



SCENES FROM  
SKY MEADOWS  
by  
CHARLES RANDALL



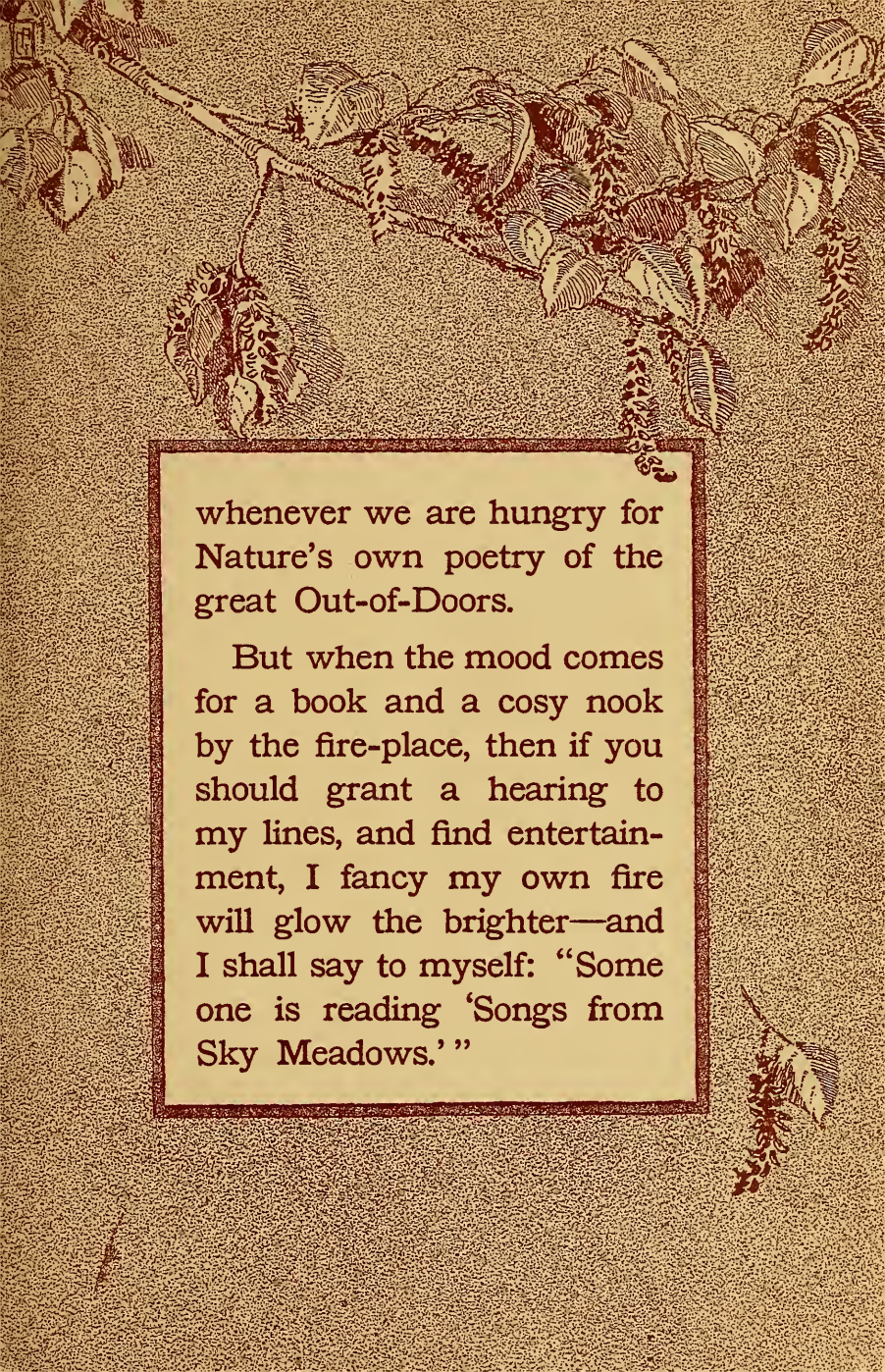
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**I** d  
e  
poetry of life; if you love  
a stroll over the autumn hills  
at chestnut-time; if you en-  
joy buffeting a winter storm;  
if you have the heart of the  
boy or girl that thrills with  
joy at the sight of the first  
violets, or the sound of the  
first blue birds, I am sure we  
shall agree to drop all books



whenever we are hungry for  
Nature's own poetry of the  
great Out-of-Doors.

But when the mood comes  
for a book and a cosy nook  
by the fire-place, then if you  
should grant a hearing to  
my lines, and find entertain-  
ment, I fancy my own fire  
will glow the brighter—and  
I shall say to myself: "Some  
one is reading 'Songs from  
Sky Meadows.'"



