.
Now lemurs swing among the trees,
Their fur is ruffled by the breeze;
While others stem the rising flood
That winds among the neighboring wood.

They catch the fish that swim around,
While crocodiles bask on the ground
Along the shore, on either side,
With open jaws extended wide.
Countless turtles now appear
On every side; they have no fear.
How beautiful their sculptured shell,
Grooved there, or pitted, marked so well
With patterns rare of many a form!
Some look like beads so often worn
To ornament a lovely throat.
Watch them dive beside the boat.
But see, out in that open part,
A *Phaenocodus* swiftly dart!
He drags a lengthening tail behind,
And flies as on the wings of wind.
I wonder what has made him run.
I see—a huge *Corophodon*.
But ere they come to mortal fight,
My boat takes me far out of sight.
Most all the beasts I see on shore
Have five toes, behind, before.
But now comes one that walks on three,
Though rudimental ones I see,
Like dew-claws on a recent dog.
My bark glides in the rising fog,
And when the flood and plain are clear,
I've left the mammals in the rear.

I cross the wondrous border line,
The greatest landmark left by Time,

Between the age of Mammals and
The one where Reptiles ruled the land:
They swam and floated in the air.
The puny mammals that were there
Were small and primitive, indeed;
To notice them there'll be no need.
I'm floating in a bayou wide,
With palmettos on either side,
While here and there a fig tree full
Of luscious fruit;—toward one I pull
And load my boat, whose gunwales sink
Quite closely to the water's brink.
But see that mass of foam so white!
A swimming Reptile heaves in sight,
While two strong arms the waters churn.
A duck-billed head, whose eyeballs burn,
A great, broad body like a boat,
In which air chambers help to float;
While mighty limbs, eight feet in length,
And fifteen feet of tail, show strength;
Vibrating like a mighty screw,
As through the waves our saurian flew.
On shore a troop comes down to drink,
On solid sand that reached the brink;
Their faces armed with three great horns,
Far larger than the unicorn's;
While monstrous head, seven feet in length,
Is a sure symbol of their strength.
On pillared limbs their weight is borne,
Deep footprints in the earth are worn.

But on we glide, while reptiles strange
On every side our thoughts engage.
While from this old Cretaceous shore
The Jura stretches out before.
Great plesiosaurs, of mighty limb,
Out in the ocean safely swim;
While ammonites, with painted sail,
Are wafted by the passing gale.

I've left fresh water in my wake,
My course through deep blue waters take.
But ere I leave the jungled shore,
I hear the earth resound once more
'Neath tread of thunder-lizard dread.
But on my boat has swiftly sped,
The flora changes on the land
And tree ferns lift their pillars grand.
Lepidodendrons' bushy crests
Wave back and forth, together prest;
While sponge-moss hangs in festoons gay
Across the thickly planted way,
Or covers ground with carpets rare,
On which I trace my steps with care.
Yes! a landing I have made
Beside a lovely Permian glade.
A score of million years are fled
Since my imagination led
To go into my birch-bark boat,
And on Time's Tide to gently float

Far down the stream to Permian day,
And cast my anchor in the bay.
The Angiosperms have not appeared,
But rush and reed great trunks have reared ;
Conifers, that are growing here,
Bring back my thoughts to recent year.
The reptiles are of lowly mien,
While salamanders large are seen,
And Cope himself gave one name :
Eryops now is known to fame.
He drags his form through mossy clay,
And toward the water makes his way,
For he can live in watery home
Or through the heated jungle roam ;
For gills and lungs his heritage,
On water, land, his battles wage.
Amphibians, monarchs of the earth
They reigned, ere higher life had birth.
One leaves a deep trail in his wake,
Then plunges in the nearby lake.
See waters part, and a strange band
Now leave the flood to come on land ;
Their heads shaped like a quarter moon,
While two great horns provide the room ;
For while on shore their course they take,
A pathway through the moss they break
With their strong horns of solid bone,
Re-curving from their heads have grown.
Their eyes lie far down in the face—
A character of all their race ;

While double condyles placed behind,
With two on atlas, you will find.

