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V E R S E

BY

H. W. P.

[i.e., Henry Webster Parker.]

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1862.

1862

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NEW YORK
JULY
1900

A few words here, to *acquaintances*, may save much oral repetition.

This booklet is printed, first and chiefly, as a medium of sympathy between the writer and persons of like tastes. Next, to make up for the crudeness of a volume put forth hastily a few years since, from a western press,—a part of which volume is revised and included in this. Also, to vindicate, though never so little, a faith and a vocation that often are unfairly thought to be, or made to be, adverse to naturalness and genial culture.

Beyond these reasons, it is enough that the soul delights to express itself in all ways, honors and cherishes its true human experiences, even the most trifling, and is moved to share them with other minds. The title-page may be taken as a sign that the writer does not much affect a rhymers' reputation—fabled grapes in the best sense, and not desirable in the common acceptance.

Of poetizing, enough to say, it rejuvenates life ; it educates in all beauty ; it sharpens and refines all perception ; it disciplines in all use of language ; it trains to a better appreciation and elocution of all poetry ; it crystallizes many a sweet and fleeting impression, else lost ; it may coin many a golden truth that never would be unearthed from a treatise or sermon, and never so well remembered in the form of prose ; it helps to fill the world with song, which, of its own nature, tends to " whatsoever things are true, are pure, are lovely." It is work ; yet it may

serve as recreation ; and all persons have their diversions, of some sort.

A title like "Vignettes" is a small matter and common property ; but it may be well to say that the heading was printed in these pages before another book appeared in which the same word is put to similar use.

While these leaves were being arranged in rare moments of leisure, civil war darkened the land. But the birds did not stop singing.

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VERSE.

THE RAVINE.

Far in Eden's sunny upland,
Sweet the stream began to flow ;
Now, between o'erhanging ledges,
Down a shadowy gulf we go.
Only here and there a sunbeam
Slips the fir-tree's fingers through ;
Only from a sky of azure
Falls a light of silver-blue.

All along the rocky channel
Little rifts of progress gleam ;
Bubbles from the past are circling
Where the slower waters dream.
Tuneful silence—tender beauty!—
Moss and fern and fragrant wood,
Lonely bird and bird-like gurgle
Of the ever-gliding flood!

List! a deep and deeper murmur
In the air and in the ground—
See! a rush of glassy rapids,
Sudden brink and depth profound!
Gloom and roar and wraith of vapor—
Phantom of a death abhorred!
Foam-white fear and seething passion—
'Tis a great day of the Lord!

Down we step from shelf to crevice,
Down from branch to branch below—
Now, 'tis passed! and with the torrent
Through still shades again we go;—
Then again a roar, a tumult!
 Oftener, grander, are the falls,
Steeper slants the hill to valley,
Higher loom the Future's walls.

Weary pathway—is it endless?
When the opening shall we find
Where the floods, their struggle over,
Through millennial meadows wind?
Yet, if ere we find we perish,
Could we choose sublimer place—
Time's wild cataract beholding,
And the rainbow on its face!

CONTENT.

The happy calm
 And airs of balm,
 In isles of palm,
 All bards have sung in fragrant phrase ;
 And humble life,
 Apart from strife,
 The world has made a targe of praise ;
 But since my soul within me stirred,
 And till thy life with mine was blent,
 Small meaning had the simple word—
 Content—content.

Oh years of night !
 No clearer light
 Revived my sight
 Than Hope's e'er dawning arctic morn,
 Or Memory's hues
 That long suffuse
 The sundown Past, of radiance shorn :
 Now, from the constant noon of love,
 A flood of golden warmth is sent,
 That shines around, beneath, above,
 In bright content.

The firefly beam
 And meteor gleam
 Of fancy's dream ;
 The streamlet peace of lonely thought ;

Ambition's flower
 That charms an hour,
 And then is thrown aside as naught,—
 Our joy serene, compared with these,
 An ocean is, where storms are spent,
 Yet, amber-ridged, the sunlit seas
 Roll on, content.

So glad are we,
 So sweetly free,
 Ah, can it be
 The world is mad with pain and wrong?
 All wants and fears,
 All woes and tears,
 Are surely an unmeaning song.
 No heart is tost in vague unrest,
 No form with long despair is bent,
 But the whole earth at last is blest
 With full content.

The soothing thought,
 Alas, of naught
 But air is wrought;
 Earth's tide of sorrow onward rolls.
 And we may know
 From loving so,
 How poor the cheer of vagrant souls;
 And, from our well of heart-repose,
 Fresh blessings may be drawn and lent,
 Till round the world the billow flows
 Of calm content.

LOVEST THOU ME?

To find Thy name—in youth, a distant star—
 Has yearly neared us, grown a splendid day,
 Filling all space, while earth has moved afar,
 And slowly wanes away ;

To hold Thy name as dear as words of home,
 Touching to summer tenderness the soul,
 And see in this one thought, “When He shall come,”
 Our expectation's goal ;

To know our hearts attuned to sympathy
 With all who love Thee, hating pride and strife,
 And conscience strung to that high heavenly key,
 Thy precept and Thy life ;

Ready at Thy pure feet our all to lay,
 Gold, incense, myrrh, obedient to Thy word,—
 Is all this love? Yet who shall dare to say
 “Thou knowest I love Thee, Lord?”

VISION OF SHELLEY'S DEATH.

The sultry calm a drooping sail beguiled ;
 Beneath its shade, with features fair and mild,
 Sat one whom men have called Eternal Child.

A breath—a breeze—a tempest strikes the sail;
 It fills—it stoops, and, swift and free as frail,
 It flies, a broad-winged arrow, from the gale.

A precious boat!—may angels speed it right!
 The world, in shell so thin, and form as slight,
 Hath all its hold upon a mind of might.

He lay reclined in noonday dreams no more,
 He gazed no longer at the purple shore,
 Nor mused on roofing skies and ocean's floor.

No sign of fear his kindled eyes reveal;
 He only feels the joy that heroes feel
 When sabres flash and shotted cannon peal.

The boat dipt low; his foot was on the helm;
 The deck a throne—the storm his genial realm,
 He dared the powers that nature's king o'erwhelm.

And as aloft the yacht a moment hung,
 Then down the plunging wave was forward flung,
 His own wild song—"The Fugitives"—he sung:

Said he, "And seest thou, and hearest thou?"
 Cried he, "And fearest thou, and fearest thou?"
 A pilot bold, I trow, should follow now."

* * * * *

The sail was torn and trailing in the sea,
 The water flooded o'er the dipping lee,
 And clomb the mast in maddest revelry.

It righted with the liquid load, and fast
 Went down ; the mariners afloat were cast,
 And loudly roared and laughed the mocking blast.

A moment, and no trace of man or spar
 Was left to strew the path that, near and far,
 Is whirled in foam beneath the tempest's car.

* * * * *

A moment more, and one pale form appeared,
 And faintly looked the eyes ; no storm careered,
 But all the place with mystic light was sphered.

Around him slept a circling space of wave ;
 It seemed the crystal pavement of a cave,
 And all about he heard the waters rave.

He saw them swelling as a silken tent—
 Falling as rocks of lucent beryl rent—
 Raging like lions from a martyr pent.

A sudden life began to thrill his veins ;
 A strange new force his airy weight sustains,
 Until he seems released from mortal chains.

He looked above ; a glory floating down—
 A dazzling face and form—a starry crown,
 With blinding beauty all his senses drown.

As tearful eyes may see the light they shun,
 As veiling mists reveal the clear-shaped sun,
 He knew the crucified, transfigured One.

In that still pause of trembling blissful sight,
 He woke as from a wild and life-long night,
 And through his soul there crept a holy light.

A blot seemed fading from his troubled brain—
 A doubt of God—a madness and a pain,
 Till upward welled his trustful youth again,—

Till upward every feeling pure was drawn,
 As nightly dews are claimed again at dawn,
 And whence they gently came are gently gone.

He gazed upon those mercy-beaming eyes,
 Till recognition chased away surprise,
 And he had faith from heaven to slowly rise—

To rise and kneel upon the glassy tide,
 While down the Vision floated to his side,
 And stooped to hear what less he said than sighed:

'Oh Truth, Love, Gentleness!—I wooed and won
 Your essences, nor knew ye are that One;
 Oh crownéd Truth, receive thine erring son!'

A spirit-touch was laid upon his soul;
 Like pallid ashes from a living coal,
 His mortal clay fell off and downward stole.

The Soul and Vision took their upward flight,
 And lingering angels gathered up the light
 That lay—a spell upon the tempest's might.

A WEDDING CAROL.

Fair lady, we wish you no joy—
We rather foretell it!
Joy's amulet-truth you have found,
And never will sell it.

The secret of Earth and of Heaven
Is a constant self-giving;
The denial of nothing to love
Is the life of our living.

And yet into Eden there came,
To the happiest woman,
A sorrow that darkened the day—
And are you not human?

Know then that a paradise here
Remains to some mortals;
All others have banished themselves,
And bolted the portals.

From the heaven of harmonious love
We hover to greet you;
And, within the charmed circle, may we
Never miss, ever meet you!

LOSING AND LIVING.

Forever the sun is pouring his gold
 On a hundred worlds that beg and borrow ;
 His warmth he squanders on summits cold,
 His wealth on the homes of want and sorrow.
 To withhold his largess of precious light
 Is to bury himself in eternal night :
 To give
 Is to live.

The flower shines not for itself at all ;
 Its joy is the joy it freely diffuses ;
 Of beauty and balm it is prodigal,
 And it lives in the life it sweetly loses.
 No choice for the rose but glory or doom—
 To exhale or smother, to wither or bloom :
 To deny
 Is to die.

The seas lend silvery rain to the land,
 The land its sapphire streams to the ocean ;
 The heart sends blood to the brain of command,
 The brain to the heart its lightning motion ;
 And ever and ever we yield our breath—
 Till the mirror is dry and images death :
 To live
 Is to give.

He is dead whose hand is not opened wide
 To help the need of a human brother ;
He doubles the life of his life-long ride
 Who gives his fortunate place to another ;
And a thousand million lives are his
Who carries the world in his sympathies :
 To deny
 Is to die.

Throw gold to the far-dispersing wave,
 And your ships sail home with tons of treasure ;
Care not for comfort, all hardship brave,
 And evening and age shall sup with pleasure ;
Fling health to the sunshine, wind and rain,
And roses shall come to the cheek again :
 To give
 Is to live.

What is our life? Is it wealth or strength?
 If we, for the Master's sake, will lose it,
We shall find it a hundred-fold at length,
 While they shall forever lose who refuse it ;
And nations that save their union and peace,
At the cost of right, their woe shall increase :
 They save
 A grave.

SONG OF TABLE ROCK.

Harken, oh earth! my hour is come,
And I will speak a thunder-word
Shall make the roaring torrent dumb,
And o'er the listening world be heard.

The angel waits, and I must soon—
A Titan leaping from the rock—
Strike loud the century's silent noon,
As with an earthquake's jarring shock.

For this have I in patience hung,
Long ages waiting, watching, here;
For this the cataract has sung
Its chiding music in my ear.

“Why fear to plunge?” it ever said;
“’Tis bold, and beautiful, and free;
Oh deep and soft my foamy bed—
Descend, oh Rock, and dwell with me.”

A heart of stone, to such a song
Forever harped, must yield at length;
A grasp of flint may grapple long,
But creeping age will filch its strength.

From nature's birth, I heard the sound
Of shattered waters drawing near,
And trembled at the fall profound
Of rocks that crashed from year to year.

At last I saw Niagara's face—
Its grand archangel robe and crown,
And felt the breath and wild embrace
Of floods that strove to drag me down.

Firmly I stood—a steadfast wall,
Bearing my forehead proud and high,
And shook with laughter at the Fall,
Until it slowly passed me by.

Full well I echoed back its roar,
Yet shivered with a cold delight
To think that Time could never more-
So try again my rocky might.

And I grew happy in the sound
That vainly poured its tempting song,
The while, on wooded slopes around,
A hundred summers swept along.

Then was I proud to bear the weight
Of Indian monarchs on my head,
And blest to feel a lovelier freight
Of maidens, with their tender tread.

At last there came the nailéd heels
Of men who fought the forest-sons ;
Then, later yet, the grinding wheels
And angry roar of English guns.

A few years more, and all the wild
Grew tame with shapes of man's device ;
God's grandest temple was defiled
With shrines of Pride and Avarice.

Still did I joy that on my head
So many thousands came and went ;
’Twas good to hear their godlike tread,
Who mused of Love omnipotent.

For here they best could stand and see
An emblem of the tide of Time—
A symbol great of Deity—
An image of the soul sublime.

And I—ah, who can boast with me
The pressure of so many hands !—
The wise, the fair, the strong, the free,
And pilgrims from a hundred lands.

But one there was, of lovely mould,
My willing brow of wreaths would rob—
In vain for her, the sweet and bold,
My pulse a moment ceased to throb.

She heard the torrent’s witching words—
“ Why fear to fall ? ” and, with the spell,
As shining serpents charm the birds,
The torrent charmed ; she fainted—fell.

And one there was who, in the night,
For grief and madness sought my brink ;
He leapt adown the fearful height,
And none but I beheld him sink.

Oh, I could tell a thousand tales
Of life and death, of woe and mirth,
That now must sleep till God unveils
The secrets of the air and earth.

To-day, an angel o'er me stood—
 A messenger to cast me down ;
To-day, the thunder of the flood
 Took on a fierce and taunting tone.

“ Why fear to fall ? ” it growled and hissed,
 “ Will you endure my foaming hate,
The buffet of my furious mist,
 Yet fear to dash me with your weight ?

Why fear to plunge ?—the strongest fall,
 And conquerors and empires sink ;
The stars themselves shall perish all,
 Like falling leaves ; why longer shrink ?

As I shall rise in ocean storms,
 To pour myself in other falls,
Your elements, in nobler forms,
 Shall harden into towering walls.

Why fear to drop ?—at latest, soon
 You must in Earth's destruction melt ;
Oh, strike so loud the century's noon,
 It shall from star to star be felt ! ”

I fear not, oh thou roaring tide ;
 I dare the leap, the whirl, the shock ;
And now—and NOW, to shame your pride,
 I come—a cataract of rock !

ONE FOR ALL.

The Sabbath—it is the Owner's seal
Set on the weekly treasure of days;
A wreath of olive its face displays,
The motto—God's honor, human weal.
And since each day of the seven
Belongs to Mercy and Heaven,
Disturb not the seal!

The Church—it is an embattled tower
That claims as hallowed the sea and land,
Within the range of its far command—
Yea, holds the earth for a Higher Power.
And because, the world around,
All places are holy ground,
Destroy not the tower!

The Pastor—is the inscription-stone
That marks the temple—"Deo" the word,
Showing that all the house to the Lord
Is sacred, and not one block alone.
And since all consecrate hearts
Of the living house are parts,
Deface not the stone!

The Bible—it is the one clear Voice
And Footstep, proving that God is near,
Still walks and talks to the listening ear,
Amidst the world's bewildering noise.
And since his presence we need
To feel in all things, O heed
The Footstep and Voice!

The Christ—lo! he is the All in One—
 The Representative Man Divine ;
 For all men his life he did resign ;
 His love binds each to all and the Throne ;
 And because he is the All,
 In homage before him fall,
 And honor the Son !

PROVIDENCE.

The great is made of small ; and they are most
 Who most embrace, on little things intent ;
 Napoleon watched his sentries at their post,
 And ruled, the while, a heaving continent.
 So, Lord, thy greatness sways the planets all,
 Numbers a hair and notes the sparrow's fall.

The world—it is no self-impelled machine.
 The printed textile by a housemaid worn,
 Has passed a furnace, heated white and keen :
 Too slow, 'tis burned ; too fast, it is unshorn.
 A human hand must turn the rapid reel—
 A Hand Divine must guide creation's wheel.

Build an automaton of brass and wood,
 To be the master of your children's school !
 Depend on mechanism to choose your food,
 To bring you drink and medicine, and cool
 Your fever ! Trust alone a living God
 To mete life's blessings and inflict its rod.

Boast not, O gulls, that you are sleek and strong!
 You tamely follow in the foaming wake
 Of mighty providence, that steams along
 And strews with broken meats a furrowed lake;
 You catch the larger crumbs by Goodness thrown,
 And soar as if success were all your own!

And ye of little faith! The frowning hills
 Before your vessel's course may interlock;
 So dark may loom to-morrow's wants and ills,
 Your prow may point against a wall of rock.
 The mountains open!—lo, a sudden bend!—
 And never, never, has the stream an end!

I have a Father; he is rich and good.
 He loads the desert-bird with princely plumes;
 He feasts the lonely pard with royal food;
 He grudges not the purple and perfumes
 Of all the lilies. They are more than blind
 Who know not if their sire be rich and kind.

If I refuse myself a harmless joy
 For Christ's dear sake, 'tis well, 'tis happiness;
 Or if I choose to have my wished-for toy
 And still with liberal hand the needy bless,
 'Tis well; as is my faith so shall it be;
 My Father shall not come to poverty.

Laugh on, who scout a special providence!
 All haps are special; and, on every tree,
 Rare game the hunter's quick and heedful sense
 Among the leaves shall never fail to see.
 They find who seek: bright answers to their prayer
 From everlasting wait them everywhere.

Ah, who can disbelieve, since on the earth
 Providence walked! He dwelt among the poor;
 He changed thin water into mantling mirth;
 He feasted thousands from a scanty store:
 And as He moved about with gracious face,
 So walks He still, unseen, in every place.

 THE DOUBLE TREE.

Down from Taunton toward the sea,
 Stands a wondrous double tree:
 Half is apple, half an elm!
 Lofty is the latter's helm;
 Brave the plumes that every spring
 Deeper, broader, shadows fling.
 Low the apple-growth and old,
 Scraggy, poor, and gray with mould.
 Twain, their stem is one and round,
 Knit together, smooth and sound;
 But the elm will wave alone,
 When the apple boughs are gone.

Fixed are Heaven's eternal laws;
 Nothing cuts effect from cause:
 Bitter seed has bitter fruit.
 Yet, beside Eve's apple-root,
 Springs the christian life of grace.
 Lofty faith, it grows apace,
 Thrives on evil consequence,
 Triumphs. This the hidden sense

Wrapt in pardon ;—not release,
 But the new-born tree's increase,
 Till the good, to fulness grown,
 Waves in glory and alone.

CHARITY.

A master pencilled Love,
 And thus her form designed :
 " Love suffers long " :—Wide brows
 Side-dropt, are here defined,
 The inner points high raised
 With patience. " And is kind " :—
 A gracious mouth and eyes.
 " Love envieth not " :—Enshrined
 In smiles, the iris looks
 Not sideways nor behind.
 " Love vaunteth not herself " :—
 A head somewhat inclined.
 " Doth not behave unseemly " :—
 A modest robe refined.
 " And seeketh not her own " :—
 A free and generous mind,
 Expressed by open hand
 And purse with eagles lined.

A few more strokes he adds—
 To heighten patience, three ;
 And five—nay, all—to mark
 Grand MAGNANIMITY.

VIGNETTES.

I. BUDS.

The skies have shed a rain of sudden green ;
The crocus lifts its budded baby-fist.
'Tis joy to walk—on yonder bridge to lean,
Beneath the elms that redden, April-kissed,
And there to watch the sunny dappled brook
Along its bed of leopard colors run ;
And, further on, within a rocky nook,
Where marble steps of ice defy the sun,
To climb a cliff, and see the twinkling lake,
Far as the shores of hazy violet stand,
Its changeful stripes of green and purple take ;
While clouds above, with many a pointing hand,
Shame home-retreating Winter, as they fly
In silence northward through the smiling sky.

II. BUDS.

But few the tender lines that Spring had traced
 Within the season's opened volume, when
Again returned the Winter, angry-faced,
 And, driving fast his snowy-plumaged pen,
A week of postscript wrote in bitter haste,
And all the Spring had said, with storms erased.
 To-day he fled; and I will stroll again
And read the earth. No joy is in the grass;
 The suppliant elms yet lift their naked arms
For summer; wavelets crack the painted glass
 Of sunset waters; penitently warms
 The north-wind; and, beyond the distant farms,
Are leagues of leafless woods that seem afar
Like armies in the pale-blue smoke of war.