SONGS FROM SKY MEADOWS





# SONGS FROM SKY MEADOWS

POEMS OF NATURE AND OF  
NATURE'S CHILDREN

BY

CHARLES H. CRANDALL

*Author of "Wayside Music," "The Chords of Life,"  
"Tramps Across Lots," "Representative  
Sonnets," etc.*



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Q. 59 Apr. 2, 1897  
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To  
M. E. N.  
*Friend and Critic*



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## TO POESY

### *An Intimate Epistle*

**S**WEET Spirit, hear me now, you, who alluring,  
Have led me over many a fen and field,  
Or in high city walls' unmeet immuring  
Have struck my chains whenever I appealed;  
If love o'er doubt can prove the more enduring  
Still company me over moor and weald!

Scarcely in knightly guise am I essaying  
Your glove to treasure as my favor true.  
I rather think me of the time, when straying  
In the enchanted land, when life was new,  
We knew the game of youth well worth the playing—  
The dear old world with all its Eden dew.

Light-foot companion, fleeting on before me,  
To whom the windflowers bowed in pliant grace,  
Oft, when I wearied, you bent and upbore me,  
Or hovered round a mother's radiant face;  
Or, if for her, a charm, too, rested o'er me,  
I know it was you, smiling in my place!

Wherever golden buccaneers were swinging  
On masts of gold above a grassy sea,

## To Poesy

*Wherever light-winged minstrels were upspringing  
To link with song the azure and the lea,  
There was your court and all that summer singing  
Obeyed your signal, known to bird and bee.*

*You are the rapture of the child whose cooing  
Blends with the doves upon an April morn,  
You are the blush of May and June a-wooing  
When summer rustles in the growing corn,  
And you the light of tears that, fast renewing,  
Rain on some face that leaves a life forlorn.*

*Upon the ways our thought dreams of the ocean  
And yearns for the infinity beyond.  
A flash! and you have given life and motion,  
The conscious waters own your queenly wand,  
And hearts that long to bleed in high devotion  
Follow the ship with loyal eyes and fond.*

*When o'er the stars' divine, immortal faces  
The flying clouds have dared to draw a veil,  
And past the ship the white sea-squadron races  
And the night demons hurry on the gale,  
Your whisper, heard above the groaning braces,  
Catches the breath of Hope in shredded sails.*

*Spirit, who rides upon the battle surges,  
And all the tumult and the shouting hears,  
As gloriously your beauty onward urges—  
A snowy bosom, scornful of the spears—*

## To Poesy

*How marvel we when quick your figure merges  
In one who whispers peace to dying ears!*

*Yours is the cadenced voice, the faint suggestion,  
The radiant glance that holds the heart in fee,  
The smile that more than answers every question,  
Tyrant who laughs and sets her subjects free!  
Yours are the truths that need no stamped attestation,  
The hand that knights each lowly bended knee.*

*You touch a lowly roof with tender glory  
Where yellow firelight flickers on the wall,  
We sit enthralled with ancient song and story  
While overhead the wild December calls,  
And ghosts of vanished winters, wan and hoary,  
Chatter and rustle in the chilly halls.*

*Sweet Poesy! A maiden ever tender,  
The bloom upon your beauty never fades!  
In lonely hours you draw up by the fender  
And hand in hand we tread the dim arcades  
Of golden memory to some sweet surrender  
That woke the night in one glad serenade.*

*You are the song of songs, the heart-renewing  
And loving strain that lures us through the aisles  
Of Merlin lands, where eager lads are wooing  
And half-distraught by maids of Eden wiles,  
Who flash and flee, and still invite pursuing,  
And still deny, with contradicting smiles.*

## To Poesy

*And yours the strength of lofty hours of trial  
When on the mountain-top we stand alone.  
We sweep the hands of fate about the dial,  
Choosing our path from all the heavenly zone;  
Certain, undaunted, deaf to all denial,  
From all the world we dare to claim our own.*

*For we have learned that there is no compelling  
Your dwelling in the forms that we portray.  
The walls we build shall echo naught but knelling  
Unless your light shall touch us as we pray.  
Art is in vain unless there is upwelling  
Some worship through the pigment and the clay.*

*Spirit of grace, of God's own inspiration  
To charm our ways, to ease the daily strife!  
Joy is your message: to the whole creation  
Beauty and Song; the mountain-tops are rife  
With trailing clouds that glory in laudation,  
For unto all you are the light of life.*



THE caged linnet in the spring  
Harkens for the choral glee,  
When his fellows on the wing  
Migrate from the Southern Sea;  
When trellised grapes their flowers unmask,  
And the new-born tendrils twine,  
The old wine darkling in the cask  
Feels the bloom on the living vine;  
And so, perchance, in Adam's race,  
Of Eden's bower some charmlike trace  
Survived the Flight and swam the Flood,  
And wakes the wish in youngest blood  
To tread the forfeit Paradise,  
And feed once more the exile's eyes;  
And ever when the happy child  
In May beholds the blooming wild,  
And hears in heaven the bluebird sing,  
"Onward!" he cries, "your baskets bring—  
In the next field is air more mild,  
And o'er yon hazy crest is Eden's balmier spring."