See now along this mossy bank
Are hundreds of another rank.
A foot they span in length, or more ;
I've seen these creatures oft before.
Their little heads could enter in
A woman's silver thimble's rim.
Their snake-like forms seem free of feet,
So slender, and so lithe and neat.
The time has come, so they will make
A nest in which to hibernate.
'Neath the bright moss in softest clay,
Slow and sure they cut their way,
And after much incessant toil,
In their small homes they quickly coil.
Alas! they never more will race
Along the shore's steep, mossy face ;
I'll dig their bones in nodules round
Near Coffee Creek, in the red ground.
Batrachians, or Amphibians, strange
Have here attained their highest range.
I see these creatures everywhere,
And not to step on them use care.
In recent years they shun the light
And hide in caves or wells from sight.
But here, in densely wooded land,
Along the bayou's shining strand,

Or mossy swamps that spread around,
Or sullen streams that here abound,
These ancient forms rule everywhere:
A race now helpless, then would dare
To battle e'en with reptiles rare,
Who then began their great career,
And later on would know no fear.
I need not here in covert lie,
For no beast fears the human eye.
Through the bright wood's flowery face
A form breaks through—one of this race.
Now a strange reptile I will con,
It is Cope's great *Dimetrodon*.
His spines abnormally rise high
In crescent form,—I wonder why.
In center they're three feet or more,—
Have any seen such spines before?
He moves along with agile grace,
As he's engaged upon the chase
Of *Labidosaurus*;—what a race!
And though this reptile small may be,
He is a running mystery.
Broad archéd bones project behind,
And rounder eyes midway are found,
While muzzle pinched to narrowest space
Presents a most peculiar face.
Four shining teeth in front, so trim,
Give to the face a constant grin.
While jaws below, armed just the same,
Pass like two knives held in a frame,

And shear his food to finest shred,
When on rich mosses he has fed.

Alas! these scenes are fading fast.
I have returned to camp at last.
My tent is pitched at Willow Spring,
And here my labors will begin.
Some years ago, in ninety-two,
When Coffee Creek came into view,
Along the Vernon county road
Some cheerful farmers then abode.
Galyean, if I remember right,
With pleasant home and children bright,
Was settled just south of the bridge,
(While other homes were on the ridge.)
A little store before their door,
And post-office, brought all once more
In closer touch with the great world
Where stars and stripes lie all unfurled.
A schoolhouse, where the children, too,
Learned how to read, like me or you.
And where my humble tents now stand
Were the McBrides, another band
Who came to dress and till the land.
Through these farms the Chisolm trail
Gave echoes of the awful tale,
When countless feet of every age
Performed their fearful Pilgrimage.
This trail to them then had no end,
While further north their footsteps bend.

From furthest south to northern line,
From the great gulf's broad, watery brine,
From the warm air and sunny day,
Where rifted snow-bank coldly lay:
Shall I forget, on Kansas plain,
This trail baptized with blood and pain!
A mighty drove—I see it still;
No water since the Smoky Hill
Was crossed, some twenty miles behind.
A cloud of dust raised by the wind
And tread of countless weary feet.
Their ponies' sides the cowboys beat,
To reach the water on ahead
Before the cattle rile its bed.
With hats in hand, they hope to dip
Some water for their parching lip.
Too late! for the stampeded band
Force out the cowboys on the land,
And they, ere coveted drink can gain,
Forced out by others, just the same;
Last of the herd's sore-footed crew,
'Round precious stream their ranks they drew.
Along that trail I saw next day
Full forty calves that dying lay
From the hot sun or lack of food,—
An awful death! Thy pity, Lord!
To man, dominion has been given
O'er all the beasts beneath Thy heaven;
Yet how unworthy of the trust!
They're sacrificed for money's lust.

And man is treated just the same:
When last to Permian brakes I came,
The farm McBride grubbed out with care
Shows not his labor anywhere,
Save, where his pleasant home had stood,
Foundation stones and rotting wood;
And where full twenty homes, or more,
Paid tribute to the little store,
Not one is left of all the score.
One cattleman has power to wield
O'er thousand sections in one field,
While Texas' countless farmless men
Give up their homes for cattle pen.
Hundreds of fossil forms I've found
In this rich field of Permian ground,—
The ones I showed you in my dream,
While many others I have seen.
In "Munich all thy banners wave"
Above the old red Permian grave;
On this side the Atlantic shore,
In "Cope's Collection," what a store!
American Museum's stately pile
These wondrous records keeps on file.