III. WAVES.

A silver-shining lake is ours to-day,
 Where fairy artists of the frolic breeze
Their viewless gravers ply in happy play,
 And carve a wreath of rippling images,
As here and there in single breaths they stray,
 And chase and frost the surface as they please.
In silence warm the hills and waters lie,
 Until a distant rifle sharply rings;
The startled water-fowl arise and fly,
And echoes, far from shore to shore, reply.
 'Tis silence then, until the steamer brings
A noise and foam that into stillness die:
 Thus, human Will in Truth would leave its track,
 But soon the boundless Heaven is mirrored back.

IV. WAVES.

Is this the placid lake of early morn?—
 A smiling sleeper waked to frantic life,
 A basking serpent roused to hissing scorn,
 A heaven uprisen to far-resounding strife?
 The leaping surges into plumes are torn,
 Or lift sharp edges like a shining knife,
 While booms the sweeping battery of the winds,
 With interludes of trumpet, gong, and fife;
 And all the shore with steedlike stamping grinds,
 And head o'er head the roaring billows come
 To war and die. 'Tis like the world of minds,
 Where higher than the rest leap upward some,
 And all, with cloud-rift gleams of sunny laughter,
 Dash on and die, like all before and after.

V. WAVES.

And so mount up! still up! my buoyant soul;
 'Tis thine to feel the drawings of the stars,
 And rise aye higher; and, as the billows roll,
 Yet all the water stands within its bars,
 And moves sublimely as a perfect whole
 In unseen currents onward to its goal,—
 So stand within thy place, and feel the Age
 Come pulsing deeply through thy inmost heart,
 And let it lift thee up, to thee presage
 A happier time. A wave—fulfil thy part;
 And, as I stand beside the water's edge,
 And watch the flowing forms, for love of Art,
 So God shall wait upon the brighter shore,
 And count thee when He counts his spirits o'er.

VI. WORK.

A hurried housewife is the busy Spring.
 Too long she slept ; and, now awake, ah me !—
 A thousand things she has to oversee,
 And flutters round, forever on the wing.
 So many birds to feed in morning hours—
 To wake and dress so many bedded flowers—
 So many ruffled leaves to wash and wring,
 Shake out and on the pendent branches string,
 And then with sunbeams mop up all the showers,
 And make her toilet for the coming June !
 Yon robin sees her worrying warm about,
 Pauses a moment in his idle tune,
 And glances up and down, as if in doubt—
 Then whistles, more provoking than devout.

VII. A WEEK.

A sea of song and leaf, of bloom and feather—
 A flood of summer's freshest, fullest splendor,—
 Hath been this week of June's serenest weather.
 Whate'er of beauty mornings clear and tender,
 And golden eves and dewy nights, engender,
 Has met in one bewildering bliss together—
 Delicious fragrance, foliage deep and massy,
 Unfolding roses, silver locust-flowers,
 And darkling silences of waters glassy ;
 Clear crescents, loving stars and nightly showers,
 Rich shades and lemon lights in vistas grassy ;
 And sweetest twitterings through all the hours,
 And opal clouds that float in slumber bland,
 And distances that soften into fairy-land.

1850.

VIII. DAYS.

A day of days! Of all the motley year,
 'Tis like the loveliest face you chance to meet,
 The clearest star that burns in evening's sphere,
 The only eyes to you most heavenly-sweet,
 The only thought you cherish as complete.
 So pure the blood-warm air, so fresh and near
 The utmost distance, and so infinite
 Your seeming strength, that you would fain extend
 A giant arm abroad in huge delight,
 And bury giant fingers in the bright,
 The cool, soft woods that all about you bend.
 On such a day of glory we transcend
 All space and time in being and in power,
 And live a thousand lives in every hour.

IX. DAYS.

Another perfect day! In vain we try
 To toil or rest in plodding life's routine;
 All labors, books, by turn we seek and fly,
 And, pendulous our many plans between,
 Our feet still lead us out beneath the sky.
 The sky!—ah, never thus was sky serene,
 And never grass and trees so sweetly green,
 And never lake so blue. Oh vivid blue
 And living green, of Truth and Youth the symbols!
 O man, come forth, thy youth and truth renew!
 Come forth, with song, or shout, or laughter's tim-
 brels;
 The sky, the earth, the streams, are calling you
 To give this day to field, to lake, and wood,
 In praise of God and for your spirit's good.

X. A RIDE.

A weary road—hills black with fallow fires ;
 Nature is slain, nor yet is Art enthroned.
 But look again !—the fond eye never tires
 That sees all things as pictures, softly-toned.
 Here, lucid gum in golden honey drops
 From new-cut trees, with fine concentric lines ;
 And, yonder, where the mass of forest-tops
 Makes archway gloom below the lusty pines
 That stand, like knights, in bark of bronzed mail,
 A woodman's unhewn cot is plumed with smoke
 Which, in the shadow, wavers, blue and pale,—
 On canvas, 'twere the painter's final stroke.
 But look again and think !—from sea to sea,
 This land one glorious garden yet shall be.

XI. THE CATSKILLS.

The far-off mountains, thinly draped in snow,
 And not in summer's festal robe concealed,
 Their softly-shaped yet mighty figures show,
 With every thew and muscle clear revealed.
 Step above step, the terraced masses rise,
 Until, too vast for sculptured life, they seem
 The stairs sublime of Israel's angel-dream,
 Peopled with pines of no seraphic size
 Nor brightness. Nay, so dim the distant gleam
 And faint the shadows, that, to musing eyes,
 The snow and vapor ghostly forms enshroud—
 Poor Hamlet's father, helmet-crowned and pale,
 Or, turbaned in the summit-wreaths of cloud,
 The Prophet of Khorassan, with his Silver Veil.

XII. THE HIGHLANDS.

Dragon and serpent—monsters leagues in length,
Here prisoned in the earth's once yielding crust,
Twisted and struggled with enormous strength,
And upward strove their ugly heads to thrust,
And died. Entombed within the deepening rust
That wrapped the globe, the whole horizon's bound
Their writhings raised in many a billowy mound.
Or were they horses huge, that Titans strode,
With flowing saddle-cloths that swept the ground
In graceful mountain-slopes? With spur and goad,
The giant crowd to trampling battle rode,
And now the steeds rest petrified around.
Too tame a thought! The rounded hills of rock
Were planets, hither hurled with crushing shock.

XIII. THE PALISADES.

Rouse from the dead the warrior-men of old,
And plant their ranks on yonder rocky wall!
Let archers, slingers, gallant knights and bold,
Quaintly arrayed in crimson, blue, and gold,
Mount the gray fortress, at the clarion's call,
And Richard's lion-banner float o'er all.
Or pierce the rampart, point a thousand guns,
And let the stars of Freedom be unfurled;
For there, in endless columns, might her sons
Challenge the marshalled armies of the world,
With flashing arms and cannon's heavy thunder.
Or let those pillared heights, in grandeur lone,
Be visioned to thy dumb and dreamy wonder—
One long Niagara, changed to silent stone.

XIV. GREENWOOD.

Oh not with Death, ye monumental shades,
 That floated on my floating outer eye,
 Beheld yet unbeheld, so heedlessly
 I strolled with one about the dewy glades,
 Where, deaf and blind, the dead in beauty lie,
 Their woes forgotten like the dream that fades
 At morn,—oh not with Death, in memory,
 Are ye forever blended, but with Life—
 Life from the gentle hand that thrilled me through,
 Life from the voice with love and music rife,
 Life from the eyes that shone as lakes of dew—
 A larger, more abundant life I drew,
 Till, raised the sense of change and death above,
 I grew immortal in the strength of Love.

XV. THE SOUND.

Madly as chain-shot from a cannon sent,
 The dusty cars from town to hamlet fly,
 And all their speed is to the landscape lent;
 The groves, in dances whirling, hurry by,
 And mouldy steep-roofed houses, eloquent
 Of olden times, and orchards tempest-bent,
 And rocks as lasting as New-England creeds,
 While, here and there, the roaring bridges pass
 Where arms and fingers of the sea in weeds
 Are twined. Beyond, a sail-flecked sea of glass,
 The Sound is seen across a wide morass.
 Thus, borne along by Life's impetuous steeds,
 We have at times a glimpse of that far sea
 Where spirits ever float on wings of Purity.

XVI. TEMPLE STREET.

By day, soft clouded in a twilight gloom,
 And letting sunlight through its arches pour,
 The street is like a lofty banquet-room,
 And every sunlit leaf a golden bloom,
 And sunny stripes upon the level floor,
 As if with tiger-ropes 'twere covered o'er.
 By night, the gas-lights, half in foliage hid,
 Seem birds of flame that flutter silver wings,
 And shake in concert with the katydid.
 It is a leafy palace made for kings
 To meet their thousand lords in festivals—
 A "temple" with its wreathed and pillared walls—
 A street that slowly grew a Mammoth Cave,
 Stalagmited with stems through all the nave.

XVII. MT. HOLYOKE.

The upward winding road and rocky stair,
 Our weary feet have slowly trod, and now
 We stand at last upon the mountain's brow.
 So close below it sleep the valleys fair,
 It seems an island floating in the air;—
 So near beneath this giddy brink, 'twould seem
 That one might overleap the mountain's base,
 And plunge far down within yon coiling stream
 That now reflects, in its unruffled face,
 The belting bridge and elm-tree's weeping grace.
 The soul recoils at such a thought; the eye
 Loves more to rove around the circling space
 Where purple hills, against the summer sky,
 Seem all there is of Earth's immensity!

XVIII. COMMENCEMENT.

I tread again where trod my student feet,
 But all is shorn of memory's mellow light;
 The college halls, the public square, the street,
 How dull and literal! A few I greet
 Of those who met my former daily sight,
 And others—shadows of the dead—I meet.
 And I—I lose myself in selves that were;
 Am ready now, a Fresh, to shrink with fear,
 And now, a Sophomore, to laugh and jeer,
 And now, a Senior, I could weep for her
 Who was my light and haunting music here,
 Yet, as another now, not half so dear.
 Ah, sad, confused, I will no longer stay,
 But, from so many selves, away—away!

XIX. LILY POND.

The moon has half put off her monthly bonnet,
 (And I, to-night, again have passed your place,)
 Since we beheld the Lily Pond, and on it
 Sailing, I promised you a fitting sonnet;
 And not till every lovely scene and face
 That in the mirrored depth of memory sleep,
 The brushing wings of Time shall quite efface,
 Would I refuse my careless vow to keep.
 That lakelet, bowered so in foliage deep,
 And winding far in fulness calm and sweet,
 Revealing still some fresh and wild retreat—
 In thee its symbolled truth and beauty meet;—
 Thus full and calm thy noble form and mind;—
 Thus new revealings still in thee we find.

XX. THE STATE FAIR.

Successive states of chaos passed away,
 And many strange creations came and went,
 Before the fruits and flowers that here, to-day,
 Beneath the tents are heaped in bright array,
 Were born. And many centuries were spent
 In rude attempt and vain experiment,
 Before the deft machines, in this display,
 Were perfected. And long the mighty tide
 Of human life must slowly come and go—
 Like this of fifty thousand souls that flow
 In crowded currents through the portals wide
 Of hall and tent, and fill the field beside—
 Like these must act a part and pass away,
 Before the world will see the Perfect Day.

XXI. SNOW-FLAKES.

A childlike joy, and thoughts of long ago,
 Awake in one, as one at morn awakes
 To see the first and fast-descending flakes,
 And all-o'er mantling depth of purest snow.
 Half-dreaming yet, he sees the frosted cakes
 Along the fences ranged in many a row ;
 Night-caps upon the posts, and downy pillows
 On tree-tops ; sculptured drapery from the edge
 Of roofs ; and, in the garden walks, the billows
 Of snow, where briers, pliant as the willows,
 Stoop each to kiss a plump and snowy page,
 Or strive his clinging weight to disengage.
 Such sport ! it shames and glads our morning eyes,
 That Night and Snow have caught us by surprise.

XXII. SNOW-FLAKES.

Not thus on street and garden, roof and spire,
 The snow of ages here was yearly spread.
 It tipt the Indian's plume of bloody red,
 And melted, hissing, in his council fire ;
 It took an impress from the panther's tread,
 And all the monster feet that filled the wood.
 But now the snow of whiter towns and faces
 Has drifted o'er the glorious solitude ;
 And death and silence, like a snow-fall, brood
 Upon the vanished brute and human races.
 So let oblivion come, till it effaces,
 Oh weary soul, thy summer's maddest mood ;
 Thus o'er thy woes let silence softly fall,
 And Age, with holy beauty, veil them all.

XXIII. SNOW-FLAKES.

The sun is out, and darkly blue the sky
 Deepens beyond the dazzling snowy hill.
 Winter, on such a morning, bright and still,
 Is joy itself, and peace and purity.
 It chases summer from the frozen earth,
 And comes with scowling look and breathing bleak ;
 Yet brings a ruddy summer to the hearth,
 And summer radiance to the eye of mirth,
 And summer roses to the glowing cheek.
 But more it speaks of purity and peace,—
 The spotless shroud, the sleeper pale and meek,
 The silent grave, where throbbing troubles cease,
 The gates of pearl, the multitude in white,
 The silver songs, and crystal walls of light.

XXIV. VAPORS.

The ghosts of buried seasons quit their grave
 And haunt the Earth ; nay, Earth is Hades now,
 And March is Pluto, with his clouded brow.
 Around his throne the perished seasons rave,
 And vanish when they see his sceptre wave :
 An autumn sunset and a stormy night
 Follow a wintry noon, a summer morn.
 O mocking shadows, dreary days forlorn,
 When will ye take your final ghostly flight ?
 When will the real maiden Spring be born,
 And grow, and come to us with love and light ?
 There is an end to hope's intensest might,
 If not fulfilled ; despair itself may sing
 " Who cares for joy ? Who cares for any Spring ?"

XXV. VAPORS.

Long are the weeks of fitful warmth and cold,
 When neither Winter nor the Spring prevails.
 Around the hills a heavy vapor trails,
 And hides the sky, to-day, with many a fold ;
 The lingering snow is soiled and daily fails ;
 The air is thick and blue with seeming mould ;
 The forests shiver in the faded rags
 Of former pride ; and through the clogging ooze
 All day the weary traveller slowly drags.
 The Earth is palsied ; all her lines and hues
 Are wan and wrinkled as a gipsy hag's.
 And yet why should we now our love refuse
 To Nature ? Why not love her homely face
 For all it had, and yet will have, of light and grace ?

XXVI. VAPORS.

We love our mother Earth, and well we know
 Eternal youth is beating in her veins ;
 Within her cheek the power to bloom remains.
 The silver seas of vapor wave and glow
 Above the clouds, where summer ever reigns ;
 And Earth is patient in her leafless woe.
 The human heart, to which the fruitful Now
 Should always be a Spring, alone complains.
 Kind Earth, thou grievest more than we, for thou
 Didst come from far to greet thy lord, the Sun,
 And dance around him, all thy shining brow
 Flashing with jewels from the winter won :
 He turned away ; and thou must hide thy face
 With mantling cloud, and seek thy lowest depth of
 space.

XXVII. VAPORS.

But ere is reached thine orbit's furthest bound,
 Thou'lt turn, O Earth, in thy retreating track,
 And steal, through April tears, a glance around ;
 And moving slowly, looking ever back,
 Wilt see the Sun's repentant smile ; and then,
 More slowly moving, yet resentful still,
 At length wilt show thy laughing face again,
 And drop thy cloudy robe, and mount, until,
 With summer roses flushed, thou rushest glad
 To his embrace. Once, near a monument
 Within a burial place, I lingered sad
 At sculptured Grief, till round the tomb I went
 And saw a chiseled Spirit ; I longed to shout
 And sing, as now, for now the sun is smiling out.

XXVIII. HIGH-CHURCH CANDLES.

I said that "I would look for light from each
 And all, who in the love of Jesus share."
 He smoothed his white cravat, and with a speech
 Imperious, spoke: "What can the candles teach
 Which restless men are lighting everywhere?
 We see the Sun of Righteousness—'tis there!—
 The One who is the (mitred) Church we preach."
 I smiled, and thought, as then I turned away,
 "In such an Age, your faith is more the light
 Of altar-candles in a full-orbed day;
 'Twas well enough to burn them in the night
 Of the dark Ages; but a broader ray
 Is shining now, and yours but sadly shed
 A funeral light around a doctrine dead."

XXIX. THE SEASON.

No more the tulips hold their torches up,
 And chestnuts silver candelabra bear.
 The Spring, dethroned, has left her festive cup
 Of honey-dew, and other blossoms flare
 To light another feast with tinted glare.
 Summer has ta'en the sceptre, and the trees
 In low obeisance bow their weight of green;
 The locusts bloom with swarms of snowy bees
 That make the fragrant branches downward lean;
 Each snow-ball bush with full-blown moons is hung,
 And all around, like red suns setting low,
 Large pæonies shed a burning crimson glow,
 While—worlds of foliage on the shoulders swung
 Of Atlantean trunks—the orchards darkly grow.

XXX. THE SUBURBS.

A vine gigantic, rooted in all trade,
 And spreading o'er the land, this City grows ;
 The streets, its lengthening stems, for miles are laid,
 And interlace and twine in endless braid,
 Flowering to cottages in snow-white rows,
 That ripen soon to brick, full-grown and red.
 Oh human vine ! more vine than plant or town ;
 The child has not a selfhood of his own
 Until his youthful years like fruit are shed ;
 E'en then, the root wherefrom his soul has grown,
 Gives all his life—he is a walking branch
 Of family and race. Oh sacred Vine,
 The Church of God, that growest pure and staunch
 Ever, may every heart soon feel thy life divine !

XXXI. THE DISTRICT SCHOOL.

Yon crowded school—small beer too closely pent—
 Bursts from the open door with sudden pop,
 And drowns the street in foaming merriment.
 They run and roll, they tumble, jump and hop—
 A bodied shout, each bubble of a boy—
 Each girl a rainbow-colored, dancing drop
 Of careless, happy, loving, laughing joy !
 Bright children ! through your freer lips and limbs,
 Nature for her great gladness finds a vent,
 While we, encased in custom's iron whims,
 And raised on manhood's stilts, are children still ;
 But feel the boy within us slowly die,
 As slowly grows the angel there—until
 We spread our wings, at death, to seek the freer sky.

XXXII. THE AVENUE.

The pavement rumbles so, from earliest dawn
 To midnight, that the very stones must dream
 Of hoof and wheel, when these awhile are gone.
 What various life!—the trotting-sulkies gleam
 Like circled spider-webs, bedropt with dew;
 The stages—bubbles on a roaring stream—
 Dash by; slow funerals move, of mournful hue—
 The long dark shadows cast by setting lives;
 And market-carts, that boom like laden bees,
 And bring the country sweets to city hives;
 And target bands—gay caterpillars—squeeze
 Their waving length along. Thus onward drives
 This insect world, and hard the Reason strives
 To comprehend that men are vast eternities.

XXXIII. THE RAILROAD.

The daily trains—small villages on wheels,
 That, like swift shuttles, weave the human race—
 Suggest three kinds of thinkers—he who deals
 In argument, the first. His starting place
 And terminus he finds, surveys the route,
 Bridges the rivers, bores each rocky hill,
 Embanks with proof, and fills the gulfs of doubt,
 Then whirls the world along with fiery will.
 The second thinker, lacking spade and drill,
 Through winding paths will lead you all about,
 And bring you to a safe result—should he
 Not lose himself. The third, all soul, will dart
 Through feeling to conclusions, like a bee
 That shoots right home, from subtle instinct of the
 heart.

XXXIV. TWILIGHT.

Dark wings of evening here descend and brood
 O'er recent streets and olden pasture-ground,
 With suburb villas clustered thick around.
 The night brings back the ancient solitude ;
 The cave-like smithy, that all day has rung
 And flamed with toil, is doubly still and dark ;
 The remnant of a meadow finds a tongue
 In a late-singing lonely meadow-lark ;
 Like human life, the sudden fire-fly's spark
 Twinkles and dies ; and one poor cricket's call
 Makes the soothed ear forget the pavement tread
 And wheels that roar like some far waterfall.
 'Tis silence silenced, here, but more than all
 Yon shadowy cities seem like cities of the dead.