—R. W. EMERSON.



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POEMS OF NATURE AND LIFE





# *Songs From Sky Meadows*

## LIE ON YOUR OARS AND REST AWHILE

LIE on your oars and rest awhile—  
This is the sweetest part of the stream—  
Shadowy branches over the aisle  
Lure us to linger, list and dream.  
While the wings in the verdure gleam,  
Dream and drift the rest of the mile;  
Under the thrushes, over the bream,  
Lie on your oars and rest a while.

Think of the old days under the trees—  
All the murmur and music of May—  
And mating robins and booming bees,  
The big blue roof all over the day.  
Oh, it is well to go back and think  
Of the dear mother, and see her smile  
The old sweet way, the while you drink  
Deep of her love, and rest a while.

Lie on your oars and rest a while;  
God has nothing for you to do;  
Duty and rest will reconcile,  
Smile at the thought of a task for you.

*Lie On Your Oars and Rest Awhile*

Lying, perchance, on an island cot—  
Flitting of nurses—a snowy gleam—  
All the old fever well forgot—  
Only to lie, and drift and dream.

Sudden, you see the roses bloom  
Back by the mossy garden wall,  
Out of the hazy middle gloom  
Bodies a maiden, fair and tall.  
Aye! the sound of her very call,  
Just as you heard it, years ago!  
Oh, but her smile, that lighteth all!  
Are you sorry you ceased to row?

For, while you lie and drift and rest—  
This, the sweetest part of the stream—  
Faces of all you have loved the best  
Softly shall move within your dream.  
Life is to love, and loving is life;  
Dropping the world and its petty guile,  
Learn the lesson, and, far from strife,  
Lean on your oars and rest a while.

## THE FAITH OF THE TREES

**T**O be garnished with glory and beauty, and  
broadly to stand,  
A cordon of grace and of loveliness over the land;  
To thrill with the upwelling life and exultingly grow,  
And spread out our fingers in blessings and blossoms of  
snow;  
To live in the laugh of the children that play at our  
feet,  
And cast the cool shadows the mower comes eager  
to meet;  
To paint and to sculpture a guerdon of fruit, and to  
throw  
A largess of food and of love to the creatures below;  
To bathe in the music of birds as they tilt on the edge  
of the nest,  
And to watch at the windows of morn and the doors  
of the West;  
Or the sheen of the limbs of the Dryads that sport in  
the night,  
When the moon on the vision of mortals hangs cur-  
tains of light;  
To dance with the Wind when his breathing is sweet  
in our hair,  
And our fingers are thrilled as we whirl in the arms  
of the air—

## *The Faith of the Trees*

Ah! this is the fortune of Spring and the fond Summer-tide—

To live, and to laugh, and to dream, and all carelessly  
bide!

But oh, to be stripped by the Wind who once courted  
one's hand,

As he scatters the red-russet robes o'er the pitiless land!

To be bit by the tooth of the Frost as we huddle to  
hide

The coverless beauty that furnished our yesterday's  
pride;

All naked to meet the reviling of Winter's mad rout,

Or veiled in the ashes of grayness and lichens of doubt;

The butt of the tempest, the scorn of the pitiless ice,

When the grip and embrace of the cold is a merciless  
vise;

To stretch out cold hands in a silence to gray-leadен  
skies,

And pray for the weakness of trusting, the will to be  
wise;

Forsaken by minstrel and music and children and cheer,

Or the gleam of a bird or a flower in the death of the  
year,

While the wail of the world's miserere o'erburdens  
the air,

And the daughters of Summer are silent, their temples  
are bare—

Ah, this is the fortune of Winter, its woe and its pain,

To long for the voice of a friend, and to listen in vain.

## *The Faith of the Trees*

Yet after the tempests the sweet of adversity yields  
Lymph smoother than bee-gathered nectar in clover-  
strewn fields;

From generous juices of hearts that are willing to die  
A cordial outpurls for the healing of men as they lie.

When the cold is afoot and the cotter bends low o'er  
the fire,

And the hearts of the people are low at the ebb of  
desire,

We will etch on the sky a new gospel of God that will  
stand,

A symbol of patience and trustfulness over the land.

We will make a new song for the forest and orchard  
and plain,

And the North Wind shall bear it to mountain and  
river and main.