OREGON DESERT AND JOHN DAY RIVER

One day a welcome order's given
That lifts my soul to gates of heaven.
The Kansas Plains I leave behind
And other fossil regions find,

Where the Pacific's waters rise
And fall beneath fair Western skies.
So with bright hopes on car embark
From quarters at old Buffalo Park.
All night my train still onward flies,
At morn the Rocky Mountains rise,
Their noble outlines to the sky,
That bring to lips a wondering cry.
Up, up we go, until we ride
All safely on the Great Divide;
Then we drop through the canyons deep,
While higher still the mountains creep,
Till the Salt Lake of Utah shine,
Reflecting light on the dense brine.
On, on through jagged peaks we go,
Where Sacramento's waters flow;
Then northward bound my way I turn.
Oh, how my heart within me burn!
I trace the Sacramento's source
And follow its far-reaching course.
Higher and higher still I go,
Up where the everlasting snow
Encircles Shasta's lofty land.
I've left the rail. Now four-in-hand
My driver turns his faithful team
In blazéd trail, where I may dream
As I recline in listless mode,
Where lofty tree trunks guard the road.
Up, up the steaming horses go,
Far, far above the plains below.

The sun sinks in a roseate bank
Behind the Cascade's western flank.
The Queen of Night comes on apace,
Her moonbeams filter through the space
Left by the woodman's sturdy blows,
While winding up my stage coach goes.
At last—alas! my sluggish pen
Can never draw the scene, I ken—
I leave the timber line below.
There, in the moonbeam's silver glow,
Mount Shasta stands revealed at last,
With snow-white robes around her cast,
She stands in solemn grandeur there,
Her mighty cone pierced through the air
Four thousand feet above the line
Of Cascade Range, whose timbers shine,
All night we view that giantess;
Her form and glory grow no less
Than when at first from out the wood
This Queen in all her beauty stood.
But now the team has crossed divide,
Creep down the mountain's eastern side:
And so my course I now will take
To old Fort Klamath, on the lake.
I fit me out a pack-horse train
And start for Oregon's broad plain.
A sage-brush desert I will find,
With sand piled high by southern wind.
And near a little lake's wide shore
I pitch my roving tent once more,

And rush down to the sandy rim;
And here my labors now begin.
For scattered through the drifting sand
Are bones of beasts that lived on land,
While those of swan and geese I see,
Mixed with flamingoes from the sea,
And fishes, too, of many a form.
Here the first rabbit has been born;
The elephant with stately gait,
Three horses, too, at any rate;
While a great sloth, and llama, deer,
Ruled where the sage-brush now appear.
The bison, too, in mighty herd,
Great flying hawks, and singing bird;
While meadowed stream and mighty wood
Where now I trace the desert road,
The latest of the fossils seen:
This the famed *Pleistocene*.

JOHN DAY MIOCENE

Now I journey down the stream
Of the John Day, whose waters gleam,
When we a glance not often gain,
Through rift in densely wooded plain.
For many miles this stream has won
A pathway towards the setting sun.
But here its northern course it lay,
Cuts for itself a huge gateway
Through the mountain's mighty heart,—
Two towering walls they stand apart,

A grand coulee where waters foam,
As far below the dark floods roam.
But now the mountains swing to east,
A glorious view on which I feast.
From water's edge the colored clay,
Of red and orange, green and gray,
In pinnacles and towers high,
Against the blue of arching sky;
While far above in horse-shoe bend,
The great basaltic columns trend.
Tier after tier, these columns rise
Two thousand feet into the skies:
While on the crescent edge are seen
Great pines and spruce in living green.
We camp near Uncle Johnnie's door,
And the great labyrinth explore.
A section has denuded been,
And carved in towers tall and trim,
Around the outer edge a wall
Drops quickly in a mighty fall;
While in the center everywhere
Are ridge and canyon carved with care;
While buttes and castellated form
A perfect labyrinth is worn.
We wander in and out, around;
At night no fossils have been found.
Uncle Johnnie's surely won;
He brings a skull of *Oreodon!*
"A bar's head," he says to me.
"They're found in ole Virginy,—see?"