XXXV. FREE CALIFORNIA.

High towering o'er this broad and fruitful land,
 His head above the topmost misty star,
 I saw, in dream, a shining Figure stand,
 And hold a world-long balance in his hand.
 To that, dim forms were winging from afar ;
 And, casting what they brought, in either scale,
 They watched the trembling index faintly jar.
 In vain round one scale gathered angels pale,
 And in it wept their tears, with prayerful wail,
 To add a weight to all their diadems ;
 For, in the other, iron crowns were thrown.
 Then came a bright young Form, in flashing gems,
 And with the angels cast her golden crown—
 The other scale flew up, and this went down !

XXXVI. A PICTURE.

A Cross is set in verdure bright and deep,
 Where he who painted last the "Cross and World,"
 Amid his mountain solitudes should sleep.
 Afar, the stooping rain-clouds, darkly curled,
 In sunset smile—in gloomy showers weep,
 And, low beneath, their watch the Catskills keep ;
 Above, the piles of cumulus upwhirled,
 Like Alps of figured alabaster, stand.
 Aye, such should be his monument sublime,
 And wrapt in mournful gloom should be the land
 That felt the waving of his magic wand—
 That with his name is linked in after-time.
 Nor is thy dream to COLE'S renown alone :
 It prophesies, O gifted CHURCH, thine own.*
 MAY, 1848.

XXXVII. TWO PICTURES.

Two pictures paint for me: the first, a Cross
 In foreground light against a distant shroud
 Of gloom, which scattered altar-fires emboss,
 While through it loom in shade the cities proud
 Of Athens, Nineveh, and Babel's crowd,
 And, far beyond, the Deluge billows toss,
 And gleams of Eden pierce its midnight cloud.
 The other picture—let it be the same
 Bright Cross reversed from light, in foreground
 The Victim half-seen now behind its frame, [black,
 And, just beyond, Jerusalem in flame,
 And then still later history, in a track
 Of light that reaches from the Cross to where
 The grand Apocalypse fills all the air.

* Published in *The Tribune*, and believed to have been the first, and for some time the only, public recognition of Church's rare genius.

XXXVIII. A BLONDE CHILD.

I ever loved a dark and doting eye,
 And heavy curls of dark and glossy hair ;
 But now, oh Essie, never more I sigh
 For eyes and ringlets steeped in passion's dye,
 Since loveliness like thine is very fair,
 Whatever be the color it may wear.
 The hair is but a turban for the head,
 The eyelash but a little fairy veil—
 Each lovely, if to sweetness they are wed.
 I love thy hair, so golden-brown and pale,
 That o'er thy temples thou dost smoothly trail ;
 I love thy drooping eyelid's silver thread ;
 But, more than braided floss of sunny gold,
 Thee—thee I love, thou ever sunny-souled !

XXXIX. AUTUMN SNOW.

All day the streaming roofs and swimming ground
 Have shed or drank the plenteous autumn rains ;
 All day the heavy-laden skies have frowned,
 And dozing eyes have felt the slumberous sound,
 While gazing idly at the sullen plains—
 Or, waked to watch the thousand vivid stains
 That dye the distant frost-enkindled woods,
 And fire the way-side trees, whose foliage drips,
 Like bathing birds with crimson feather-tips.
 Lo ! suddenly a whiter darkness broods,
 And floating snow succeeds the plashing floods :
 The monstrous flakes seem large as wafted ships—
 Or, like a white-winged angel throng they fall ;—
 Alas ! how can we mortals entertain ye all !

XL. A SUNBEAM.

An angel-sunbeam started from the sun,
Nor stopped to toy with Mercury in his orbit,
So swiftly on its errand it must run ;
The face of Venus, next, did not absorb it,
Nor cloud and vapor in its speed could curb it.
On, on it flew, until, its journey done,
It shone in glory on my study wall.
Thank God, who sent it thus to chase my gloom,—
A hundred million miles, for me to fall,
And fill with happy thoughts my soul—my room !
Thank God, that I can send a prayer to all,
As far, as warm, to cheer a hapless doom !
Thank God, our kindness need not shine so far,
But it may greet some nearer human star !

A MEMENTO.

“Our Father in heaven”—
’Tis the prayer of the Lord,
Embossed on a sea-shell,
Nor lacking a word.

Oh, not from the islands
Of coral and palm ;
It came from the waters
Of heavenly calm.

The angels sat waiting
To welcome her there ;
They sculptured the letters,
So holy and fair.

She stooped to the margin
Of eternity’s sea ;
She picked up the cameo
And gave it to me.

Her lips were as bloodless
As the lips of the shell ;
But the face of her slumber
Was sculptured as well.

On her brow it was written
“Our Father—Thy will ;”
“Amen” in her death-smile
Was radiant still.

A RANDOM REVERIE.

Augustus found a Rome of common clay,
 And left it marble; but the witching ray
 Of the fair moon does what no Cæsar could.
 At dusk, this suburb was mere brick and wood;
 Yet, quick as thought, the Empress of the Night
 Changed all to jasper smooth and parian white.
 Extremes may meet; her beauty takes the place
 Of the feigned power in dread Medusa's face;
 She turns frail cottages to lustrous stone,
 And life to sculpture.

Lo! the comet's gone
 From the pale west. Was it a powdered moth,
 Blown from the sea of space, lightly as froth,
 To flutter round the sun, and warm its wings,
 Stiffened with cold? Or, like the gauzy things—
 The dragon-flies that sport their summer hour,
 Hovered it o'er the great and glowing flower
 Of the gold-lilied sky? Was it a dart
 Hurl'd at our solar system's burning heart?
 Or—such its shape—a monstrous shuttlecock
 That Uriels, standing in far centres, knock
 Across the universe?

Together came
 Woman's Convention and the comet's flame.
 So strange, eccentric, were they both, the town
 Queried if earth itself would be burnt Brown,
 Or dashed to pieces with a meteor-Stone.
 Comet! Convention!—not unlike. The one

Was marked by no superfluous length of dress ;
 But then the comet's train, we must confess,
 Made up for that. Convention!—comet!—each
 Disturbed some ancient systems in its reach,
 And vanished. Will they both return again,
 And are they gas? Ponder the problem, men!
 But rest assured, unmanly men, of this—
 Neither will turn aside for hoot and hiss,
 But each will run its race.

A fire?—a fire

In yon dark city, kindling havoc dire?
 Another moon, half-set and crossed with bars
 Of cloud? A new-made Pleiades of stars?
 It is the Crystal Palace dome, rayed round
 With diamond lights,—labor and genius crowned!
 What a vast world that distant dome contains!
 'Tis like the little lump of human brains—
 A crowded universe of thoughts and things,
 Shut in a rounded skull.

But give me wings!—

Give me the stars and open heavens, to-night,
 And be the town forgot. Beneath the light
 Of memory's moon, that silvers all the past
 With softer sheen than yonder orb may cast,
 Or stars through clear and roral air may shed,
 Let me live o'er the sad sweet evenings dead.

1853.

LOSS AND GAIN.

I missed the mountain I had loved—
The feeling, calm and deep,
Of strength, of vastness, and repose,
In gazing up the steep.
I longed to climb its brow again
And breathe the angel-air,
Downward to look upon the world
And scorn its petty care.

I knew not, in this level land,
My restless fancy whirled
Far into azure deeps of space
And round the mighty world;
I knew not heaven and earth had grown,
For me, to grandeur new,
Until one day the truth sublime
Lightened my spirit through.

The mountain broke the planet's sphere,
And took the place of sky;
But now—how round and huge the earth!
The heavens, how wide and high!
My fancy finds a larger strength
In spanning sea and land—
A deeper vastness and repose
In spaces blue and grand.

And thus there is a higher might
 In weakness, woe and pain,
 In darkness still a purer light,
 In every loss a gain.
 Estate and place—these matter not ;
 There are no favored few,
 But equal good in every lot,
 Weighed in a balance true.

LOVE AND LAW.

But little of human decrees we knew,
 Yet with prisons and fines had nothing to do :
 The heavenly lesson how slow to draw—
 Lo ! love fulfils the law.

A saint, we fancied, must wink by rule,
 His pulses drill, and his breathings school :
 We looked on his face with ignorant awe—
 Nay ! love fulfils the law.

We despaired of climbing the Christian height,
 Nor dreamed it could be reached at a flight !
 It is not perfection without a flaw ;
 Winged love fulfils the law.

Proud virtues, at best, are a marble fount,
 Where the waters of life may never mount ;
 A sweet mossy spring is better than a' ;
 Pure love fulfils the law.

THE TRUE GOD.

Well, crown His crown with the ruby of Love,
 Or set the clear jewel of Justice above,
 But I will make one of the two,
 And call Him the perfectly True.

The true are faithful to love and bless,
 And faithful to wield the fasces no less—
 Oh tender and terrible too,
 Are they who are simply true!

At the first, as a promise-keeping One
 And threat-abiding, He made himself known;
 And Him the last Seer knew
 As the Witness, faithful and true.

To-day and yesterday, ever the Same—
 Go, read the Book, or but muse on its name,
 The Covenant, Old and New,
 Of Him—the eternally True.

 LION PREACHERS.

THE FIRST—R. S. S., JR.

His balanced thoughts, in rapid sweep,
 A broad and crystal theme define,
 Distinct and spacious as the deep,
 Edged with the long horizon's line.

No narrow creek, no stagnant pond,
Nor close-shut bay, contracts the view ;
But, always onward and beyond,
A sure helm guides you o'er the blue,
A stout ship bears you and its freight
Of learning, gathered from all time,
Of gold as fine as rich in weight,
And precious fruits from every clime.
And ever spreads the billowy space,
Moved by a fresh and steady breeze ;
And, here and there along its face,
The sparkling water swells to seas
That break and foam in fancy's light,
Until you reach familiar land—
A firm conclusion of your flight.
Sea-ward you gaze, as there you stand,
And list the final full appeal,
And hear the shells and pebbles drift
In rolling undertone, and feel
The rising wind, that loves to lift
The long high surges, rushing in
To dash and roar and grandly pour,
With swifter force and heavier din,
Along a far-drawn flashing shore.

THE SECOND—H. W. B.

Prepare for no betokened speech ;
No full-sailed vessel speeds your mind
O'er flowing seas to looked-for beach.
You mount the chariot of the wind,
And, as you skim a world of things,

And gaze with eagle vision down,
The sudden-shifting current brings
Your soaring soul right o'er the town,—
Floats you above the beggar's den,
The rich man's home, the busy street,—
Blows from the mantled forms of men
The fair disguise that hides deceit,
Reveals their characters, and plays
Fearlessly with their stately pride,—
Then whirls you where the forest sways,
And harvests wave in valleys wide ;
Or lifts you to a mountain's height,
And, driving down its mass of cloud,
Courses the plains with bursts of light,
And peals of thunder, long and loud,—
Prostrates the castled Wrong, and cleaves
The walls of Doubt and Bigotry ;
Or, dashing ocean-ward, it heaves
With thought profound the deepest sea.
Yet, hath its fiercest inspiration
A soothing breath for sad despair,
And always, with the agitation,
Brings purified reviving air.

THE THIRD—C. W.

You hear an infant's plaintive cry
In words that faintly rise and fall ;
You see a canvas, wide and high ;
And, like the fingers on the wall
At Babylon's feast, two spectral hands,
Above the large-browed speaker's head,

Shoot out and up, like ivory wands,
 And, on the canvas-subject, spread
 Rich tints—word-paintings—with a stroke
 Rapid and strange as Merlin's art.
 Sweet rural scenes—an olden oak,
 Soft grass, and limpid streamlet, start
 To life and beauty; then, as soon,
 Are blotted with the hues of night,
 And darkling seas, whereon the moon
 And stars alone shed misty light.
 Instant the pictures come and go—
 A mother and her slumbering child;
 A mountain hoar with ancient snow;
 Or purpled vines or torrents wild;
 Lightning or sun, earthquake or breeze;
 Tempests or calm distilling dews;
 Volcanoes, eagles, flowers;—all these
 Glimmer in quick dissolving views,
 While dart the spectral hands, and moans
 The child-like voice, which, now and then,
 Rings forth a truth, in prophet-tones,
 That well may startle sternest men.

 BELL.

Thou art no tepid soul, no twilight creature,
 In whom the gentler graces only dwell;
 But life and thought intense in every feature
 Quiver and flash incessant, Bell.

Thy brilliant lips and eyes, the soul revealing,
Thy past declare, thy future lot foretell ;
The keenest lights and darkest shades of feeling
Will be thine orient riches, Bell.

And if thy heart to God and truth is tending,
And, upward winging, ever striveth well,
Thy soul will be an orb of light transcending
All mild and starry spirits, Bell.

From sun to sun, throughout the airy ocean,
Thy flight the swiftest pinions will excel ;
Strong in thy love as daring in thy motion,
The herald will be angel Bell.

And like the angel with the face of lightning,
Before whose splendor men in silence fell,
Thy soul will be a sunset glory, brightening
Paradise with thy beauty, Bell.

WHAT TO DRINK.

Yes ! chill and weary, dreary, 'tis,
To live too temperate, I wis ;
But what to drink ? the question is.

No burning fever-cup is mine,
No corn distilled, nor musty wine,
From Scio, Lisbon, or the Rhine.

God's golden wine!—the deluge bright
Of glowing day and shining night—
Deeply and long I quaff the light.

And beauty, beauty!—of earth and air,
And every face God maketh fair—
In dreams of that, I drown my care.

And love, love, love!—from lip and eye
I draw and draw a large supply,
Until no more my heart is dry.

And truth, the truth of truth, I drink,
Prostrate beside its ocean-brink,
Until joy's madness is—to think.

These are my wines, and these I pour
Into my soul, and it flows o'er
With rapture, and can hold no more.

But grace!—for this far more than these,
Oh may I thirst, as thirst the trees
For light and rain in showered seas.

This is the blood of the true Vine ;
Its drops with love's own crimson shine,
And fire with deathless life divine.

With this may soul and life be filled,
With this may heart and mind be thrilled,
Till breath, pulse, life, in death are stilled.

TENDER AND FIRM.

Have you a glorified mother?
Can you find words to commend her—
Words that are better or other
Than—she was firm, yet was tender?

Parent and teacher, who train
Young Immortality's germ,
Hear it again and again—
Mark it—be tender and firm!

Art only asks for a finger
Steady, yet flexile and slender;
Horseman and surgeon and singer
Need but a strength that is tender.

Firm as immoveable stone,
(Firm—firm—ponder the term)
Tender as mosses thereon—
Think of it—tender and firm!

THE GHOST OF LOVE.

It was a hermit, lone and grave,
Who lived contented in a cave;
It was the wingéd boy who found him there,
And feigned a little saint to be—
But stole the poor man's rosary,
His hour-glass broke, and hid his vellum rare.

“ Imp ! ” cried the anchoret, “ there lies
Beneath your rosy-faced disguise
A dark enchantment ; ” and he seized the child
So fiercely that he strangled him.
Ah, foolish anger, crazy whim !
Ah, years of sorrow for one moment wild !

For, day by day, the ghost of Love,
Before, behind, beside, above,
Was ever near, a giant shadow now ;
And if the hermit ceased to pray,
Or strove to drive the Shape away,
It came more near and with a sadder brow.

And if he wandered in the wood,
Or paced beside a river’s flood,
It followed still with dark suggestions there,
And pointed at the tempting stream ;
And if he slept, it came—a dream
That wore a thousand forms of vague despair.

At last he left his gloomy den,
And from a happy morning when
He wedded, never more the Shape was seen ;
Yet sometimes on the cottage wall
Its flickering presence seemed to fall,
Sometimes to moan around the home serene.

But when a child of mortal race
Was born, and with a sweeter grace
Than his who found the hermit-cave before,
A sigh as of a fleeting ghost
Was heard and in the distance lost,
And haunting forms and sounds returned no more.

"INVESTIGATION."

Ans—"The rose that all are praising."

The spirits are a-knocking,
 The good, the bad, and all ;
 The people, they are flocking
 At every wizard's call.
 "We should inquire—investigate,
 Be candid"—so they smoothly prate.
 In-ves-ti-ga-tion—gation,
 Oh that's the word, of late !

A chicken that had warning
 To look not in the well,
 Its mother's mandate scorning,
 Flew up, gazed down, and fell.
 'Twas drowned, 'tis true—a sorry fate,
 But chickens must "investigate."
 In-ves-ti-ga-tion—gation,
 Oh that's the word, of late !

His meat and self reflected,
 The dog saw in the lake :
 He plunged, the cheat detected,
 But lost his precious steak.
 The mystery of its imaged mate
 He did indeed "investigate."
 In-ves-ti-ga-tion—gation,
 Oh that's the word, of late !

Around a candle flying,
 The moth in flame is wrapt ;
 Around a morsel prying,
 The cautious mouse is trapt.
 The luring light, the fatal bait,
 Why should they not "investigate?"
 In-ves-ti-ga-tion—gation,
 Oh that's the word, of late !

The tree of knowledge evil—
 "Taste it—ye shall not die ;
 'Tis wisdom," said the Devil,
 And man believed the lie.
 The fruit was fair as yellow gold ;
 Man should "investigate"—be bold !
 In-ves-ti-ga-tion—gation,
 That was the word, of old !

M A R G A .

Craggy nests with eider-lining ;
 Pillowed cradles, soft and white ;
 Geodes, full of crystals shining ;
 Hearts that hold a hidden light ;—
 Such the cavern, Marga's room
 From her birth to maiden bloom.

Roof and column, arched and frosty
 With the fine and lustrous spars ;
 Rich divans and hangings costly,
 Bridal silk with silver stars—

Made, by mirrors multiplied,
Hers a palace, long and wide.

She, a snowy flower, and ever
Draped with pearls and misty lace,
Fled from light and tint, and never
Passed the portal of the place ;
All things there were angel-white,
Save her hair of waving night.

Lost to earth were perfect features,
Stately form and eyes of blue ;
Life was spent with fancy's creatures,
Who, if spirits false or true,
Came and went to work her will,
Whispering mystic words, until

Through her lonely self-communion,
Fasting, dream and vow, I wis,
She had grown to closest union
With another world than this,
Ripening into sweetness rare
Not on mortal joy and fare.

Fatal morn !—her father entered ;
Fierce he was, but very mild
When with her in whom had centred
All desire—his only child.
“Marga,” said he, “’tis the hour
That will crown my hope of power.

“Now, a prince who knows my treasure—
Wealth and daughter, but not where—

Meets me yonder, sues my pleasure,
 Mine!—an outlaw's, in his lair,
 Who would else the gibbet feel,—
 Now, at last, the proudest kneel!”

Forth, with gold and jewels laden,
 Went he to the mountain's brow ;
 Forth he led the trembling maiden,
 Ready for the marriage vow ;—
 Shot with sunlight, Marga shrank
 From the groom, and, fainting, sank!

Then a sudden tempest broke ;
 Lightning-rent, the mountain fell ;
 Yet, before the thunder-stroke
 Echoed deep their double knell,
 Prince and robber saw a form—
 Marga's, glorious through the storm,

Mounting upward! And they noted
 Voices (while the thunder rolled)
 As if angels near them floated :—
 “ Thus we punish lust of gold ;
 Thus, in homes of wrong, we rear
 Pure minds for a purer sphere !”

 BERKSHIRE VALLEY.

This vale was not a fairer one
 Than many on the dimpled face
 Of Earth, and here no clearer sun
 Had lighted all the roomy space.

But now the hills are drawn around
In happier shapes than elsewhere,
With softer forests are they crowned,
And bathe their heads in purer air.

The grass is richer, and the stream
In curves more graceful lingers here,
And rock and tree are like a dream,
Painted in colors warm and clear.

For here, companions of the birds
That come with Spring and go with Fall,
Are they whose song and wiser words
Have made our memories musical.