I, too, patient heart, in the Faith of the Trees will  
abide,

When my Love turns a face that is leafless and voice-  
less with pride;

I will live on the love in the innermost heart of my  
life,

And for love of my Love I will take that dear love for  
my wife;

And the life of my love fills my heart with a wonder-  
ful joy,

With the thought of a love that delights not to hurt  
or destroy,

## *The Faith of the Trees*

For safe in the roots of my being there lie, hidden deep,  
Leaves, flowers, fruit, bird-song and children, all  
sweetly asleep!

I will humble my heart till it lies in its primitive dust,  
For of all love the love that is best is the love that can  
trust.

In the Faith of the Trees I will find me a refuge and  
hope,

Though the rack of the tempest remorselessly harries  
the slope;

Deep down in the root one can feel fond Nature a-beat,  
And kindle new strength for the storm at her generous  
heat.

Though all to the ruth of the spoiler so seemingly  
yields,

With "vanity, vanity," writ on the forests and fields,  
In the core of my heart I will dream and conspire with  
the Spring

Till the violet buds, and the rivulet leaps, and the  
thrush is a-wing;

I will cling with my root and my life to the faith that  
is dear,

For the Lord who is Lord of the Months is the Lord  
of the Year.

## THE BIRD ARMY

**A**N always welcome army  
Comes scurrying o'er the land;  
A brave and martial legion,  
Led by a brilliant band.  
The robins are the pipers,  
The flickers beat the drum,  
The blue-birds and song-sparrows  
Play sweetly as they come.

Ah, what a wide invasion  
They lead from zone to zone!  
No campaign half so mighty  
Was ever planned or known.  
From ocean unto ocean,  
From gulf to arctic strand,  
Sweeps one resistless army  
That nothing can withstand.

The skirmishers and scouts  
Are grackles, phebes, wrens;  
The thrushes and the vireos  
Are ambushed in the glens;  
The crows, the black-horse cavalry,  
Are ever on the flanks;  
The ducks and geese, the "heavies,"  
Trail by in noisy ranks.

## *The Bird Army*

So onward, in good order,  
They march with lusty cheer;  
The bobolinks and mocking birds  
Bring up the army's rear.  
The south wind and the sunshine  
Supply the army train,  
And dainty rations rise up  
At summons of the rain.

No wonder grim old winter  
Retreats before the host,  
And all in vain his strongholds  
And vain his Christmas boast!  
From snowbank unto snowbank  
They make the braggart flee,  
They melt his ammunition  
And set his prisoners free.

So gleams the welcome army  
In every wood and field;  
The blue-bird's azure ensign,  
The oriole's crimson shield;  
And welcome is the pæan  
The sweet musicians ring—  
The routing of the winter,  
The triumph of the spring.



## TO SLEEP

**T**HERE is a quiet path of sleep  
That leads us back to God;  
One sanctuary that remains  
When all our paths are trod.  
Away, away from fretful sound,  
From light and thought and care!  
O part the leafy, hidden gates  
And let me breathe its air.

Cool fingers for the lidded eyes  
The zephyrs there shall bring,  
The while we glide and dream and drift  
From every sordid thing,  
Through shaded avenues of rest  
Where toil was never known,  
Where God in his great mercy broods  
And heals and mends his own.

Awake, our foes are round about,  
Our watch must ceaseless be;  
But sleep, and they are put to rout;  
Forget, and they will flee.  
In this brief lull we too may share  
Eternity's calm sweep;  
We, with the ages, drop all care  
To sleep—to sleep—to sleep.

## *To Sleep*

In helpless glad surrender there  
The soul lies bare and prone  
Till washed as pure as glittering snow  
On mountain summits blown.  
O sleep, the self-fulfilling prayer,  
The answer freely given,  
How sweetly blow thy piny winds  
From off the hills of Heaven!

He goes to sleep, he goes to God!  
Then gladly bid him speed.  
He goes to meet the primal source,  
The balm of all our need.  
He comes from sleep, he comes from God!  
O welcome him with grace!  
Fresh from the all-restoring hands,  
The Light is on his face.

IN A WESTCHESTER ORCHARD

**W**HAT is the dream of the blossoming tree,  
Holding a hammock for every bee?  
What is the thought of the redolent ways  
When Spring is living her bridal days?  
This is the prescience that seems to speak,  
Paling faintly each blossom-cheek:—

All things pass, the bud and the flower  
Tremble in beauty a little hour;  
Yet, on some golden October day,  
Odor of apples shall whisper, "May!"

What is the solace when branches bend  
And days of bearing have come to end,  
When russet and ruby, touched with bloom,  
Globes of wine with a rich perfume,  
Redden the arcades, gild the ground?  
What are the words that softly sound?