We search this bad-land more and more,
To find it has been searched before.
But every day we gain more skill,
And soon can climb the highest hill.
With trusty picks we cut quite deep
Broad notches for our hands and feet.
And so we climb up hand o'er hand
And reach above the timbered land.
Above the sign of mountain sheep,
We cling to precipices steep;
While our trained eyes the surface scan.
Each hunter longs to bear the palm
For having made the richest find,
That leaves competitors behind.
And so we labor in the field.
Our sharp picks oft a harvest yield
Of dogs or cats or herbivor.
What pleasure is it to explore
These dangerous beds to life and limb,
Beneath the frowning lava's rim!
We're working in the middle dawn,
As John Day Miocene 'tis known.
Three years I spend in this rich field,
That a full hundred species yield
Of forms that never more'll appear
In life upon this moving sphere.

IN THE LARAMIE

For many years my life work ply,
And many museums supply
With the rich store from Nature's book.
On many wondrous scenes I look.
I've often wanted to explore
The graveyard of the Dinosaur,
And when the British Museum said
They'd like to own a mighty head,
The largest of the saurians dread,
Triceratops (Marsh gave the name),
To Converse County then I came.
In Wyoming's range for sheep
Are many canyons carved quite deep,
In the grey sands and beds of clay;
While haystack buttes on every side,
That often crown some high divide.
The creeks spread out in fanlike shape,
That everywhere the surface break
Into ravines, with edges steep;
While here the dead for ages sleep.
For weeks we worked the Laramie,
Those beds of sand from fossils free.
Night after night my boys come in,
And not a single fossil win.
We search out Hatcher's chosen field,
That not a single skull will yield.
At last we reach the Cheyenne brakes,
Each one a rugged canyon takes

And follows it to cedar crest.
I work on steadily with the rest.
At last one day we moved our tent;
Across the roughest ground I went,
I came to a denuded space;
O'er it my weary footsteps trace;
I stumble on a weathered horn.
I'd weeks of disappointment borne.
It is too good, I greatly fear,
To find a huge skull buried here.
We mark the place, return next day,
Remove with care the crumbling clay:
A mighty skull before us lay.
What joy to a discouraged mind
To know a skull at last we find!
But good luck does not come alone,—
George has found a pelvic bone.
Charlie and I make the long trip
To Lusk, where we our fossil ship.
When five days later we return,
I hear such news my heart strings burn—
A story that George has to tell.
My pride runs high, my bosom swell,—
He's found a splendid *Trachodon*,
And he the prize has surely won.
“He lies now in the quarry there,
Let's quickly to the place repair.”
“No,” says George, “unload your duds.
For three long days we've lived on spuds,

We've worked at least twelve hours a day,
And quarried out the sandstone grey
Full fifteen feet at least in height,
Twelve feet across, from left to right.
The floor is over ten feet deep,
In center lies, as if asleep,
The carcass of our Trachodon.
And so, you see, the prize I've won."
"That's not all," cries the eager boy,
"I know your heart will break for joy,
The glory of this specimen—
He lies there as he floated in
With bloated body on the wave.
The gas escapes he found his grave,
As he sinks to his long rest,
Skin clinging fast to bone and breast.
A long and lingering death he'd died,
His flesh had all been atrophied.
He surely has been starved to death,
His skin to all the bones is prest,
And within abdominal walls,
Like a great curtain there it falls.
While carcass rides upon the tide,
The head is pressed to the left side;
As in the sands his body's laid,
His arms stretch out imploring aid."

I scarce can wait until with ease
The boys their hunger can appease.
With haste our eager footsteps take
To bed of the old Laramie lake,

To where the mighty carcass lay,
As if he'd died but yesterday.
I raise a high exultant sound,
The crags and canyons echo round.
"Thank God, thank God, I'm paid at last
For days of toil, for dangers past!"
Now, Science had a mighty store
Found by collectors long before,
Of this great reptile Trachodon.
"What has this great discovery done
To advance science?" you will ask.
To tell you it will be my task.
It was supposed they lived on land,
On pillars strong he used to stand,
With short front limbs, and hands to grasp,
He held the swinging branches fast;
While duck-bill nipt the foliage green
That passed along his jaws between,
Where full two thousand teeth are seen
Arranged in perpendicular line,
Diagonally, too, one at a time.
Alternate teeth could wear quite thin
While other teeth were coming in.
A monstrous tail—one would suppose,
With hind limbs, like a tripod rose.
Of course attention must be lent
To the huge beast's environment;
And tyrant of the Laramie
Who preyed on reptiles such as he.