Here he has built his summer nest
Who mocks the Age in pleasant tone,
Yet, when he soars and sings the best,
Glowes with sweet visions of his own.

And he is here whose plumage smiles
With every changing rainbow hue,
Who brought from distant coral isles
The spiciest fruits that ever grew.

And he whose sombre fancy seems
To love the ghostly twilight dark,
Who yet is touched with humor's gleams—
A starling with a scarlet mark.

And he who gives the voice of night,
As purely as the nightingale,
Yet wings through ages past his flight,
In legend's plumes, a golden mail.

She, also, who to Shakspeare's thought
Has given a voice that is its mate—
From him his song immortal caught,
And flew with it to morning's gate.

She, too, whose dear New England tales,
And gentle words and woman's worth,
Have made her, in our homes and vales,
The welcome robin of the North.

With such as these, hath not the scene
More regal hills and bluer skies,
More lucid streams in pastures green,
On which a fairer sunshine lies?

For them, the hills are stationed here—
Caparisoned with wood and glade;
For them the meadow elm-trees rear
Their fountain-forms of drooping shade.

THE CHAINED STATUE.

An echo from the past—a buried name,
Is she, imperial Palmyrene—her hands
To stern Aurelian's car with brazen bands
Enlinked. And she is but a breath of fame—
The victor's victress, who, a captive, prest
A viper like a child against her breast.

But thou art instinct with the life of life,
Oh Beautiful! As we are gazing now,
All Time shall look upon that holy brow—
Those lips where hopelessness hath ended strife,
Those eyes that all their bitter tears have shed,
That fair and shrinking form, and drooping head.

Yet lift thine eyes! No might can drag thee down
From virtue's throne—no tyrant touch defile
The heart that scorneth brutal force or guile.
Beauty and innocence!—a double crown
Of Heaven's creation, gives august command,
And its own sceptre is thy stainless hand.

High court thou holdest,—all men pay respect:
The good confess thy pure uplifting power;
The base at thine unsullied presence cower;
Their grovelling thought and lawless lips are checked,
As if a seraph's snow-light, in their path,
Smote on their darkness like the lightning's wrath.

Nor can the free heart be confined with chains,
Golden or iron; it flies through earth abroad,
It floats to heaven and hides itself with God.
Thy thoughts are wandering on Thessalian plains,
Are hovering round thy home, or reaching up
To Him who gives and takes life's mingled cup.

Sweet Purity's self! in thee the brimming sum
Of human wrong and sorrow is express;
In thee our sense of Beauty findeth rest;
From thee still voices, breathing Freedom, come;
By thee is taught the soul's great dignity,
And Earth's and Heaven's fair future shines in thee.

THE ANGEL OF SONG.

The lamps and living sea were lost to sight,
And sounds in visioned form and hue advanced ;
The Voice became a stream, a soul, a light,
That played before the eyes of one entranced.

A stream that bubbled deeply from a fount,
And ran in silver windings far away,
Or fell in sunshine from a rocky mount,
And filled the air with rosy flying spray.

A light that streamed in wild auroral dance,
Then trailed afar a meteor-thread of gold,
Or burst in stars that filled the blue expanse,
Or widely into sparkling oceans rolled.

A soul of beauty, loosed from mortal clay,
And trying every motion swift of grace,
As first awakened to celestial day,
And revelling in joy of power and space.

And then the skies were opened, and the Voice,
As through a window, warbled from her throat,
And all the songs of those who there rejoice
Were sent to earth in one united note.

So fearless, pure and happy was the song,
It seemed the very gladness of a heart
Ascending to a faith, serene and strong.
That in the Universe it has a part.

The visions passed, but ever unto me,
 While life and toil and memory endure,
 That Voice a symbol beautiful shall be
 Of joy and freedom for the true, the pure.

 PLEA FOR THE HEART.

The human heart! the living heart!
 A sea in storm, or sea at rest,
 Where golden joys in glimpses dart,
 Or monsters lift a bristling crest;
 And hidden fountains boil below,
 And upper, under, currents flow—
 Ah why and whither, who may know?
 Such is the heart.

Trust not the heart, if it be trust
 In vaunted goodness, windy will;
 Thy rock of faith is drifting dust,
 And wilfulness is lust of ill;
 But if thy calmer mood it be,
 That loves to bow the humble knee,
 Fear not; an angel leadeth thee:
 Follow thy heart.

Passion may flash in vivid flame,
 And madly rush at reason's bound;
 And worship for a human name
 May wildly cast thee to the ground;

But if 'tis love, and love alone,
 That, as a flower, has gently grown,
 And would to seraph eyes be known,
 Honor thy heart.

Doubt may embattle earth and sky ;
 The holiest word seem but a word ;
 Yet heed thy heart ; let not its cry
 In all the conflict be unheard.
 God is not found in mental din ;
 A way he would more sweetly win—
 Oh, bring the King of Glory in !
 Believe thy heart.

Error may wear a veil of light
 And lead thee in its sylvan path ;
 Or wrongs may rise in fettered might,
 And ask a voice of righteous wrath :
 But first learn silence ; stay to think,
 And if thy burdened soul will sink,
 From outward danger scorn to shrink :
 Utter thy heart.

Wouldst raze the castle that may screen
 The nestled adders of the past ;
 Or wouldst thou wreath it in the green
 Of reverent ivy clinging fast ?
 Cherish the old, nor fear the new,
 And pay the past its grateful due,
 Yet be to human longings true ;
 Enlarge thy heart.

The human heart!—a sea at rest,
Or tost in dashing passion's play ;
A gate that bars each angel guest,
Or swings apart to boundless Day ;
A vine that struggles for the light,
Or falls—a knotted mass of blight,
And self-impiercing thorns of spite—
Oh save thy heart.

The heart is all ; be thine a deep
That mirrors all the upper blue ;
An arch triumphal with a sweep
So high that Heaven may enter through ;
A growth that clasps the Highest Throne,
And circles Earth—a blooming zone,—
A HEART—a pulse of Nature's own !
Such be thy heart.

WINTER AND WAR.

A ghostly battle is the snowy gale
That all day drives with furious speed !
Along the far horizon swift they go—
Banner and spear, rider and steed,
In slanting lines of cloud that forward lean,
As, troop by troop, they haste away ;
And, over all, the ashy vapors float,
Thick as the smoke of deadly fray.

From every hilly ridge the dry snow spins
 Like volleys from a mimic fort,
 And loud the windows rattle in the wind,
 As 'twere a heavy gun's report ;
 And, ceaseless in the noisy storm, are heard
 Trumpet and drum, and shout and wail,
 While every drift is folded like a form
 Prostrate and sheeted, cold and pale.

Man's blood is one: the far-off Euxine shore
 Cannot resound with strife and woe,
 But it will shape the lightest dream, where'er
 The tides of human feeling flow.
 And some there be who say the elements,
 By sympathy with man, are whirled
 Abroad in storm, till war on earth becomes
 A war of heaven around the world.*

 VERSICLES.

We live from hand to mouth; and so
 Our graces hardly live ;
 To him who hath, all riches flow,
 To him the poorest give.

The first dear thousand truths attained,
 No end of heavenly good ;
 The ploughing rains, a channel gained,
 Soon pour a rolling flood.

* " In the memory of man such a hurricane has not desolated the Crimean shores, and, as a proof of it, the buildings of the old monastery, on the coast near Balaklava, have been blown down."—*War Correspondence*.

Feeling—we have enough and more,
 If only not misplaced,
 Like palace treasures tumbled o'er
 And left to ruin's waste.

If we would love where love is due,
 The hateful only hate,
 Distrust the false, believe the true,
 How cherubic our state!

Why is no Bible written still?
 The thought would not be vain
 If latter times did not fulfil
 The Spirit's promised reign.

Does not the Book itself foreshow
 That God his will would write
 In all new hearts, and earth should glow
 With universal light?

The cold consent—"divide the child,"
 A loveless heart betrayed;
 To save alive, with horror wild,
 The true heart only prayed.

True love to God and love to man
 United live, or die;
 The false love of the partisan
 Breathes in his party cry.

Two disputants, to Hades sent,
Soon as within the door,
Exclaimed, "Our breath was idly spent—
Time is to us no more!

"Duration? Ah, did we not know
In even the earthly clime,
A perfect joy, a perfect woe,
That has no sense of time?"

All things are beautiful and kind
To him who takes their course;
But death in all things he shall find
Who breasts their mighty force.

God's earth is full of dread and sweet;
In earth, himself He writes:
It is not strange that in him meet
All glorious opposites.

There is no heart that does not burn
To one or more, whose word
Is gospel. Whither shall we turn?
To whom but thee, O Lord?

God's human image, parent face,
Complete in One he could
Unveil, to show his truth and grace;
And if he might, he would.

Things most enduring and unseen
The angels never see ;
Justice and truth, and love serene,
The hidden glories be.

And yet the soul may see them now
Beneath all fitting forms,
Eternal as the mountain's brow
That folds itself in storms.

Precious the crown that has a place,
And flashes back the light ;
Worthless, if hung in vacant space
And lost in boundless night.

The jewelled soul is nothing worth,
That fills no sphere of love,
Nor glows with God : unmissed on earth,
'Twill not be missed above.

The engine is not free that fails
To keep its iron track ;
It plunges, if it spurn the rails,
Headlong, a helpless wrack.

Wouldst thou be free ? thy burden draw
And every power employ,
And fly along the track of law,
Thy work a play and joy.

Not he who cares but little, shows
The liberal mind and free—
Who says, "It may be truth—who knows?
It does not trouble me ;"

But he who seeks the truth to weigh,
And grasps with earnest hold,
And grants, but does not throw away,
All unessential gold.

"If any man will do His will,
The doctrine he shall know :"
We do not know our hearts until
We stem their wilful flow.

And then we feel our weight of sin,
Our weakness understand,
Nor trust the shore of life to win
Till Christ extend his hand.

The Word our guide, a finer sense
Reveals its heavenly source ;
And strong our faith in providence
When following its course.

Obedience opes the doors of truth ;
Gives freedom proper place ;
Links us to God, brings deathless youth,
And is the childlike grace.

A RHYMED ADDRESS.*

Come forth, my Pegasus!—with drooping wing,
Which long disuse has robbed of gloss and spring,—
With hard professional driving tired and galled,
Although in cleric comfort well in-stalled—
Come forth again! Thy flights are short and few;
In life's prose harness there is much to do;
Seize the brief moment, soar in freer air,
And shake from hoof and mane the dust of care.
Too soon must thou descend, oh neighing bird!—
With Bishop Horsley and with Lightfoot herd,
Feed on Professor Park, or craunch thine oats
In learned Stackhouse or in Barnes (his Notes);
Follow with Palfrey through a tangled maze;
Browse on Professor Bush, on Bloomfield graze;
Midst Fenelon and Nettleton, thy ways
Must pick with care, digesting Doctor Hey.
So shalt thou learn to draw thy lumbering dray;
So shalt thou grow a safe and useful horse,
Whose practical mind the driest men endorse,
Unless, indeed, by too much rubbing down
With Newcomb, Cardwell—writers of renown,—

* Delivered, 1857, in connection with an oration by the Editor of the North American Review; hence the second and third paragraphs.

Thy shining zeal shall toss its haughty head,
Break Doctor Schaff and tear Professor Shedd.
Such will be, is, thine unromantic fate ;
But now, dear Pegasus, with joy elate,
Spread thy light wings, thy sober bridle slip,
Nor wince at duty's spur, nor critic's whip.

College ! a poem ! and the honored man
Who leads our periodical caravan,
Its elephant conducting !—these suggest
My theme ; and first in story be it dressed.

Long years ago, a student, who had slept
Till half his final college season crept
In silence past him, basking out his time
O'er text-books, fiction, travel, tomes of rhyme,—
Strangely awoke from the soft dream of youth,
To yearn for fact, to famish for all truth—
Awoke as one whom hunger's self may wake,
Or shaming noonday light his slumber break.
What now should quickly feed and fire his mood ?
Thanks to Reviews !—he reapt their choicer good.
Five volumes of the " North American," seized,
He straight devoured, nor then his soul was eased.
Dry subjects that, till now, he blindly thought
Must always be to him as husks of naught,
Grew juicy as he read : reports of trade
Were sweet as mellow songs of moon and maid ;
Essays on constitutional law as grand
As Spenser's shadowy tales of fairy-land ;
Abstracts of coastwise survey as sublime
As Maryatt's scenes of wreck and pirate crime ;

Critiques on Kant as canny as a plot
That weaves in rainbow plaid the page of Scott ;
A treatise on the Northmen was a treat ;
Dulcet a statement of the sugar-beet ;
From hieroglyphics honey-drops distilled,
The census charmed and therapeutics thrilled.

You shrug your shoulders—you, the mind select,
So deep whose well of learning, we suspect
The bottom has dropt out. You wag your head ;
You doubt the student who has never read
Hegel in German, or, in French, La Place.
This smattering from Reviews is sounding brass.
Granted : but must we trace the Niger's course,
Nor drink until we reach the far-off source ?
He is the smatterer who rests content
And boasts, at any point in his ascent
Of topless knowledge, howsoe'er he climb,
With others' aid or not, the hills sublime.
Thanks to Reviews, if these may help us stake
The fenceless wild of ignorance, and break
Its virgin soil, till some thin harvests spring,
And quick reward of joyous fruitage bring.
The floating items of the daily Press
Be praised for this, that many a random guess
At truth, or hint of science, throws a twine
That after it shall draw a heavier line,
And this a cable, till the wire-bridge stands
Anchored, and stayed with branching iron bands,
So firm that o'er the dizzy floor there runs
A thundering train that weighs a thousand tons.

Terence's words our motto (all have seen 'em)—

Nihil humani a me alienum—

Whatever concerneth man concerneth me.

The wider range, the more we do and be ;

Nothing that can inform the mind is waste ;

Nothing that fires a UNIVERSAL TASTE.

Broad culture !—or, to give our theme an edge,

Breadth versus Depth—the long net or the dredge.

Life, like a porpoise, is so thick and short ;

So few are broad and deep—the Humboldt sort ;

Between the two we mostly have to choose—

A submarine research or fishing cruise.

But first, to make the meshes of our seine

So close that small fish cannot slip between—

To give it, here and there, a leaden weight,

Secure some depth and keep the netting straight—

Observe ! the student cannot be too nice,

Too slow and sure, too close, exact, precise.

Allwhere, beyond New England's western line,

Behold the "famed Academy," fresh and fine !

What towering brick, the mortar hardly dry !—

A cotton mill is not less wide and high.

Within, a painty show of globes and maps,

And burnished scientific toys and traps :

Machines electric, shocking but to see ;

An ill-matched, clashing, chemic family

Of salts and batteries, jars, and fierce retorts ;

A cabinet, with a pint of crystal quartz ;

A magic lantern, magic somewhat small,

But all the pictured wonders strange and tall.

Such the grand apparatus. Teachers found,
The fair prospectus next is sent around,
As thus: "Salubrious region—scenery fine—
A moral town—a thorough discipline—
To fitting youth for college, *special care* ;
In short, an institute that will compare
With any;" then come fifty references
To Honorables, Doctors, and D. D's.
The term begins; in one short wasted year,
Young Hopeful is in full and proud career—
Two hundred lines of Virgil every day,
Mingled with Rhetoric, French, and Algebra,
And botanizing rambles through the woods,
And nightly gazings under silken hoods,
At the sigh-dear-eal heavens. To college now,
And win the crown! The tutor makes his bow,
The lesson gives—five lines of Homer's Greek.
Five lines!—to one who lately in a week
Had read his thousand! Recitation comes;
At the first question, Hopeful bites his thumbs,
And mutely stands and stares, with fallen crest.
Such the beginning; need we tell the rest?
The pampered lad—a foundered racing-horse,
Flounders on wearily through all his course.
Nor is this all; their dewy freshness gone,
Their glory yet unreached, he can but yawn
Over the 'ologies that else had come
In ripening season, purple as a plum.
Happy for others, doubtless, 'tis to skim
All science, while the chance is theirs; for him
Who enters college, it is worse than naught;
Better were he a wild ass, newly caught.

O ye who teach preparatory schools,
And spoil young Hopefuls! Are ye simply fools?
Whether ye seek to flatter fond papas,
Or your own course as superficial was,
Two hundred stripes would be your trifling meed
For each two hundred lines your pupils read.
A dunce indeed is he whose lack of drill
Teaches him not the path to learning's hill
That others should pursue; a desperate dunce
Who knows not, difficulties conquered once,
Thornless are learning's else tormenting ways.
Ye sordid teachers, seeking ease and praise,
For you the doom of Sisyphus were mild,
Who spoil a man in every trowsered child—
Set him to roll the stones that ever drop
Backward, when half-way to the mountain-top.
No wabbling cobbles, pebbles, bowlders, drift,
Up the steep highland may we push and lift;
The knowledge which our memory cannot slip,
The truths our minds can hold with certain grip,
Are those we quarry out and chisel square,
Measure exact and hammer to a hair.
Them we may tumble up our mental slope,
With them may build, from base to cope,
The structure that, reposed on solid piers,
Springs into graceful spires in after-years.

All hail, Precision! Not a mincing jade,
With bitter face, art thou, but heavenly maid,
Daughter of stars that move in orbits true.
Upon thy lip there glows the roseate dew

Which nature mixes with unvarying art,
Weighing in subtle scales each airy part.
A light that vibrates to eternal law,
Illumes thine eyes ; and sculpture, with no flaw,
Is not more perfect than the whole contour
Of thy smooth limbs and angel features pure,
While all thy motion writes in air the grace
Of waves, whose myriad atoms know their place.
We kiss thy fingers, lift thy homely veil,
Thy beauty greet,—hail, fair Precision, hail !

Our song, thus far, conceals a cunning aim—
To lull asleep a man whom we may name
Dredger. The flowing rhyme and doctrine sound
Soothe him to dullness, gentle and profound,
And last, not least, the etheriform address
To Miss Precision, ends his consciousness.
Now for an operation !—his one fang
Pull from his firm-set jaw, without a pang—
That tooth which chatters ever in our ears
Such words as 'fritter,' 'smatter,' and like sneers—
That tusk of sharp rebuke for all who strive
To taste all sweets and store them in their hive,
Who seek to glean from science what they may,
Or give to beautiful arts their hours of play,
Aware that men more truly understand
The knowledge they have practiced with the hand.

The fulcrum of the wrenching murderous key
Wrapped in the swathing soft of imagery ;
The handle grasped with unrelenting nerve ;
The tooth's neck hugged within the fitting curve

Of the steel hook, a few quick turns will fetch
The bent incisor from the slumbering wretch.

Each jerk a question, we proceed ; and first :
Wouldst know of everything the best and worst,
The light side and the dark ? Wouldst have a mind
Tuned to appreciate what is good in kind,—
A mind of hobbies rid, from crotchets free,
That values all things in their just degree—
A balanced mind, whatever wind may blow ?
Something of everything be thine to know.
The shallow man, whose range of thought is wide,
May be the last that from his ground shall slide ;
Less time may deep-based slender columns stand
Than broad-spread pyramids that rest on sand.
By none, ta'en unawares, is he o'erthrown,
To whom all novelties are somewhat known.
What if the sciolist does often take
The humors that in fierce eruption break
All o'er this age of philosophic trash?—
The itch of spiritualism, the canker-rash
Of rationalism, and eke the mental mumps
Of that conceit which sees all truth in 'bumps.'
Shall we be never born to knowledge, then,
Because exposed, before we grow up men,
To infantile distempers ? Sayest thou,
" Drink deep, or taste not ?" Good, but tell us how
Our learning can at first be else than small.
Down thy deep well it may be worse to fall,
Than, on the curb-stone, from a bucket sip.
'Tis dangerous for an outward sailing ship

To pass the rocks and shallows of the shore ;
 Yet soon, beyond the raving breakers' roar,
 With crowded sails and leaning to the lee,
 It rushes through the broad unsounded sea.