All things pass, the winter drear  
Leaves no vision of fruitage here;  
But, ringing about some Christmas tree,  
Rosy children my praise shall be.

Ah, but the days when there shall come,  
Drowning the sound of woodpecker-drum,

*In a Westchester Orchard*

Men with axes, levels and drays,  
Leading northward the city's ways!  
Where shall the yellow-hammer hie?  
Where the robin, and squirrel, and I?

Blossom and fruitage, lost to view—  
Peasant, painter and singer too—  
Live alone in the hearts of men,  
Into the All-Life merge again.

## STAMFORD HIGHLANDS

(“*Sky Meadows*”)

O VER the hills of Stamford the morning light  
doth hie,

Flooding the sky and meadow, flooding meadow and  
sky,

Calling the birds to worship, the country-folk to rest,

Calling the pasture lilies that toil not, yet are blest,

Greeting the patient cattle, at rest on a thousand hills,

Blending in mellow music murmur of myriad rills,

Touching it all to beauty, ocean and sky and sod,

Stately and calm and lovely—fit for a hymn to  
God.

Far away to the southward rise up the city spires,

Faintly up to me journey strains of the blended choirs;

Fancy can see the singer rise in her wonted place,

Flowers on her snowy bodice, joy on her chastened  
face;

Pouring her soul in music, thrilling the starry nave:

*Gloria in Excelsis* echoing, wave on wave.

Up on my highland meadow I seem to hear it all,

Unto my inner spirit the music makes its call;

Part of the sky and ocean, part of the wood and  
glen,

*Gloria in Excelsis*—ever and amen.

## *Stamford Highlands*

Many the friends I treasure down in the city streets,  
Many the kindly service the straying memory meets;  
Here the good hand-pressure, here the welcoming  
smile,

Here the word well-spoken that helps the weary smile;  
Here the glance of beauty, and here the rugged cheer—  
The honest hand, the timely deed, they reach me even  
here.

Still, as I tread the meadow, some nearer voices speak;  
“Do not forget us, either, though we are shy and  
weak.”

Brown-coat bird in the stubble, whistle of thrush and  
quail,

Bobolink, drunk with music; swallow that skims the  
gale;

Hoarders of nuts and apples, chatterers up in the tree,  
Soft-coat friends in the pasture, quick to hear and to  
see;

Hoofs that will make their music over the winding  
road,

Four-foot comrades ready ever to pull the load;  
Voice of the filly's whinny, flash of the collie's tail—  
So by their signs ye know them, helpers that do not  
fail.

Then, with more subtle language, the voices in the  
grass

Rise up to offer solace and cheer me as I pass.  
It may be dewy violets that turn their heavenly eyes,  
The gold of dandelions, just stamped by nature's dies,

## *Stamford Highlands*

The perfume of the clover, fresh rumbled by the bees,  
Or swaying of the blooming grain in wind-swept  
symphonies.

If, haply, in the orchard the robes of bloom are spread,  
Or in the autumn forest the maple tops are red,  
If woodbine leads its flame aloft the cedar-spires of  
green,

Or clematis her snowy arm upon the wall may lean—  
All lead along a soothing path, the spirit all forspent,  
Into the land of restfulness, the Country of Content.

So let the white-winged vessels glide along the line of  
blue,

Where cliffs and water rival in soft, ever-changing  
hue,

There where the white-tip billows rise with mighty  
surge and souse,

And threaten, laugh and foam away about the schooner's  
bows;

Where some speed on to pleasure, and some on  
errands grim,

Some by the headlands flashing, some in the offing  
dim;

If Fancy cares to board them, we know the homeward  
track.

Where'er they stray, the happiest way is still the  
coming back.

Ay, and the ones about us, knowing our weaker ways,  
Neighbor, and friend, and comrade, whose silence  
speaketh praise!

## *Stamford Highlands*

Strong are the hearts that gather upon and among  
the hills;  
Stout are the ties that bind us here where the tempest  
shrills;  
Here, where the north wind winnows and purges the  
hearts of men,  
Here, where the hearth-fire glimmers when tempests  
rack the glen,  
Here, where the old songs hallow the old gray cottage  
walls,  
While answers back December's rack, or down the  
chimney calls;  
Here, where we war with torrent, and snow, and  
wind, and sun,  
Breed we the old clan fealty that lasts till life is  
done.  
For the Highland lad and lassie, Highland maiden  
and man,  
They fear no peer, for love and cheer, since ever the  
world began.