His body was in armour clad.
I must confess it made me glad
To learn from this my trophy grand,
HE LIVED IN WATER, not on land.
His feet were webbed, and his thin skin
Was blotched with scales, both small and thin.
His mighty body shines and pales,
Lined by rosettes and little scales.
His mighty tail of fifteen feet,
Like the propellers of a fleet.
A length of thirty feet he spanned—
A wondrous creature, and so grand.
His duck-billed head three feet in length.
His neck shows well his sinewy strength,
No carapace on dorsal spines,
But osseous tendons pack the lines
In muscles dense, on either side;
Like straddle-boards on roof they ride.
His hind limbs, full eight feet in length,
Are strongly built, of mighty strength.
With ease he stems the rising tide,
And swims to pastures on the side
Of shallow streams, whose waters glide
Through the green rush and shining reed.
And here our reptile stops to feed.
He plants hind feet in sand below,
While rushing by the waters flow.
In solemn grandeur there he stood
And gathered armsful of rich food.

Then chops it off with duck-bill strong,
While muscles pass it fast along
Where teeth like scissors shred the mass,
That into a great stomach pass.
A half a ton, I'd say, or more,
Has passed in through that open door
Before his appetite appease.
He's finished breakfast, if you please.
Now watch him as his way he'll take
To the smooth surface of the lake.
His limbs in unison, they beat
The gurgling waters 'neath his feet.
The tail, in undulations strong,
Urges the heavy mass along.
He's gaining speed. Oh, see how fast
The foam is rising on the blast!
His body now is hid from sight
Beneath the foaming waters white.
He's gaining distance: see arise
A great white column to the skies,
Like smoke in fighting ship's broad wake;
The foam marks out the course he'll take.
But now to work; I'll dream no more.
Our work lies in the old lake's floor.
How will we get our saurian safe,
Is the great problem we must face.
The mighty fossil it will prove
A trying task for us to move.
We first take off the arms and head;
They're heavy, and they weigh like lead.

The body now we cut in two,
Cover with starch and paper too;
While yards of cloth the parts enfold,
Which, dipped in plaster, forms a mold
That soon becomes as hard as stone.
It well protects the brittle bone.
Two thousand pounds each section weigh,
Like chunks of iron there they lay.
We're only four, my sons and I.
To move these masses we will try.
But first of all, strong boxes make;
Then each his sharpened shovel take
And cut some grass to pack around
This specimen that we have found.
We build a platform for the skull,
And to it now our wagons pull.
A section then we get around,
With levers lift it from the ground.
We build beneath with rocky blocks,
And get it in the box at last,
Which we roll in the wagon, too;—
Repeat the process till we're through.
Now you might think our labor done:
Dear friends, it's only just begun.
We hitch four horses,—“Please don't talk.”
Half up the hill those horses balk;
They back the wagon in a ditch;
They will not pull. So we unhitch.
Then to the nearest ranch I go—
Full twenty miles from camp, I know.

What if a rain should flood the ditch
And in the Cheyenne River pitch
This load to me worth more than gold?
“The ranchman’s busy,” so I’m told.
He would not stop his work one day
For all the bones on earth, they say.
I find a man who owns a team
Who’d gladly go, so it would seem,
To help me in my direst need.
So off they go with all their speed,
For Levi had come on with me,
And went to show the road, you see.
In passing I might simply say
He only charged three dollars a day.
“We’re out the woods; now I can talk”—
Alas! he knew his team would balk.
So full three days all squandered they.
The man got his three dollars a day.
At last George finds a man and team
Who’d do their duty, so ’twould seem.
And so we reach the platform floor
Beside the railroad station door.

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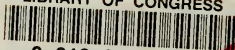


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