A second pull : The truer truth and grace
 Of things, as only in their proper place
 Beheld aright—all this wouldst thou discern ?
 Something of everything be thine to learn.
 All parts depend for value on the whole,
 And truth with truth, to the wide-looking soul,
 Is linked, the chain-work reaching every way.
 Go to the wilderness ; the feathery spray,
 The vines and twisted limbs, the loads of bloom,
 And sunlight mixed and tangled with the gloom,
 Compose a perfect mass. Remove a bough,
 Drag forth a mossy branch ; 'tis rubbish now.
 Behold the aeronaut !—and choose between
 His prospect and the miner's narrow scene.
 No glimpse of grandeur shall be ever caught
 By him who dwells in trite and partial thought ;
 While he who wanders through the ether blue
 Shall gain, though dim, a glorious bird's-eye view.

But wouldst thou into fair proportion grow,
 Yea, grow at all ? Be this thine aim, to know
 Something of everything. A thriving boy
 Would eat the world, but any food will cloy
 A sick man's longing for one fruit alone,
 If, ere 'tis brought, the longing be not gone.
 Eternal are the healthy tastes that range
 From this to that, made sharper by the change.

Nor only this ; 'tis nature's instinct wise
That fires a child to try all energies—
To leap and shout, to whirl and roll and fly,
Expanding thus to full-formed symmetry.
He is complete who uses all his powers ;
His soul alone to strength and beauty towers,
While others are as one deformed, who grows
All head or legs, all ears or hands or toes.

Or wouldst thou find the truest mental rest ?
In various thought and work, 'tis found the best.
Nothing can freshen like a change of clime ;
And he doth journey who, from time to time,
To diverse efforts passes at his will.
Moreover, he has sternly learned to drill
His mind in self-command. No self-control
Like his whose fancy is a mettled foal,
Well trained alike to curb and loosened rein,
And to the harness and the toilsome wain.

Is happiness thine aim ? The same advice
Will point thee to its intellectual price.
Let the blind grub bore through his chosen tree ;
Be thine to wing and sing and circle free,
From every tree of summer plucking fruit,
Not darkly gnawing at one bitter root.
Or is utility thy rule ? The whole mind
Is weakened if one power be left behind ;
A giant's arm upon a withered trunk
Has nothing of a giant's force and spunk.
Besides, we know but little if not this—
No information ever comes amiss.

Thanks for the word: whatever good we eat
Forms us within, builds up the soul complete.
The mind is one, in various exercise,
And truth is one, no matter what its guise.
In every sphere he is himself a host,
Many in one, who knows, is, does, the most ;
In every walk of life, he leads the van—
The large and many-sided finished man.

Dredger still slumbers. Lift him from the chair,
Lay him upon the lounge and give him air.
A few long breaths and he will slowly wake,
And crawl as stiffly as an April snake,
His loss unfelt till he together smite
His fangless jaws that never more can bite.
And who is Dredger then? Not thou, not thou,
Honored Professor, with the generous brow,
Who must be thorough in thy special branch,
Yet not thereby disposed a dart to launch
At cruisers who have never 'made' La Place.
Dredger is everywhere—a snake in grass,
Who, moved by envy, prejudice, conceit,
Hisses at culture more than his complete.
Art thou a doctor, sometimes writing verse?
Thy proper work may be performed no worse,
Yea better, if relieved by graceful play ;
Yet Dredger, in a strangely friendly way,
Will hint behind your back, " Fine fellow that—
Expert in rhyme"—which is as one should pat
Your shoulder, while he stabs you in the side ;
Or as a Beauty, when she would deride .

A rival's plainer face, will simply drawl
 "A dear good creature!" meaning, "That is all."
 More bold and honest, other Dredgers cry
 "Doctor of promise, but"—and then they sigh,
 And talk of tastes, and shake a bony pate.
 You may be self-controlled and temperate—
 May rhyme but once a year, or once in five;
 E'en that the poor soul never can forgive.
 Go, Dredger! ask his patients; they can tell
 Whether he does his life-work ill or well.
 Stick to your clamming, you who drudge and dredge
 All your life long, and raise but mud and sedge;
 Nor turn and strike him with your toothless rake,
 Because he casts a seine, and fain would take
 All golden fish of truth and taste that swim
 Within the sparkling world's far-circling rim.

Student! in budding taste and learning blest,
 With one thing wanting, vain is all the rest—
 A thirst for robust life, for open air,
 For manly power. O once so fresh and fair!—
 Not Paley paled thy boyhood's rosy cheek,
 Nor Livy made thy lips a livid streak.
 'Twas sheer neglect of glorious sun and breeze,
 That gave thee trembling nerves and feeble knees.

"With one thing wanting"—nay, correct the line;
 Instead of "robust life," write "life divine."
 Sound body is the stalk, and deeds the fruit,
 But Christian faith is both the flower and root.

Apprentice! clerk! what if thy master rave?
In duty prompt, be not in soul a slave.
Thy spare hour seize, invent or write or read;
Be Franklin's mind, as well as rules, thy creed.
Take thou, in youth, this maxim to thy heart—
Whate'er in science, life, religion, art,
Thou carest least for, knowest least about,
For that care most and search the matter out.

And ye who battle in the business world!
At your neglect, let Mammon's lip be curled
Never; keep step with life; but let him laugh,
And call your higher tastes but golden chaff.
Yea, suffer in your purse and his regard,
If need be, happy in your high reward.

What is the soul? A grand foundation wall,
Laid for a palace, long and broad and tall—
A base where many an angle, arc and line,
To musing eyes suggest the great design:
Here wide saloons for hours of social ease;
There royal workshops, stores and armories;
Here galleries of science, art, and lore,
To flash like ocean's endless jewelled shore;
And, yonder, long-drawn halls for high debate,
Where Truth and Right may sit in ermined state;
Here cellars fit to hold a vintage vast
Of sparkling lessons gathered from the past;
On that side, chambers, couched and curtained well,
Where dreaming Fancy may in stillness dwell;
On this side, all sides, towers of Christian grace.
While in the centre stands a solid base,

Wherefrom should spring Devotion's crystal dome,
Revealing and resembling the soul's home—
The all-o'erarching sky. Such is the plan,
God's own foundation for the perfect man.
The builders—what do *they*? At this far end,
Dives puts up a shanty, there to vend
His stock of silk or law, of spice or pills,—
A room of ledgers built and thatched with bills;
And thus he trades, till he can build or buy
A pasteboard villa or a brown-stone lie.
On yonder corner, Pundit plants his hut,
Of mouldy parchments made, and darkly shut
From all the splendor of the fields and skies;
And there he feeds on learning's lifeless flies.
And here Ambition piles his shaky tower,
On this high terrace, where he wields his power,
Until the mass of loose and rolling stones
Tumbles upon his head and grinds his bones.
And, yonder, Pleasure spreads her gauzy tent
And revels, till a sudden storm has rent
The silken roof, and torn the flags that deck
Its slender cones, and whelmed her in the wreck.
And where the palace-front should look away
Seaward, *there* creeps around a narrow bay—
There dwells within a cabin, reared of shams—
There lives and creeps friend Dredger, raking clams.

O every man!—the whole foundation thine,
Whereon to raise a structure that may shine
As beautiful as the gates of Paradise—
Beholdest thou its regal shape and size?

Buildest thou only that which may be wrought
By thy low passion or thy scanty thought?—
Some Arab hovel on the marble placed,
While all the vast substructure runs to waste,
A serpent's haunt, with brambles overgrown,
Its ponderous blocks to ruin crumbling down,
Till he who searches, though he strictly scan,
Can trace no outline of the primal plan.
Has no fair vision ever floated on thy sight
Of some great soul, of angel breadth and height?—
A palace many-mansioned, thousand-halled,
With jasper, amethyst and sapphire walled,
Its airy domes and polished pavement broad
Burning resplendent with the light of God.

THE LOOM OF LIFE.

I stood within a spacious room
Where many busy weavers were,
And each one plied a lofty loom,
With ceaseless and with noisy stir ;
The warp and roller, spools and reels—
It was a mazy scene and new,
While slow revolved the groaning wheels,
And fast the clashing shuttles flew.

Unnumbered threads of brilliant dyes,
From beam to beam in order drawn,
Seemed dipt in hues of sunset skies,
Or steeped in tints of rosy dawn,—
Or as a thousand rainbows bright
Had been unravelled, ray by ray,
And each prismatic beam of light
Inwoven with the fabric lay.

Quick—quick the clicking shuttles flew,
And slowly up the web was rolled,
Sprinkled with purple, red and blue,
And strewed with stars of yellow gold ;
The quaint device came forth so true,
It seemed a work of magic power,
As if by force of Nature grew
Each imaged leaf and figured flower.

I sat within a silent room,
While evening shadows deepened round,
And thought that life is like a loom
With many-colored tissues wound,—
Our souls the warp, and thought a thread
That, since our being first began,
Backward and forth has ever sped,
Shot by the busy weaver—man.

And all events of changing years
That lend their colors to our life,
Though oft their memory disappears
Amid our pleasures and our strife,
Are added fibres to the warp ;
And here and there they may be seen,
Dyed deep in joy or sorrows sharp—
For *we* are all that *we have been*.

The loves and hopes of youthful hours,
Though buried in oblivion deep,
Like hidden threads in woven flowers
Upon the web will start from sleep ;
And faces, long since loved, we find
Are pictured there, with memories rife—
A part of that mysterious mind
Which forms the endless warp of life.

Still hour by hour the tissue grows,
(Memory is its well-known name,)
Stained fair with joys or dark with woes,
The pattern never twice the same !

For its confused and mingled gleams
Reveal so little care or plan,
In heedless sport the shuttle seems
Thrown by the maddened weaver—man.

And if our conscious waking thought
Weaves out so few and worthless ends,
Much more a tangled woof is wrought
When dream with dream commingling blends;
The toilsome scenes of weary days,
By night lived o'er, at morn we see
Made monstrous in a thousand ways,
Like fabled shapes on tapestry.

And as the weaver's varied braid,
When turned, a double wonder shows—
The lights all changed to sombre shade,
While all the dim then warmly glows;
So, many hours we think most bright,
And many deemed most dark and cold,
Will quite exchange their dark and light
When all the hours of life are told.

For thought ends not—it reaches on
Through every change of world or clime,
While of itself will ever run
The restless flying shuttle—time!
And when the deep-imprinted soul
Shall burst the chambers of the tomb,
Eternity will forth unroll
The work of this our wondrous loom!

THE HUNTER'S DESTINIES.

I.

Night's crescented and spangled dome
O'erarched with love, and fed with dewy light,
A garden-hid Virginian home.
The airs of summer, in their elfin flight,
Stept lightly on the vine-rose leaves
That made a low veranda's damask woof,
And crept in wreaths along the eaves,
And fell in shade upon a silvered roof.
Within, the moonlight and the bloom,
Through open lattices that reached the ground—
Faint lights and sweets—relieved the gloom;
And both were blended with as faint a sound
That echoed from a festal hall,
That chirruped from the crickets in the earth,
And stole from maize-fields green and tall—
From tinkling tambourine, and song and mirth.
Without—a garden through the open door;
Within—a nodding nurse, and sleeping child
That lay upon the polished floor,
Where flowers of moonlight in the darkness smiled.
In slumber mild,
Its dainty face with dream-drops beaded o'er,
Reposed THE CHILD.

II.

The night wore on; the nurse had gone
To find the far-off music through the trees;

Dark lines of level cloud were drawn
 Across the sinking moon ; and with the breeze
 There came a rising rushing sound—
 Wild voices came, but not of midnight brawl ;
 And through the casements, and around
 Where fading moonbeams crept from floor to wall,
 Dim forms were gliding in the room,
 Like lights in darkness, shadows in the light ;—
 They were the shapes of Hope and Doom.
 And first, with features fevered with delight,
 And eyes with dreamy radiance filled,
 Came young Romance, and breathed a tale of love,
 And the fair infant's spirit thrilled.
 Next, bold Adventure came and bent above
 The couch ; his clarion-voice was heard ;
 He shouted, laughed and kissed the slumb'ring child,
 And passed. The fairest and the third
 That came and knelt, was Freedom, glad and wild.
 By dreams beguiled,
 Its dimpled cheeks with sleeping laughter stirred,
 Reposed the child.

III.

A moment, silence reigned again ;
 And then a magic music charmed the air,
 And through the door a joyous train
 Flew in, with cymbal clash and torches' flare—
 Mad Frolic, Sport, and dancing Joy,
 Delirious Pleasure, License, lavish Wealth,
 Loose Beauty with her wanton Boy,
 And Revel pale, in hand with rosy Health.
 They chased about—a merry rout—

And kissed the child, and wet its lips with wine—
Then, with a shout, they all flew out.
The moon had touched the hills, in its decline,
And shriller sang the stormy air.
A spectral form stole in—another came,
And then a third, with tangled hair,
And hollow cheeks, and glaring eyes of flame—
Mad Hazard, crazed with golden dreams,
Dark Murder with a dagger 'neath his cloak,
The lip of Hate that still blasphemes,
Foul Lust and Wrong; they stooped—the words
they spoke
 Its slumbers broke,
And with a fear-flushed face and piercing screams,
 The child awoke.

IV.

The years flew swiftly by; the child
Had grown a brawny man, and wandered far—
A hunter in the western wild—
A hero-name beneath the evening star.
Beside his nightly fire, he slept;
It shone on gleaming gun and fringed dress,
And flamed before the wind that swept
Through roaring hills and groaning wilderness.
In pauses of the gusty storm,
The hoot and howl and snarl of tameless things
Were heard, and here and there a form
Stole out from gloom, or passed on rushing wings;
Revenge came near, but stayed his knife,
Repelled by long-accustomed, savage fear;

And hidden shapes of spirit-life
 Danced round the fire with demon laugh and leer ;
 And all the forms that gathered round
 His cradle, came again to bless and ban ;
 And ghostly victims on him frowned,
 Or stooped from air his fated face to scan.
 With features wan,
 His weary senses drowned in sleep profound,
 Reposed **THE MAN.**

A REPLY.

'Tis true, I sometimes only jingle rhymes
 Together, by the force of love or will ;
 But there are rarer, purer, calmer times,
 When all the soul, in light serene and still,
 Is lifted up, and thought with feeling chimes,
 And strange new energies my spirit thrill.
 At first, I seem with toil to recollect
 A song I framed in antenatal states ;
 But soon I read it in my mind correct,
 And each predestined word impatient waits
 For ink ; or, rather, all my soul can hold
 Runs, pure and glowing, into proper mould ;
 And if there be a line or accent lame,
 My transmigrated memory is in blame.

A HAPPY DAY.

A dearer day may sometime come to me,
But none is hived within my memory,
So sweet as that I lately spent with thee.

The sun that shone upon us was the same
That often lights the evening clouds with flame,
And all the leafless scene was cold and tame.

And thus each sound and form and color died ;
But in my soul they found a place to hide
Until, as now, they rise up glorified ;

For, all the scenes that are entombed in sense,
Have each a living essence that from thence
Awakes in Fancy's world to life intense.

Those leafless trees, to me, are every one
With blooming recollections clothed upon,
And with a purer glory shines the sun.

The chill November wind that shook the trees,
Comes back to me like airs from summer seas,
As soft and fragrant as the flight of bees.

No more the faded fields are dry and sere ;
They freshly wave as in the virgin year,
Fair as an Eden in a sinless sphere.

The road, the house, the mimic lake,
Such color from imagination take—
Are so transfigured for your own sweet sake,

That all the vale a perfect picture seems,
Enriched with shade and lit with sunny gleams,
Like those that bless our happy morning dreams.

And then the long and quiet walks we took
Around the hills, along the roaring brook—
How changed, yet real, all the objects look!

The dizzy rocks in recollection rise
Sublime as were the walls of Paradise
That once in vision met the prophet's eyes;

And we—ah, we were more than mortal there,
For you were as the angels wise and fair,
And I, like them, was free from earthly care.

We said not much, but only seemed to stroll
As spirits that on heavenly hills patrol,
And, silent, hold communion soul with soul—

Like seraphs who, upon some crystal height,
See far below them, in this mortal night,
The stream of Life flash onward wild and bright.

That foaming torrent!—'tis a symbol true
Of my own being flowing on to you,
Since first your loveliness and worth I knew.

My childhood was the wandering of the rill,
My youth the toilsome turning of a mill,
With idle windings through the world, until

Like yonder stream, when first you chanced to pass,
My soul reflected back your spirit-face,
And saw its reflex there as in a glass.

A pilgrim stream—a wayward anchoret,
In none of those I looked upon, as yet
Had I such likeness in unlikeness met.

But you, enchanted with your image caught
Within the clearest mirror of my thought,
I held my purposed course of life for naught.

By some sweet influence of your eyelids led,
I left the vales that were my dreamy bed,
And down an untried steep I wildly sped.

And you—a spirit flitting on the rocks—
I followed, where a gulf of wonder locks
Me in, and where I fall in blissful shocks

From love to love, in such a sudden way
That all my life is changed to happy spray,
Nor, if I would, can I the current stay.

And still I follow, still I seem to hear
The cataract's deep music sounding near,
In tones prophetic, clearer and more clear ;

And still I seem to list your spirit-call,
And see you leaning o'er the fearful Fall
Where I must dare the last descent of all.

And will you, airy spirit as you are,
With me, the plunge, the shock, the whirlpool dare,
And all my chanceful lot enjoy or bear?

And will you from your prouder height descend,
Your life with mine in lowly union blend,
Until the mingled river reach its end?—

Until our stream-like flow, through gloom and glee,
Shall pay its tribute to that boundless sea
Where love is lost in Love's infinity.

My thoughts, that golden day, were nearly such;
But glances, smiles and kindlings of the touch,
Were better than to utter overmuch.

Nor did I know my heart; for, to be seen,
There must be space our joys and us between,
And quiet reveries must intervene—

Those solitary hours that o'er us steal
In silence, when the floating thoughts we feel,
To Fancy's airy frost-work may congeal.

"MORE LIGHT."

A SAD PLEASANTRY, SUGGESTED BY AN ENGRAVING.

I had a vision, yesternight,
Of one who clomb a mountain side,
And loudly cried for "Light—more light!"
And loudlier called at every stride.

His words so silver-voiced—so broad
And fair his marble throne of mind,
He walked the mountain like a god,
And upward gazed—but he was blind.

And through his filmy eyes there came
The glimmer of a distant glare,
For, all the summit burned with flame,
And shot its cinders high in air.

Still up and on he urged his way,
With form erect and footsteps bold,
Till he was lost, beyond the day,
Within the smoke that downward rolled.

"More light—more light!" he proudly said,
"Too long has truth in darkness lain,
Too long have men for falsehood bled—
The world shall welcome Reason's reign.

I gasp for breath in bigot clouds,
• But keep my upward, onward way,

And brighter, brighter stream the floods
Of freer thought and coming day!"

His voice was lost to listening ears,
His form grew dim to sight of men,
And, in the happy after-years,
His name was never heard again.

WATCHING WITH THE DEAD.

Each saddened face is gone, and tearful eye
Of mother, brother, and of sisters fair;
With ghostly sound their dismal footfalls die
Through whispering hall, and up the rustling stair.
In yonder room the newly dead doth sleep;
Begin we thus, my friend, our watch to keep.

And now both feed the fire and trim the lamp;
Pass cheerly, if we can, the slow-paced hours;
For, all without is cold, and drear, and damp,
And the wide air with storm and darkness lowers;
Pass cheerly, if we may, the live-long night,
And chase pale phantoms, paler fear, to flight.

We will not talk of death, of pall and knell—
Leave that, the mirth of brighter hours to check;
But tales of life, love, beauty, let us tell,
Or of stern battle, sea and stormy wreck;
Call up the visions gay of other days—
Our boyhood sports and merry youthful ways. •

Hark to the distant bell!—an hour is gone!
 Enter yon silent room with footsteps light;
 Our brief appointed duty must be done—
 To bathe the face, and stay death's rapid blight—
 To bare the rigid face, and dip the cloth
 That hides a mortal, "crushed before the moth."

The bathing liquid scents the chilly room;
 How spectral white are shroud and veiling lace
 On yonder side-board, in the fearful gloom!
 Take off the muffler from the sleeper's face—
 You spoke, my friend, of sunken cheek and eye—
 Ah, what a form of beauty here doth lie!