Softly the light of evening over the world doth lie,  
Touching the sky and meadow, touching meadow and  
sky,  
Ever a newer glory, ever a rarer hue,  
Spread on the western canvas, by artist deft and  
true;  
Pictures we may not handle, but Croesus cannot  
buy,  
And measured not by dollars, but by the heart and eye,



*Stamford Highlands*

So softly fades the beauty, and night begins her reign,  
Where glides Selene, the silver queen, with all her  
starry train;  
The harbor light gleams red and bright, that not a  
ship may roam;  
And, up above, the star of Love, the beacon star of  
Home.

“GONE TO SEE IF THE DREAM IS TRUE”

**M**EETING the eye as the leaves unfold,  
Such the heading; and, for the rest,  
Some one had dreamed of a mine of gold  
Thousands of miles away in the West.  
So he had bartered his plows and kine,  
Sold the roof-tree his fathers knew,  
Set his face for that mountain mine—  
“Gone to see if the dream was true.”

Where are the children? Night is here;  
Over the meadow the shadows creep,  
Hours ago they crossed the weir,  
Thridded the wood and climbed the steep.  
Hand in hand, brave Kitty and Will  
Followed the beautiful fleeting clue—  
Chased the rainbow over the hill—  
Hurried to see if the dream was true.

Lad and lassie, maiden and man!  
Ah, they cannot escape the dream  
God has placed in His own good plan,  
Giving them faith in the things that seem.  
Hand in hand, with a radiant smile,  
Altar-plighted, the world all new,  
Treading a rose-embroidered aisle—  
Ah, let us hope that the dream is true!

*"Gone to See if the Dream Is True"*

Comes a time when the light is dim,  
Feet unfaithful and fingers slow.  
Laggard to hear or voice the hymn,  
Listless to read and blind to sew—  
Cross the hands! For, against the wall,  
Shines the City-beyond-the-Blue.  
Soon it is said, of each and all,  
"Gone to see if the dream is true."

Yes, there is gold in the mountain mine,  
Beauty and grace in the bow of God,  
And love to-day is no less divine  
Than when the first lovers walked abroad;  
Not all the houses on earth can buy  
The hope in a City-beyond-the-Blue.  
Dearest, with us the proof doth lie—  
Whether or not the dreams come true.

## MAN OF CLAY

U<sup>P</sup> and out, thou man of clay!  
“No, I cannot work to-day.”  
Sloth! the sun is riding high,  
Mark him, surging through the sky!  
Catch the motion of his course,  
Filch his fire and steal his force.  
Dappled lands beneath the skies  
Beckon thee to enterprise;  
Hearts are longing for a word,  
Throngs are waiting to be stirred,  
All the earth is at our hand,  
Loyal, if we seize command.  
Busk thee, busk thee, man of clay,  
Wilt thou ever bar my way?

But the man, with scarce a sound,  
Shuffles on his daily round,  
Sleeps and wakes and stirs the fire,  
Kindles with some vague desire,  
Casts a longing look to heaven,  
Praying blindly for the leaven  
That shall raise the bread of life  
And shall clear the veins of strife.  
Then the hapless man of clay,  
Sad and muttering, goes his way;

## *Man of Clay*

Goes to market or to field,  
Gathers in some paltry yield,  
Trades a greeting for a smile,  
Helps a pilgrim on a mile,  
Hoards the light of loving eyes,  
Reaches for the sunset skies,  
Strokes the horses by the shed,  
Feeds the kine—and goes to bed.

Man of clay, haunting the days  
With thy stolid, stupid ways,  
Wilt thou never come to power,  
Be a king, if but an hour,  
Drop thy shuffling, shambling speech,  
Take the sword within thy reach,  
Take the pen within thy hand,  
Take the plaudits of the land,  
Till thy love, who dwells apart,  
Lights the altar in thy heart?  
Man of clay, I spurn thee so,  
I could break thee with a blow!  
Ever thy cold shadow bars  
Me from pathway to the stars.  
I would cleave the clayey chain  
But I fear the crimson stain  
Of the blood that binds away  
Thee and me, O man of clay!

Spurned to fury at my words,  
Now he turns, and at me girds;

## *Man of Clay*

“ Prithee spare a slave in chains  
Taunts and buffets for his pains!  
Could my daily burdens be  
Rolled up for the world to see,  
Like a bourgeoning ball of snow,  
Since I first began to grow,  
It would cause thy cheek to blanche  
At its threatening avalanche.  
Count the stones that I have lifted,  
Count the burdens I have shifted,  
While I battled, as I must,  
With the weakness of the dust.  
Spirit, with immortal brow,  
I am wonder-built as thou.  
Though thou towerest as of old  
Gleamed Apollo, all of gold,  
Spare thy boasting on the way—  
I am still thy feet of clay.”