Never hath Art, from purest wax or stone,
 So fair an image and so lustrous wrought;
 It is as if a beam from Heaven had shown
 A weary angel in sweet slumber caught!—
 The smiling lip—the warmly-tinted cheek,
 And all so calm, so saint-like, and so meek!

She softly sleeps, and yet how unlike sleep;
 No fairy dreams flit o'er that marble face,
 As ripples play along the breezy deep,
 As shadows o'er the field each other chase;
 The spirit dreams no more, but wakes in light,
 And freely wings its flashing seraph flight.

She sweetly sleeps, her lips and eyelids sealed;
 No ruby jewel heaves upon her breast,
 With her quick breath now hidden, now revealed,
 As setting stars long tremble in the west;

But white and still as drifts of moonlit snow,
Her folded cerements and her flushless brow.

Oh there is beauty in the winter moon,
And beauty in the brilliant summer flower,
And in the liquid eye and luring tone
Of radiant Love's and rosy Laughter's hour ;
But where is beauty, in this blooming world,
Like Death upon a maiden's brow imperaled !

Veil we the dead, and close the open door ;
Perhaps the spirit, ere it soar above,
Would watch its clay alone, and hover o'er
The face it once had kindled into love ;
Commune we hence, O friend, this wakeful night,
Of Death made lovely by so blest a sight.

THE CITY OF THE DEAD.

Go forth and breathe the purer air with me,
And leave the city's sounding streets ;
There is another city, sweet to see,
Whose heart with no delirium beats ;
The solid earth beneath it never feels
The dance of joy, the rush of care,
The jar of toil, the mingled roar of wheels ;
But all in peace and beauty there.

No spacious mansions stand in stately rows
Along that city's silent ways ;

No lofty wall nor level pavement glows,
Unshaded from the summer rays ;
No costly merchandise is heaped around,
Nor pictures stay the passer by,
Nor pluméd soldiers march to music's sound,
Nor toys and trifles tire the eye.

The narrow streets are fringed with living green,
And weave about in mazes there ;
The many hills bewilder all the scene,
And shadows veil the noonday glare.
No clanging bells ring out the fleeting hours,
But sunlight glimmers softly through,
And marks the voiceless time in golden showers
On velvet turf and lakelets blue.

The palaces are sculptured shafts of stone
That gleam in beauty through the trees ;
The cottages are mounds with flowers o'ergrown ;
No princely church the stranger sees,
But all the grove its pointed arches rears,
And tinted lights illumine the leaves,
And prayers are rained in every mourner's tears
Who for the dead in silence grieves.

And when dark night descends upon the tombs,
No reveller's song, nor watchman's voice
Is here ; no music comes from lighted rooms
Where swift feet fly and hearts rejoice ;
'Tis darkness, silence all ; no sound is heard
Except the wind that sinks and swells,
The lonely whistle of the midnight bird,
And brooks that ring their crystal bells.

A city strange and still!—its habitants
 Are warmly housed, yet they are poor—
 Are poor, yet have no wishes, woes, nor wants;
 The broken heart is crushed no more;
 No love is interchanged, nor bought and sold;
 Ambition sleeps, the innocent
 Are safe, the miser counts no more his gold,
 But rests at last and is content.

A city strange and sweet!—its dwellers sleep
 At dawn, and in meridian light,—
 At sunset still they dream in slumber deep,
 Nor wake they in the weary night;
 And none of them shall feel the hero's kiss
 On Sleeping Beauty's lip that fell,
 And woken a palace from a trance of bliss;—
 God's voice alone may break the spell.

A city strange and sad!—we walk the grounds,
 Or seek some mount, and see afar
 The living cities shine, and list the sounds
 Of throbbing boat and thundering car.
 And *we* may go; but all the dwellers here,
 In autumn's blush, in winter's snow,
 In spring and summer's bloom, from year to year,
 They ever come, and never go!

 CITY.

In the din of the mart, in the roar of its wheels,
 A thunder is lent to the current of time;
 Ah, who in the silence of solitude feels
 That every moment of life is sublime?

TAGHCANIC FALLS.

Ye bards and travellers! Oh talk no more
 Of Scotland's misty crags and luns and lakes,
 Nor tell us how the waters at Lodore
 Come down, nor how the Rhine in fury breaks,
 Nor how at Reichenbach the torrents pour,
 And all the solid ground at Staubach shakes ;
 I care no more for these, nor sigh to see
 The Falls of Terni and of Tivoli.

I've read enough of these, and seen Niagara,
 Which is the king of cataracts forever,
 And it is certainly a sight to stagger a
 Poor poet's or a painter's best endeavor ;
 And other Falls I've seen, but such a crag or a
 Remarkable cascade beheld I never
 As that which gave me quite a poet's panic
 When late I gazed upon our own Taghcanic.

It lies about (I like to be particular)
 One mile from Lake Cayuga's western shore ;
 On either side the rocks rise perpendicular
 Three hundred thirty feet and something more,
 And all the stream, diffused in drops orbicular,
 Descends in wreaths and falling mists that pour
 Two hundred feet and ten, or nearly so,
 Before they form again the stream below.

A friend of mine, as sweet as any nun,
Yet not as solemn, thought it like a barrel
Of falling flour, and so would any one ;
But I remember nothing so nonpareil
As the figure used by Alfred Tennyson,
Who "dangling water-smoke" does not compare ill
To "broken purposes that waste in air"—
Look in his "Princess," and you'll find it there.

A tourist, in his famous Alpine travels,
In speaking of a like cascade and glen,
Some very striking moral truth unravels
Concerning streams diffused in air, and then
Once more collected ; but I think that cavils
Are justly interposed by critics, when
One tries to turn all beauty to utility,
No matter with how much confest ability.

I better like the thought of one whose look
At this surpassing wide and deep abyss,
Led him to ask how great a spoon it took
When Madam Nature scooped a gulf like this ;
Indeed, 'tis very hard to think a brook,
Though it for ages roar and foam and hiss,
And wear and tear with all its mad-cat strength,
Could scratch so deep a chasm a mile in length.

But these are thoughts unworthy of the theme,
Or, as the rhetoricians term it, bathos ;
And so I'll get up inspiration's steam,
And try my hand at poetry and pathos ;
For it is pleasanter to weave a dream
Than in a jest to throw one's time away thus ;

The Falls I therefore will apostrophize
In metaphors proportioned to their size.

I hardly like it—this poetic way
Of calling on the deep blue sea to roll,
And urging cataracts no more to stay,
And recommending stars to shine, is droll,—
As if they would the voice of man obey—
As if the rocks and waters have a soul;
But since it is the custom I will try
A verse or two of such sublimity.

Roll on, Taghcanic's wild and singing stream!
Here darkly winding in thy gloomy deeps,
And there reflecting back the sunny gleam
That slants athwart the cliffs and dizzy steeps;
As wild and varied thou, as is the dream
That hovers o'er the couch where Valor sleeps—
As wild and fearless thou as they whose claim
To this our land first gave to thee thy name.

'Tis sweet to look on thee when summer's morn
Hath touched thy lordly battlements with gold,
And when the mists that of the night are born,
In rosy wreaths and clouds are upward rolled;
'Tis sweet to see thy walls, with ruin worn,
O'erhung with fragrant pines and gray with mould,
All silvered with the moonbeams cold and white,
Or blushing in the torches' ruddy light.

Thine amphitheatre, ascending wide,
Calls up a vision of the storied Past—

The chariots coursing swiftly, side by side,
 Within the Coliseum's circle vast,
The gladiator who in silence died,
 The shower of garlands on the victor cast,
The deadly stroke—the shout—the cruel throng—
I gladly turn from thoughts of death and wrong.

I love to think that in thy rocky walls,
 Where stands the strangely perfect gothic door,
The genii have reared their magic halls,
 With crystal column and with pearly floor,
And fountains where the tinkling water falls,
 And arching roofs with jewels studded o'er—
A mystic realm in secret silence bound,
Until the spell to open it is found.

I love to think that fitting fay and elf
 Are hidden in thy darkling nooks and dells ;
Or that, beneath the ledge's jutting shelf,
 A spirit, matchless in her beauty, dwells,
And wraps those misty robes about herself,
 And ever sings and weaves her witching spells,
Until revealed at some fond dreamer's call—
The lovely Undine of the waterfall!

What else I choose to dream is my affair ;
 It is a very wild and wondrous scene,
And has a picturesque and noble air
 With all its foam and rocks and forests green ;
Nor is it probable that many care
 For it, except to say that here they've been ;
And doubtless, quite as honestly as Pickwick,
They'll tell you—'tis a *nice* place for a pic-nic.

THE STORY OF A SOUL.*

PART FIRST.

I felt the autumn chill of coming death ;
The flower of life was shrinking up to soul—
A ripened germ that drank the vital force.
I lay upon my couch as light and vague
As cloud on air ; and all the lightning sense,
Diffused before throughout my tortured frame,
Streamed to the brain. The sight alone was clear,
As loth to leave its crystal home, wherein
Were imaged now, through windows fronting west,
The purple evening, woods, and bronzed grain.
Terror and weakness—they were idle names ;
My soul exulted in her spiritual power,
Yet gravely thus she sang her Song of Death :—

'Tis sad to leave the lovely world.
The blazoned banner of the sky,
And all of Earth's sublimity,
Are, day by day, in light unfurled,
In glory float before the eye.
The cultured ear and eye are clearer,
The heart is deeper, Nature dearer
From year to year : 'tis sad to die.

* In this story, read on a public occasion in 1861, are allusions to Dr. Eliphalet Nott—to the Germanian Band—and to "A New Monetary System," by Edward Kellogg. The rhymed Part Second is but slightly dependent on Part First.

'Tis hard to leave the busy world—
To feel our courage mounting high
On thoughts that just begin to fly,
Then arrow-struck and swiftly hurled
Downward to dim obscurity.
Our life is always a beginning,
A hope of honor worth the winning ;
We hope to do, and, hoping, die.

'Tis hard to leave a stormy world,
When every watcher may descry
A happy Future drawing nigh,
And all the nations, onward whirled,
Behold the sunny shores that lie
Beyond that ever-heaving ocean—
The Present, with its wild commotion ;
Alas! to see, to sink, to die.

And yet, to leave a weary earth
For higher life, is well, we know ;
Our being is a constant flow,
And death itself is newer birth ;
The seed decays that it may grow ;
A world sublime awaits the dying
Who purely lived. Away with sighing !
The Past is passed ; 'tis well to go.

Yet was the spirit in matter's strict embrace.
The upward struggle roused the fainting pulse ;
The flesh, a tiger's brother, once again,
And fiercer in its dying grasp, rebounded
To crush the victor soul. A weight of air.

Of heavy breath and eyelids, prest me down ;
I longed to sleep, and sweet it was to sleep,
Until at last, when light and life were gone,
Suddenly flooded back the consciousness ;—
Mine eyes refused to wake, my lips to move.

Then from the tomb of darkened, deadened sense,
Deep from the prison cold of stony clay,
Upward I yearned with one intense desire
To Him, the Conqueror of death and hell,
To Him, the daily strength of all my life.
And up I went with prayer ; the earnest wish
Was eagle wings, was freedom, power. I seemed
I knew not what—at first, a flying eye
That mirrored all, above, below, around ;
And then a spreading mist of conscious light
That filled the room, and then a human form.
But now the senses blended all to one,
Till sight was hearing ; hearing, touch and taste.
Beneath—for still the finite dwells in space—
Beneath me lay the lifeless chrysalis
I had inhabited long ; and o'er it leaned,
Weeping, the one whose silent woe alone
Had dashed my joy of death. As oft before,
Our spirits seemed to mingle, each with each.
Through the fine foldings of the brain, I saw ;
And in that constant heart, as in a cup,
I looked ; but, more than all, I now beheld
That other's memory, feeling, will and thought,
An endless picture passing through the soul.

Days passed—a simple consciousness of place,
Familiar sight and sound, lost in the bliss
Of one beloved presence, cheered with mine,
In calm communion felt.

An evening came ;

The Evening Planet slowly floated down—
A silver thistle-globe in breathless space,
Casting a light along the floor. My soul
As oft in life, went forth to meet the star,
Now in surprising truth, and not in dream.
Instantly was I there—there in a world
So new, so soon, it seemed the earth had changed
To something else, not I my place. Oh joy!—
To find that will and motion are but one,
To know that space exists alone in thought—
An old discovery, new, bewildering, dread.
I felt the maddest joy the lightnings feel,
When east and west are flashing back and forth
Glare upon glare that quiver round the sky.
The universe was opened, end to end,
And will a key, unlocking every room,
And space a palace, every spirit a king,
Welcome to range through all the royal halls.
A sunlike sense of bright expansion filled
My heart ; a myriad rays of feeling shot
Through upper, lower, circling gulfs of night,
As if my soul would crowd immensity
With her enfranchised being ; then, appalled,
I shrank, and bowed in lowly praise to Him
The Infinite alone.

Roused from the shock
Of blest surprise, I searched the tender star

That warmly palpitates to loving eyes.
I saw her people, strange yet human-shaped,
Fair as the one who gave the planet name,
The Queen of Beauty. Mountains vast are there,
And thrice the height of Himmaleh, as men
Have measured: morning sits upon their tops
An hour before it plays in vales below;
And regal Winter thence beholds a zone
Robed in a second summer, every year.
The fauna, flora, grow to shapes and hues
Of loveliness exceeding earth's; for there,
Nearer, the sun appears through denser air
A disc enormous. Longer twilight reigns,
And richer sunsets glow; at these I gazed,
Following at will the ever-setting orb,
And bathed in splendors of perpetual eve.

Then, at a thought, I darted back to night;
And there, afar, the Earth was shining clear,
An infant moon. It fixed my rapid thought;
I longed to single out the trembling ray
Reflected from my home; intensely burned
The strange desire, and suddenly I saw,
Deep in its brightness, all the pictured world.
As in a camera-lens, a beam of day
Contains the outer scene, and o'er the wall
Within, expands a perfect counterpart
Of color, form,—so, on my soul enlarged,
The glimmering Earth was spread in truth complete.
Aye, in a point of light I read the earth,
The oceans first, the lakes, the hills, and last
The roofs and moving men. Glory to Him

Who made the wondrous soul!—an essence fine,
A jewel washed from blinding dust, a force
Beyond expression sensitive and strong.
Nor strong in vision only: while I gazed—
Watching the fairy crystals of the snow,
And battling life within the drops of rain—
Unconscious of the latent powers that use
Alone reveals to new-born spirits, I heard
Sounds of the Earth, across the vast abyss—
The roar of storm and bell, the buzz of bees;
I caught a faint perfume of flowers, and seemed
To taste the thousand fruits of yonder star,
My native planet. Nay, I heard the light,
Saw the sweet odors, tasted brilliant tints;
And found new colors, above, below, the scale;
And knew the hidden qualities of things
That mortal nerves cannot discern. Again,
My separate senses melted into one—
One grand perception, sifting all the globe
That twinkled there; it pierced the inner core,
The central fires, the rocks, the chemic laws,
Until the soul, angelic in its might,
Grasped the huge earth in one complete idea—
A single thought, vast, perfect and sublime.

Long in the shade of Hesper, I remained;
Or else my crowded musings lengthened hours
To days; for, moving with the moving night,
To me the skies had halted, Time was not.
I kept the star-bright Earth forever poised
High on a mountain-top—a diamond hung
Above its snowy crown—until, at length,

Inward my new perceptions turned. The sight
Of home recalled my life, and Memory woke—
Leapt, like a dreamer, into dazzling noon—
Dropt, a broad curtain painted o'er with life,
Between me and the distant stellar stage
Whereon that life was acted. Then, it changed ;
I stood upon a summit, all the scene
Of mortal years below. And, winding on
Through vales of sorrow, wet with bitter tears
Shed in the night of Time, but glittering now
In morning light ; and flashing in the fields
Of ripened blessing ; stealing under shades
Cast by the tangled thickets, dense and dark,
Of circumstance ; and bursting over rocks,
The flinty wilfulness that towered aloft
And would have held its gentle flow,—the stream
Of God's kind purpose there, amazed, I saw,
Tracing it through the wilderness of life,
From end to end.

The vision changed ; for still

The cherub Fancy sports beyond the grave
Led by the hand of Reason. Once again,
My memory rose, a painted canvas, framed
In golden mouldings of immortal joy.
But now the perfect shadow of a life,
With all the colors glorified, began
To melt in slow dissolving views of truth.
Out of the crowded scene of mortal deeds,
A group emerged, colossal in its shapes :
Self, a dead Titan, broken spear in hand,
Lay, slain with lightnings, while upon his head
Stood holy Love, her eyes upturned to Heaven,

Her hands extended o'er the kneeling forms
Of Faith and Hope.

Thus, as a child expands
To consciousness, and learns the curious world—
Thus wisely left alone, I crept along
From point to point of new development.
Thus, one by one, their shining faculties
Arise to spirits, till themselves have found
A heaven illumed with all sublimities.
Reason soon followed—a new capacity,
So new its force; it severed true from false,
And seized essential verities. No more
Playing with words—the rattling toys of Time,
Nor logic—childish architecture, built
Of blocks, and tumbling over soon as built;
Nor drawn aside by teasing sense, nor yet
Oppressed with weariness, but grown a man,
Harnessed in angel armor, Reason stood
And shot the dart of intuition through
Mystery's centre; or, wheeling up
His forces, marched along a hundred lines
Of argument, with even step and front,—
Not straggling singly on a savage trail,
And hurling random arrows, as in life;
Or else he drew his ranks compact around
The many-sided fort of truth, and held
The ground impregnable to all assault.

In Reason's light, I saw the moral laws—
Clearly beheld, on Falsehood's livid lip,

A self-inflicted fatal sting ; in Truth,
The germ of angel health and growth ; in vice,
The spark of deathless fires ; in virtue, rays
Of dawning Heaven ; and so the eddying breeze
Of after-whirlwinds, in the hiss of Hate,
And Paradise in every breath of Love.
In each, in all, the long results were clear,
As some have feigned to see a demon's face
Lurk in the beamy wine, or holy eyes
Shine in the stars. Forward I looked again
At all the picture in my native star,
And back at memory's imaged world, and lo !—
The sweet deceits of Time were turned to dust,
As when a shape of beauty, disintombed,
And full and fresh as life, falls at a touch
To ashes. Earthly lures, the glittering gauds,
The gilded shows, wherewith the world has tricked
Its folly, crumbled like the paper pomp,
The scenery fair, of burning theatres.
So bald, so loathsome, were the forms of sin,
No mortal would o'erstep the heavenly rule,
Could he but see as spirits may see. So right
And beautiful were the laws of consequence,
That up the scale of law my vision ran
To Him, the Rule, the Life. And where is He ?
And whither should I fly to see His face ?

“ If One were absent, 'twere no Heaven to me”—
Again I heard the words, across the gulf
Of time and space ; in memory, sat again
Within a temple near the senate-house

Of her, imperial sister of our States.
There, one of eighty years, a college Head,
Stood in his monumental height and grace,
And uttered simple truths. The westering sun
Streamed in along a darkly painted wall,
And touched his mellow face, his snowy hair,
And lit the velvet desk, the Holy Book,
With fires of gold and ruby. Soothing song
Haunted me, faintly; silent were the crowd
And pure of look; and through an open door
Came the warm breath of May. It was the air,
The light, the peaceful multitude of Heaven.
The pleader's feeling more melodious flowed,
And last he said: "However men may seek
Their good in earthliness, the only good
Is Christ; however trust themselves, in Him
Alone is strength; however wise they grow,
He is the only wisdom. All is nothing
Without Him—nothing, but for Him, is Heaven.
The poet may weave its harmonies in verse,
And picture the fair palaces of light,
The streets of gold, with shining angels lined,
If One were absent, 'twere no Heaven to me."

The words were with me yet; the universe
Was open now; I wondered where He dwells,
The Man Divine, on whom I hoped to look;
But, dazzled with creation's blaze, I failed
To turn the key that locks the inner skies.

Soon as a thought, I left the Evening Star,
And paused high in the zenith. There, around,

Above, below, (I speak as men—to souls
'Tis only outward, inward,) stood the sphere,
Sparkling, entire, and infinite, of space.
I rested in myself alone, and looked
Beyond the farthest reach of human science.
Then, as a revelling insect, back and forth
Within a little space of summer air,
Darts, tireless, hither, thither, turning quick
In angles complicate as Euclid's own—
So I, for simple joy of changing place
And power exuberant, sped every way,
Till the unnumbered suns appeared to dance
In brilliant mazes, moving with my slow
And measured motion. Ah, thought I, a dream
Not born of nothing, stirred my mortal sleep,
When oft I seemed to leave the ground and fly
Across a field, by inward force of will ;
It was the folded pinions, dimly felt
In embryo.

But, sunward now I flew,
So slow, it was no instant change—so fast
That all the stars flowed back in fiery lines,
As if the sky were thickly striped with lightnings.
Fearless, through burning clouds that robe the sun,
I plunged, and saw the habitants, in form
So perfect that the gazer's eye may draw
Infinite glory from a finite shape,
Lustrous as marble, till the vision swims,
Blinded with beauty. Endless summer waves
Beneath perpetual day, and heavy woods
Make rooted night, or twilight dim and cool.

Here sleep or walk the natives, toiling not,
And happy in their Golden Age, at last.
Mortal are they, but living out the term
Of life, they long for death as natural birth
To wider joy. I passed to other worlds ;
To Jupiter, enwheeled with zones of cloud ;
To Saturn, arched with fluid rings, and mooned
With many crescents as a Moslem town.
In these, in all the blooming spheres, prevail
The kindred forms of beauty absolute,
The man, the plant, alike, yet ever varied,
Not monsters such as boyish fancy builds.
The laws of Nature, still the same, inform
The whole, as if creation were a vine
Spreading forever ; yea, as if one soul
Were breathed of God within the frame immense.

From planet unto planet still I flew,
And chased the meteor in its curving track,
And joyed to catch the ruby drops of light
That fell in bursting showers, or bathe and float
In the far-foaming wake of comets. Then
I willed myself to worlds where double suns,
Diverse in color, make a crimson day
Succeed an emerald day, or sapphire noon
Herald a golden morrow. On—still on,
I held my dauntless way to where, oh God,
Suddenly all Thy universe assumed
A shape beyond expression beautiful.
No more a mighty maze of shapeless cloud
And useless void ; but all the wheeling worlds
Made one vast temple, pillared, arched and roofed

With gold, whereof the particles were stars,
And hung with draperies of stellar haze ;
But the whole temple ever slowly changed,
Cloud-like, to other forms of arch and dome.
Nor were the splendors silent all ; to spirits
'Tis always one to see, to hear, to feel ;
The music of the spheres is therefore truth.

How long I gazed and heard, I asked me not.
The earthly years by hundreds o'er me flew,
So full of life, that now they spread themselves
To long eternities,—then, at a glance,
Dwindled to specks of time. The singing spheres
Entranced the very time they measured out ;
And memory drew me back to one sweet year,
A year of second birth to thought, when earth
Was new, and music—fancy's dancing light
Till then—became a heavenly revelation.
'Twas in a city midway from the hymns
Of Trenton and Niagara. 'Twas an eve
When a whole nation sighed, as hour by hour
The news electric ran that he was dying,
The Palo Alto victor. Then and there,
I heard the orchestra that once had winged
The festal hours when first the hero stood,
A nation's chief. To me, the hall, the crowd,
Were not ; I watched a window-square of sky
Deepen from tender blue to night profound ;
And as it deepened, heard the voice of Time,
All Time, all joy and sorrow, madness, woe,
And saw a thousand forms of light and gloom,
From music born. Distorted faces glared ;

Long lines of star-browed angels circled down,
And ages dead were summoned back to earth.
The horn rang out the joy of happy souls ;
The viol screamed or laughed in scorn, and groans
Rose dread and deep from under-gulfs of night.
The past, the future life of self, of all,
Before me crowded, wailed, entreated, warned,
Battled, triumphed, or struggled wildly past,
A long procession. Good for me the hour
When Music, erst a sylph or monster shape,
Assumed the glory that immortals wear,
And sang to me the messages of Heaven ;
It nerved me newly for the war of life.

Now in the central court of space I dwell—
No globe immense, but the aye changing point
Where, balanced, hangs the whole creation's weight,
Light as a snow-flake on the hand of God.
And here at length I felt myself alone,
As one who leapt from starry rock to rock,
Across creation's stream, rejoiced to know
Himself alone in starry solitudes,
Communing with his soul and God ; and clomb
The heights of glory, there amazed to see
The wilderness of worlds, and feel the want
Of other hearts, to share excess of bliss.
Alone!—it startled me with daring fear ;—
At once, I would be everywhere—on all
The peopled globes where'er myself had been ;
My lonely being would I spread through all.
I willed, with new velocity of thought—
Willed to be present in a thousand places

In quick successive instants, quick as one.
Soon as a flash that strikes a world of waves,
A thousand selves were scattered o'er the deep
Of distant space ; and, urging on my soul,
On and around, with energy immortal,
Swifter and swifter still, I seemed to grow
Ubiquitous—a multipresence dread—
A loneliness enlarged, more awful yet,
Till in my soul's extreme rapidity,
The many selves were blended into one,
And space was gone ! The universe was lost
In me—in nothingness.

Soon it returned,
And stood resplendent ; space again became
A mode of thought, as thought resumed its calm,
And motion ceased with will. I found myself
Far in the outer shores of light. I longed
For sympathy of other souls, with whom,
Unlike the mortal habitants of earths,
I might converse. I prayed in thought to Him,
The risen Lord of Life, and straightway felt
A loving presence near, unseen yet known ;—
But oh for real forms ! At once, I saw
The golden thorns, and in the glorious eyes
I read this thought, without a word of speech :
“ Too much you burned to see the universe.
Your wish was granted ; Heaven and Hell are made
Of granted choices. You were one of those
Saved as by fire—in you, the fire of love
Toward Beauty. Holiness you loved far more
For that 'tis beautiful, than simply right.
But had you flamed, in death, to God alone,

Into his presence sooner had you come,
Though never more immediate than in life ;
For God is always found in consciousness,—
Only His symbol, boundless light, is seen,
Or His celestial form—the Son of Man.”
Then, as the rapt Bavarian truly dreamed,
Suddenly, a sea of light and love arose
And bathed my soul, and filled the empty space
With overflowing glory. All was Heaven ;
And all the joy, the splendor, I had known
Till then, to this was but the prelude harsh
Of brazen instruments, before the song
Of some incarnate seraph, breathes and rolls
A flood of sweetness o'er a waiting world.

Who shall describe the indescribable !
Enough to say, whate'er we wish of scene,
Society, occupation, pleasure—all,
Whenever wished is ours ; and this is Heaven ;
This is the prize of earthly self-denial.
Freedom, the boundless freedom of the pure,
This, the reward of holy self-restraint ;
And rest, deep rest—this is the end of toil,—
Rest for the long o'erwearied mind and heart ;
Rest, and not death ; rest like the great glad sea
Swaying with fulness, not with driving storm.
And oft we wonder at our want of faith,
A joyous faith, on earth ; and oft we smile
To think how poor and timid were our dreams ;
But oftener smile to think that mortals smiled
Or frowned, when other mortals dared to dream.

And here we dream ; yet here the dreams are real
To us ; if true themselves, it matters not,
No more than unto men, if earth be earth.
Long we for scenery ?—straight we see a reach
Of forest, ocean, vale or mountain-chain,
New forms and tints, suffused with light divine,
And breadths whereon the stars are drops of dew.
Ask we for templed grandeur ?—oceans vanish,
And range on range of crystal column stands,
Paved with transparent gold, and pinnacled
With spar prismatic—all the height and shape
Beyond the stretch of wish ; and there we move
As through a sunset palace, rich in wonders.
Choose we seclusion ?—arbors dim with shade,
Or sylvan glooms, where lulling waters pour,
Around us close. And still the finer arts,
With nobler models, nobler means and ends,
Are ours, if sought for. Yet, in all, o'er all,
There is a glory inexpressible ;
Nor ask we if the soul projects her wish,
Or if the many mansions are prepared,
And we unconsciously are changing place.

But this we know, that yet the outward fails
To satisfy ; the heart is boundless yet ;
And all appearances are finite forms.
The measureless domain of feeling, thought,
The Nature Infinite, whereof the spirit
Partakes, and whither it may far withdraw,
Deepens and opens, ever and for ever.
This hath no changing form, no final shore,
But inward, onward, still the soul may range

Through regions where sublimities of Truth,
Grander than mountains, soar beyond the sight;
Where mental, moral light outshines the day,
Though all the stars were melted up, to form
A single orb; where attributes Divine
Beam in the many-colored arch that spans
The universe, or God's perfections star
The all-embracing concave of His Love,
With Justice sunned and mooned with Purity.
Our life is this—eternally to explore
The Perfect Mind.

And this were misery
To them who once, and still, would none of God;
From whom He therefore now withdraws Himself;
Who, chained with weakness, emptied of all force,
Neither have power to see the light of love,
Nor quench the flame of memory that feeds
On past experience, never turned to good.
They look beneath the cheats of sense, and scorn
The gold, the wreath, the cup, the pride, of life;
Sated are they with outward things, to them
Most vacant, uninformed with life divine.
Driven by a restless instinct still to seek
The inner deeps of God, they rush to the brink
Of awful knowledge—shudder—backward fly
To weary sense, or hate's companionship.
The Infinite to them is woe—to us
Is bliss.

We know whate'er we will to know
Of high and higher truth, by inner light;

Yet, if it sweeter seem to give and take
In mutual exchange, from far we call
Congenial souls—our wish the messenger.
They come ; we see the picture of their thought,
Or feel it pass from soul to soul, or hear
The words of heaven, unutterably sweet.
They come and go, nor seem to leave their place,
If needed there ; so instant is a thought,
And motion with a thought, a soul may dwell
In many companies, yet may live alone,
Meanwhile, in other place. And thus we see
The Kings of mind, the Princes, Powers of light,
And all the sainted great and good of earth,
Yet never steal their freedom, time and peace.
Thus we converse with Him, the Man Divine,
Who dwells in every place, with every soul—
The Whole Reality of the spaceless God.
Thus we possess our former friends again,
Nor need to lose them from our loving sight.
Nay, time and space are only ways of thought ;
We truly move not, lengthen out no life ;—
To be immortal, souls need only *be*.

PART SECOND.

In heaven, our life is measured by the flow
Rapid or slow, of thought. We could not know
How long since we were born in death, until,
As now, we visit Earth, on wings of will.
Lately, we started from the distant place
Where we had been, to move so slow in space

That we could see the history all of earth,
In every scene, down from creation's birth ;
For, still the light of worlds is travelling on,
And images of all that hath been done
In Time, are flowing outward in the light.
First we beheld the mist that banished night
From space ; a whirling fire ; and then an orb
Molten and ruddy, hastening to absorb
The gases, till the globe was dim with rust,
So thick that it became a solid crust ;
And next the monster life ; and then the days
When wind and sun dispersed a cloudy haze,
When oceans, hills, appeared, and man was made ;
And so along, through all the light and shade
Of human deeds, their glory, madness, shame,
Until, surprised in rapid flight, we came
To ours. We smiled, in thought, to see ourselves
As earthly children, restless, roguish elves ;
But sighed to find the acts of after-life
Painted in space—our folly, sin and strife.
And now we saw the Crystal Palace gleam
With icy splendor—saw the clouds of steam
From ocean vessels—saw the bannered cars
That first ran o'er the Erie railway bars—
Saw California's sudden stir. But on
We flew, through each event, till we had won
Our ancient home. Then first we knew the year—
Twenty-eight hundred, fifty-one.

And here,
We need not stay to tell the strange delights
Of angel travel—up to Alpine heights,

O'er stormy seas, in mammoth caves, or through
 The tropic blooms—a tour so instant, new,
 And sweet to spirits who, in mortal life,
 Were kept at home by duty, purse, or wife.
 Nor may we speak of many changes wrought
 By these, a thousand years of human thought,
 Since we were men; how races mingled all;
 How art advanced, and evils came to fall;
 How liberty increased, and truth progressed,
 Until, o'er the broad empire of the West,
 From Bhering's Straits to Patagonian plains,
 Blessings are equalized, and order reigns.
 Nor need we tell Religion's triumphs, here,
 For these, in heaven, are heard by every ear.
 To *you*, with whom I talk—a kindred band
 Dwelling with me in this the Better Land,
 I bring no news; you only seek to know
 What most we noticed on the earth below;
 You love to glance through other eyes, and learn
 How things appear to us; you would but turn
 The special prism of individual view,—
 A word or two will be enough for you.

Certes, Invention has surprised herself.
 Her former wonders on oblivion's shelf
 She laid, and points to greater glories now—
 To flying ships that round the planet go
 Weekly; and railways that dispense with steam;
 Self-moving wagons; clothes without a seam;
 And artificial mutton, fowl and beef,
 By chemists made—to brutes a blest relief;
 And patent masons, patent housemaids, cooks,

And so forth ; locomotive quills ; and books
With simple signs—a volume on a page.
Such is the progress since the glorious Age
We call our own ; but what had this availed,
If still the worker's curse had been entailed,
Age after age,—his ill-requited toil,
And virtual exile from a share of soil ;
If still the drone may loll at home in ease,
Nor lift a finger, while his hoards increase ;
Yet labor—all that adds to human wealth,
To gain a crumb, surrender time and health.
The labor-saving arts had thus despoiled
Of bread itself, the multitudes that toiled ;
And still would be the depth of man's descent,
That, in his thriftless state, he is content.

Prosy and plain, a remedy was found—
No socialistic mill where men are ground
From bad to worse—no French communist dish,
A demon's broth of neither flesh nor fish—
No patent milk-of-human-kindness churn,
That out of gear is thrown at every turn,—
But just as Newton in a pippin saw
The universe, and knew its simple law,
So one, whose name, of course, was noteless then,
When he was moving midst his fellow-men,
Found, in commercial life, the wormy root
That blasted nearly all of labor's fruit ;
And thus the cure for wrongs of social state—
A national safety-fund—a legal rate
Of two per cent., or something of the sort—
We half forget such matters *here* ; in short,

The scheme was known at last, and ran like fire
Through every wakeful land where men inquire
Of this and that, and where the people rule.
Lo, what a quiet change it wrought! The fool
No more must starve for lack of finer brain;
The ruthless money-kings no longer reign;
No more is gold the thrice-accursed bane
Of justice, love, and public weal; the chain
Of social weight has now an equal strain;
All men must work a little, bread to gain;
No one, to live, must be a weather-vane;
No one, to ignorance, the fates ordain,
And none to monster fortunes may attain,
And seaport cities now may never drain
The country's wealth, or send it o'er the main;
In fact, a man can never more complain,
But, having just enough, is 'rich as Spain.'

Cities are changed to Edens now!—and this,
Where Hudson's waters and the ocean kiss—
The Island City—one may see complete.
No crowded rookeries line the barren street,
But all are gone; and every 'block' a square
Of verdure, with a central palace fair
In each, where many households live in peace,
Unmixed, and own their rooms, or cheaply lease.
The poorest have the joys refined of wealth,
Without its curse, the want of heart and health.
All classes, raised to culture's purest height,
Return, at noon, from morning labors light,
And spend the rest of every livelong day
In walking, reading, talk and graceful play.

Beautiful city!—a breadth of palaces,
Surrounded each with gardens, fountains, trees.
Beautiful!—there the sun may well forget
Damascus old, the ‘pearl in emeralds set.’

And all the continent is such and more,
From eastern seas to calm Pacific’s shore.
The million railway lines, whereon the trains,
With noiseless motion, fly along the plains,
Are princely palace-streets, from end to end,
O’er which the arching elm and willow bend ;
And all the land, with leafy hedges graced,
Is tilled in humble plots, with none to waste,
Save the old groves reserved as soothing shade,
And free to feet and wheels of every grade.
Noble the lowest!—every creed and blood,
That o’er the ocean poured a human flood,
Their better traits commingled, form the type
Wherein the perfect men of Time are ripe.
Our country!—still our feeling burns to thee.
The burden of thy wondrous destiny
Lay on our mortal hearts; thy Future loomed,
In vision dim, a world redeemed or doomed.
In thee, we saw a loftier struggle yet,
Than when a foreign foe thine armies met ;
For this, a hemisphere was saved till then ;
For this, the earth gave up her choicest men.
And now a thousand years have told the tale ;
’Tis writ on every fruitful hill and vale ;
And angel-souls with happy pain expand
To feel but half the glory of the land.

All things are new, and yet not all; the oaks
Of social growth, and trees of heaven, no strokes
Of skeptic axe have cleft, nor passion's fire
Has burned; they flourish greener, wider, higher.
Only the mouldering trunks of old abuse
And poison-plants, denied a longer truce,
Have been removed. The Bible yet is prized
The one great Book divinely authorized;
But men have learned to hold it in the light
Of common sense;—the party on the right,
Look less at words and more at inner pith;
The left, have ceased their idle cant of "myth;"
And all confess the Gospel sent to feed
The multitudes, and sow equality's seed,
As well as be transfigured on the mount
Of Faith. The Church exultingly may count
A nation in a common fold;—each sect
Had learned its special failings to detect,
And welcome others' truth; and thus they found,
Surprised, they stood at last on common ground.
The clergy—free. The Sabbath yet remains,
And everywhere, in cheerful beauty, reigns,
With less of running, seeing, hearing—more
Of thoughtful peace within seclusion's door.
Marriage endures, with thornless roses wreathed;
Passion is joined with wisdom earlier breathed;
And, all conditions equal, kindred hearts
Outrageous worldly interest never parts,
Nor joins the uncongenial. Woman's curse
Is lessened, too—so great her physical force—
A strength, endurance, beauty, now maintained
By natural dress, and daily, nobly, trained

To glorious exercise and common cares,
Not lost, as once, when all were born the heirs
Either of toil or sloth. And 'woman's sphere'
Is found at last, confessed without a sneer ;
'Tis just the sphere of action she can fill,
Greater or less, so there be gift and skill ;—
Although it worries yet a faction small,
That woman is an institution at all.

Noting the great and happy change, we sped
From State to State, o'er lake and river-head ;
We found the nation's latest capital,
And stood, unseen, within the council hall.
Here were no men of venal caucus choice,
But now a people's one harmonious voice
Directly calls to power the pure, the wise.
No reckless demagogues may exercise
Their trade, nor vain declaimers. Tariff-rate
And army-bill are none ; but calm debate
On education, art, improvements ; then
Adjourned, till five years roll away again.
We left the peaceful Congress ; hastened round
The grand metropolis ; and last we found
A palace, built of burnished gold, and glazed
With sheets of pliant, woven glass that blazed
In rainbows. Banners, over doorways cast,
Were lettered, " Grand Museum of the Past."
We paused. A marble statue stood above,
Copied from Phidias—great Olympian Jove ;—
A chiseled globe within the outstretched hand,
Upon the globe the feet of Victory stand,

A wingéd statuette. We gazed below,
And saw amid the concourse, moving slow,
A grave instructor, with his youthful class,
Approach the entrance of the hall of glass.
"Behold this noble work of art, and learn,"
He said, "the course of language to discern.
Yon globe's the world; the shape of Victory
Is Queen Victoria, who lived of old, and she
Was Jenny Lind, who conquered all the earth.
But how did such a group as this have birth?
The Jove was Barnum; thus I get his name—
Olympus and Parnassus were the same—
Parnassum, Parnum, Barnum, quod erat,
And so forth. Thus you see by putting that
And this together, one may find the truth
Of history. Jove, or Barnum, he, forsooth,
Was Jenny's Premier, and, as it is meet,
Holds her who held the world beneath her feet."
'Twas thus he spoke; the class were edified;
And we, invisible spirits, side by side
With mortals, passed as 'dead-heads' at the door.
The visitors, in cheerful colors, wore
Varied costumes according to their taste;
Fashion is obsolete, with all its waste
And slavishness;—the lordly beard alone,
By every man in natural pride, is grown.
In fact, one grand development of Time
We found is this, that none declare it crime
For each to be himself—to shout, to talk
As children do—to dress, to leap, or walk,
And freely think, in bounds of innocence.
False dignity, cold custom, vain pretence,

And cramping modes, were scouted long ago,
And all are free to let their nature flow—
To give to rightful impulse room and play,
From infancy till reverend hairs are gray.
Somewhat, in truth, the freedom pure of Heaven
Had lightened Earth with effervescing leaven.