Gazing at him from the door,  
As I scan him o'er and o'er,  
Shoulder-breadth and knotted thews  
Eye-glance smouldering like a fuse,  
And the form so proud and pliant,  
In its bending still defiant,  
I confess an awe-like feeling  
Over me is slowly stealing.  
No, I may not run away,  
But I fear the man of clay!

## *Man of Clay*

Ah, thou mystic, mortal elf,  
Art thou then my other self?  
Are the red drops, never sleeping,  
And the life-hosts, thrilling, leaping,  
Down the avenues of veins—  
Mad parade of joys and pains—  
But the mirror and the dream  
Of the spirit's hidden stream,  
And thy heart and brain the keys  
Of the soul-born harmonies?  
Are the beauty stores I prize  
But the gleanings of thy eyes?  
Are the heavenly sounds I hear  
Echoes from thy mortal ear?

I salute thee, man of clay,  
I shall learn from thee to-day,  
Reverence thy low estate,  
Fit rebuke to proud and great.  
Though thy patient, piteous round  
May not sanctify the ground,  
And upon thy beaten hair  
No one puts a crown to wear,  
Here's a hand for any weather  
While we jog along together,  
Boon companions, all the way.  
Is it so, my man of clay?

## GUESSES AT THE VERITIES

WHAT is Life? A race worth running—  
So God must have thought—  
Chance to win, or cheer another,  
Though the prize be naught.

What is Youth? And what was Eden  
Ere 'twas sold for debt?  
Ask the workhorse or the oxen—  
They remember yet.

What is Fame? A name, low-written,  
Pencilled on the wall  
By the schoolhouse ere the Teacher  
Rings the final call.

What is Hope? A snowy lily  
Framed in granite walls.  
Watching it, the prison quickly  
Crumbles, fades and falls.

What is Faith? A ray that pierces  
Mountain, mine and sea;  
Says: "Where'er you wander, never  
Can you stray from Me."



*Guesses at the Verities*

What is Love? A hand's warm pressure,  
Fervent, in the dark.  
Then the world all wondrous-lighted  
From a tiny spark.

What is Death? A momentary  
Shudder at the wave  
Twixt two vessels—one fast sinking,  
One that comes to save.

What is Heaven?—perhaps it liveth  
In the human heart;  
In all Love and Joy and Beauty,  
Knowing it has part.

## THE PALISADES

**A**S moves our stately river to the Sea—  
A royal journey, girt with nature's pomp,  
A retinue of mountains, rocky heights,  
Fair sloping meads and myriad rills that rush  
To wave white hands at passing of their queen—  
One special honor, equalled nowhere else,  
Waits where the noble line of sentry cliffs  
Against the western sky, in long review,  
Silent, salute the Hudson as it glides  
So calm, so noble, to its final scene.  
Thus have they stood, an Old Guard, centuries-tried,  
To keep the river's charm inviolate,  
To champion, with a soldier's martial front,  
The subtle claim of beauty over all;  
To lift a silent protest to the throng  
That hurries to the jangling crowded mart,  
To barter dewy memories, quiet thoughts,  
For pomp and place, for glitter, gain and gold.

The Palisades! And are they but a mass  
Of lifeless trap-rock, subject to our will,  
To rend, to raze, to grind, to bear away  
For the dull throng to trample underfoot,  
There, where the engines hiss and hoot and scream;  
There where the horses lose their hope and die,

## *The Palisades*

There where the youth forgets his mountain home  
When flash the midnight lamps across his path;  
And life becomes a laugh, a cry, a curse?  
Was sacred beauty made alone for spoil?  
The violet has its mission ere it dies  
Beneath the heel that grinds it in the dust,  
And so the mountains, in their prophet robes,  
Lift up their warning to the vandal hands  
That yet would steal the earth's most godlike grace  
And sell its very beauty for a coin.

The eagles seek their immemorial haunts,  
To look down with contemptuous haughty gaze,  
Or swoop with lust of life upon their prey.  
Along the cliffs the waves break as of yore,  
And pass the countersign along the camp.  
The white sloops veer and tack and softly dream  
Away into the distance. Faintly sound  
The pulsing shuttle trains along the shore,  
And the white steamers with their hundred eyes  
Bear precious burdens up the patient stream.  
Lights flash out of the lowly fisher-hut  
And gleam and die upon the beacon tower,  
While in the west the bars of red and gold  
Change, interchange, and burn and fade and die.  
Now, in their royal purple richly dight,  
The cliffs again take up their nightly watch,  
And who shall say what converse with the stars?