And, seeing all the glorious change, we passed
Around the rooms of that Museum vast,
Filled with the curious symbols of the Past.
And first are seen those indices of Time—
The garments strange of every age and clime ;
And many passers laughed aloud to see
The fashions of the nineteenth century—
The universal black, the stove-pipe hats,
The pinching coats and choking neck-cravats.
In other halls are models, great and small,
Of mechanism—at length supplanted all
By art so perfect that the loom and plough
Of Fillmore's reign, are savage relics now.
The tools of War, in other rooms, we saw—
All useless now, in days of love and law ;
Slavery's, too—the coffer-cuffs and chains,
But rusted o'er and dark with ancient stains.
Surprised were we, on other shelves to find
Products of matter and of human mind
Together classed ; for instance, books and rocks :
Shakspeare and diamonds ; Milton, marble blocks ;
Shelley and corals ; Byron and lava cold ;
Wordsworth and granite ; Tennyson and gold ;—
As if the work of genius were a part
Of the great Artist's all-embracing art ;

Or as a oneness, deeper than we think,
 In all resemblance welds the hidden link.
 But vain it were to seek the guiding thread
 Of this, the cabinet great of centuries dead;
 And vain to number up the million things
 Mingled with surplices and crowns of kings.
 We saw the last of poison ever distilled;
 The last of pipes, with last narcotic filled;
 And came at length beside a mummy case,
 The Last Conservative preserved!* His face
 Is shrivelled up, as if his soul, to the last,
 Was terrified lest men would go too fast,
 And earth to ruin run;—'tis said, he died
 A hermit cavernd in a mountain-side,
 Five hundred years ago; with him, the breed
 Was lost, of which the world had little need.

* The following lines are all that remains of the yet unborn Last Conservative, besides his mummy:—

OUR DRAGON.

Neighbor Southron keeps a dragon,
 He and we,—let no tongue wag on!
 Hush there! hush!
 Fierce the monster and immense is,
 Strong to break through strong defences,
 Large of tush,
 With a fiery-green and jealous eye;—
 Why not keep a dragon—tell us why?
 All the land is hot and deathful,
 Of his foul and flaming breath full—
 Hist there! hist!
 Blood he sheds enough to swim in,
 Sups on tender babes and women—
 Whist! be whist!
 Let no babblers dare to speak of it;
 We will keep him, for the freak of it!
 Down he strikes our noblest heroes,
 More his victims than were Nero's—
 Still! be still!
 Down a third part of our stars he†
 Drags, and all our welfare mars he
 At his will;—
 Fiercer grows that writhing tail of his,
 But—oh save him, harm no scale of his!

† Rrv. xii. 4.

A SONG OF 1861.

England! Borne on slumber's wing,
Oft I light among thy daisies ;
Thine, to me, a changeless Spring,
Sweet as in thy poet's praises,
When of May-day morn they sing.

Home of all my long-gone sires—
O! to see thy seats manorial,
Happy pastures, gray old spires,
Peasant roofs, and each memorial
Left of those who woke thy lyres!

Other lands are strange of tongue,
Other blood not half so human :
Europe's proudest states have clung
To the false-lipped Roman woman ;—
Truth on thy strong arm has hung.

Free, yet steadfast—golden words !
Could we doubt thy peerless Laureate ?
Nay, thy well-pleased choice accords
Rank to rank and fortune aureate :
Noble men, thy lords are lords.

Foremost for the bondman's right,
Thou wert great in christian bravery :
Surely, when the powers of Night

Rose to war the war of slavery,
Thou wouldst hail the side of Light.

Foolish fancies—are they all?
Art thou blind with folds of cotton?
Hast thou drank poor envy's gall?
No, thy feudal turrets rotten
Wait a great republic's fall!

Why such haste to charge our woe
On the free rule of the many?
Slave-lords are our civil foe:
Wise thy nobles!—are there any
Who the truth can fail to know?

Weak the cause that seeks to rise
On a far-off land's disasters—
Weak and bad if propped with lies—
Trembling, when the people's masters,
Fearing them, would blind their eyes.

Fades the dream-light from thy shore;
Totters every princely palace;
While, beside the cottage door,
Pales the rose's tear-brimmed chalice;—
Misery walks the hard clay floor!

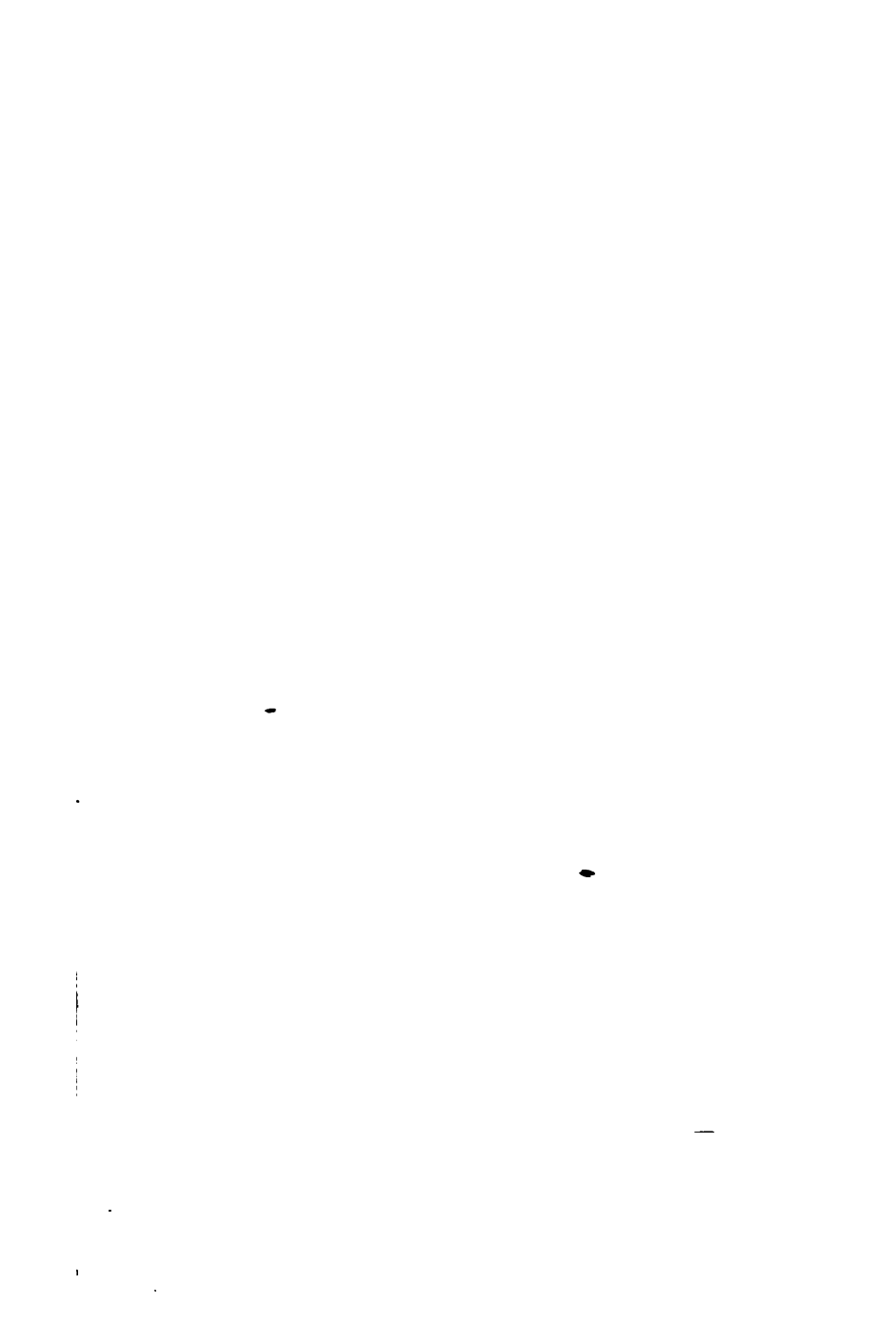
England!—to thy better self
Be thou true, and shame the creatures
Who belie thy voice, for pelf;
Purge thy Press of venal teachers—
Saxon groom and Celtic elf.

Yet be just ; blame them the least :
Close-restricted, tamed and baited,
Cringes even the royal beast,
And, his fawning hunger sated,
Sleeps, contented with his feast.

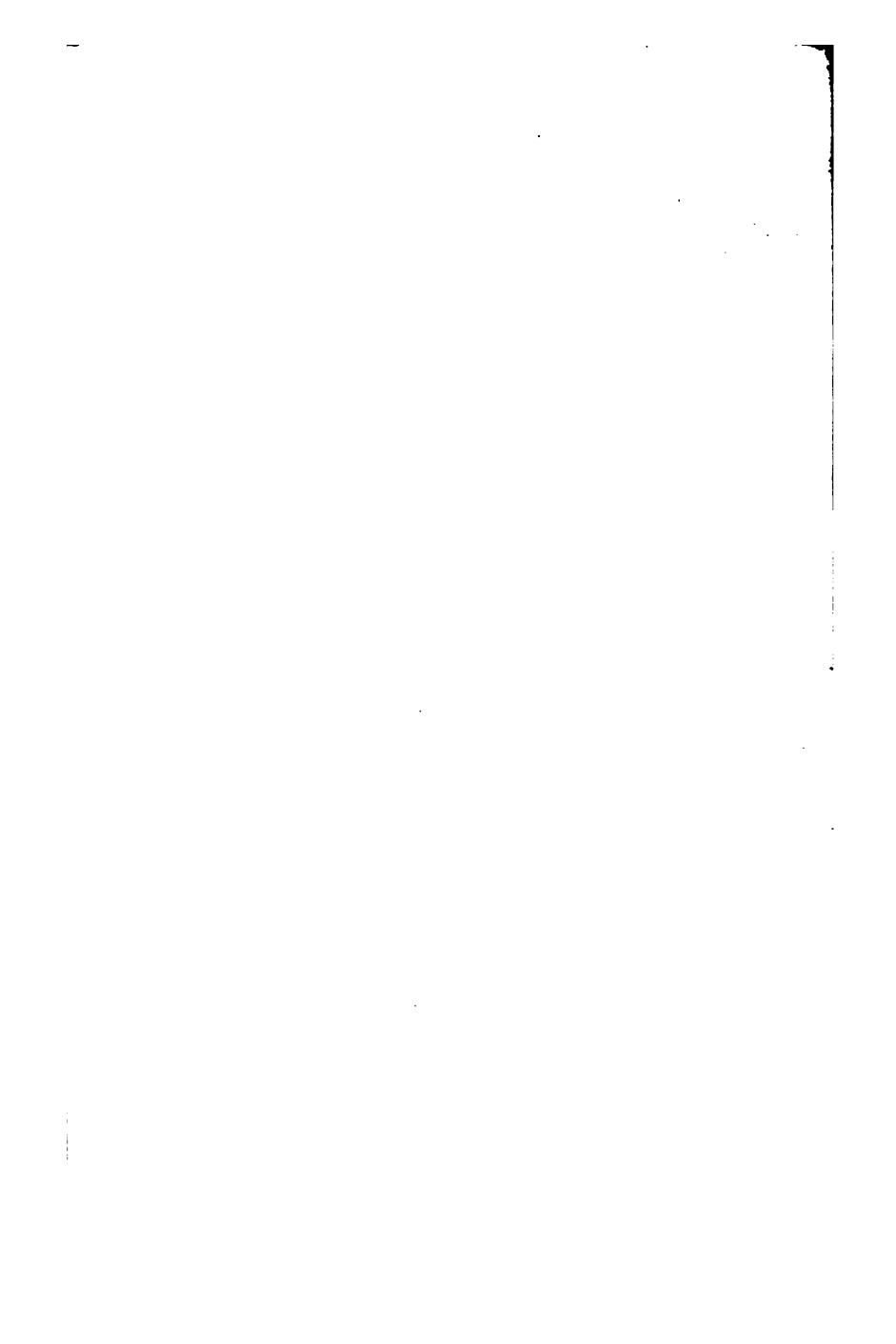
Wake, and stretch thy lion-paws !
Thy lords drive from their dominion
By the power of equal laws ;
While, wing-beat with free opinion,
Ours are clutched in iron claws.

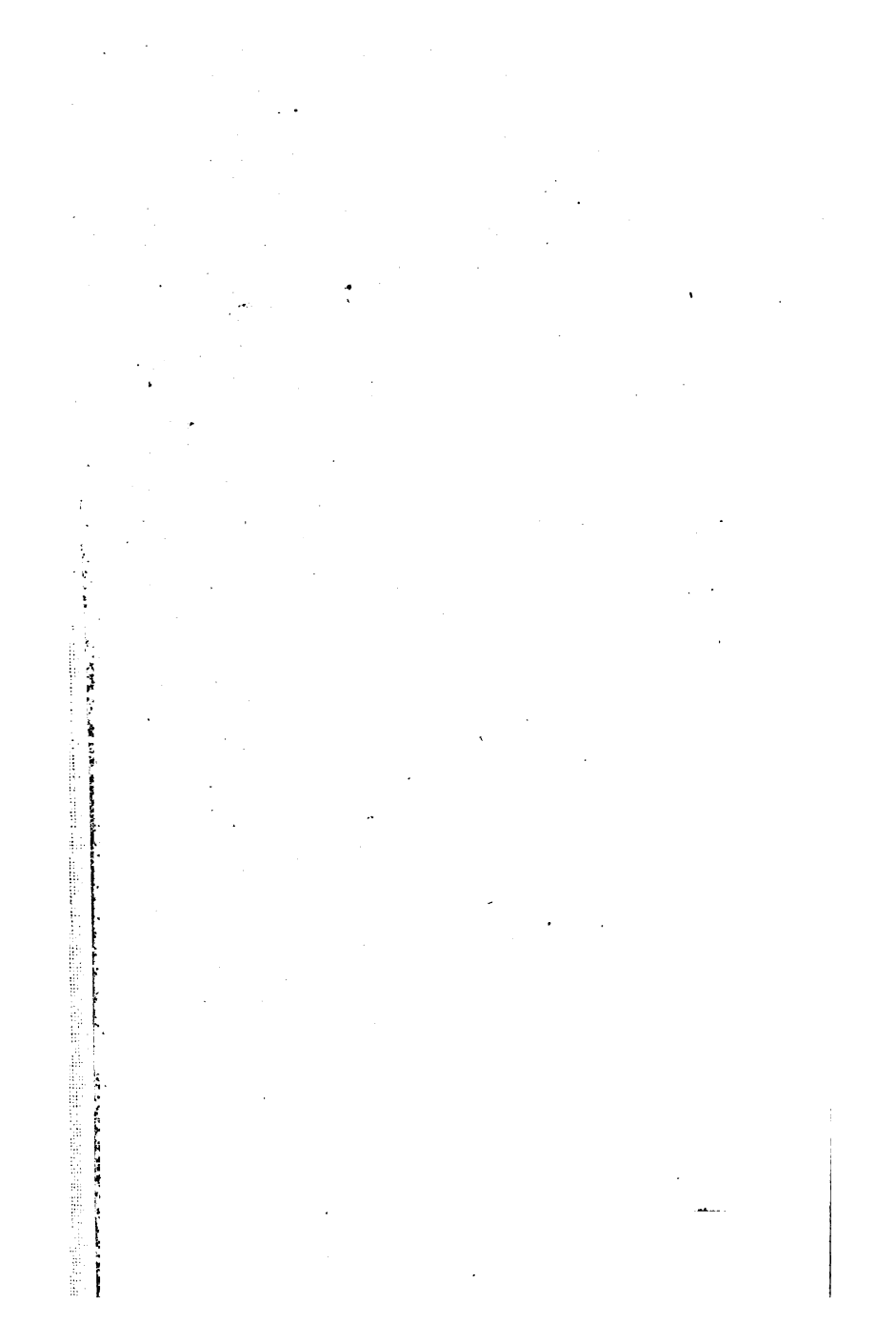
Lifting hands of crimson hue,
History makes but one confession—
War, to please or foil the Few—
War, to aid or check Oppression :
Old the tale, yet ever new !

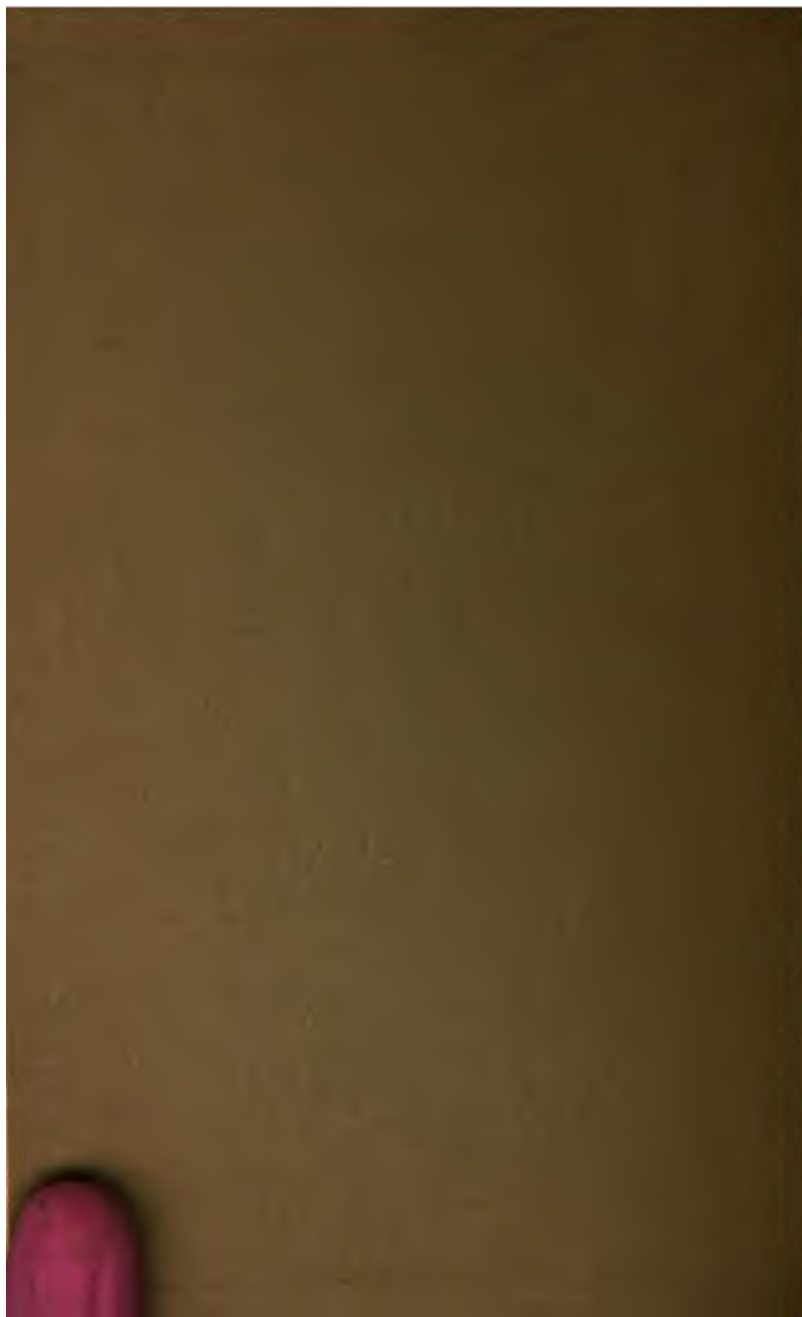
Bless the people!—*they* love peace ;
'Tis their bread, their one vocation :
May their light and love increase ;
May they rule in every nation ;—
War will then forever cease.











APR 15 1964