If we call back some silent yesterday,  
We shall behold a red man's light canoe

## The Palisades

Put out beyond the point; or, on the shore,  
A deer come, stamping, to the water's edge.  
With thicker green the cliffs were girded then,  
Naught but a hunter's smoke would stain the sky,  
And God might gaze upon his unmarred work.  
Then came the *Half Moon* with her wondering crew,  
Like simple children straying out of bounds;  
The queer Dutch boats mixed with the birch canoes,  
And so the stream, with some misgiving, woke,  
Rubbing its eyes, from centuries of sleep.  
How strangely rang the rifle-crack along  
The shores that only knew the arrow's whizz!  
The tides of war flowed with the river's tides.  
Here stood the Patriot Sage, his gallant troops,  
His dauntless heart proof against all reverse;  
And here, and here, the doughty little forts  
Held out against the oppressor. Here, close by,  
The gallant spy was caught, to meet his doom;  
And here the joyful drum and cannon woke  
The advent of the happy days of Peace.

So weaves the glamor o'er the dreaming cliffs,  
The fancies of the poet and the sage,  
The wizard pen that sleeps at Tarrytown,  
The mingled praises of a world of men—  
All tribute to the glory of the cliffs—  
Long waves of admiration, breaking ever  
At foot of this grand, glorious rocky wall.  
The centuries past left us this royal sight,  
Through ages Nature planned her lovely gift,

## *The Palisades*

And other men, who sleep in lowly graves,  
Spared every ramp and rocky citadel  
To greet and gratify our eyes to-day.  
And shall we take the trust, and pass it on,  
Or rob the future of its heritage?  
Fair breaks the dappled dawn along the shore,  
And sweeps the stream with pink and pearl and gray,  
It touches sails with silver and with gold,  
Illumes the deep-dyed purple of the cliffs;  
The lights are quenched, the wheels of trade revolve,  
When, of a sudden, from old Indian Head,  
A white smoke puffs, a heart-break, rending crash—  
The devil-dynamite has done its work—  
And beauty, fair cliff-spirit, bleeding lies  
Dethroned below the mountains that she loves!  
The people's heart, albeit sometimes slow  
To waken to its every precious need,  
May yet be trusted in the crucial hour.  
Two stately commonwealths have crossed their swords,  
A sworn protection, arching o'er the stream  
To drive the violators from the scene  
Of desecrating and unholy spoil.  
With that protecting ægis in the skies,  
Through peaceful lapse of many a century yet,  
An inspiration and a boon to men,  
May stand and glow and dream—the Palisades.

## THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

**T**HE wind is sweeping over hill and valley,  
His kisses glaze the rivers and the sea;  
He drives his steeds through avenue and alley,  
And laughs to see the shivering people flee.

*Yet by the hearth-fire glowing  
The North wind shall not rest,  
Where warm hearts are bestowing  
Cheer for the Christmas guest.*

Now country lads heap up each wooden manger  
That every patient beast shall have his fill,  
For once a stable held a princely Stranger,  
And even the simple ox would think it ill

*If, on this night of glory,  
A shepherd should forget  
The manger of the story  
With silver radiance set.*

The world again awaits the light of ages,  
The heavens are set, all brilliant as of old,  
When o'er Judea's hills the patient sages  
Followed the path the Star had touched to gold.

*The Christmas Message*

*Then on each spirit-altar  
Let votive tapers flame,  
And there with song and psalter  
Be praised the wondrous Name.*

Good people all—wherever ye are dwelling—  
In crowded town or on the lonely farm—  
Join in the Christmas Message, sweetly swelling,  
And make each home a haven bright and warm!

*For hearts, though rude and lowly,  
The royal cradles are  
Where lies the Guest so holy,  
With Love, the guiding Star.*

And so while Love each human heart is cheering,  
Each breast shall hold its lowly Bethlehem;  
Each poor abode shall know that light endearing,  
As helping hands shall bring it home to them.

*Such simple, glad oblation  
The Saviour shall prefer  
To rites and adoration,  
Or frankincense and myrrh.*

## HEATHER

AH, Heather! My darling, my Heather!  
The child of the rough Highland weather,  
A-tremble with purple and dew,  
My homage is offered to you.  
So shy, with your delicate fingers  
Just dipped in that heavenly hue  
When the dawn of the hill-country lingers,  
With gems that the sun showered upon you  
In morns when he wooed you and won you!  
What tether, my Heather, doth draw you?  
For I loved you ere ever I saw you.

O far-away mother of mine—  
Far away on a wind-harried hill,  
With brown eyes that glisten and fill,  
You are drinking the purple like wine  
And your happy heart will not be still,  
While the child in you leaps at the sight  
Of the pink and the purple delight  
That stretches in glimmer and gloom  
Over mountains and valleys of bloom,  
Till I feel in my veins  
The sun and the rains  
Of Lanark and Perth and Argyle,  
And Ben Lomond, the Lord of the Isle,



## *Heather*

While the Carmichael blood, as it drains  
Through the years and the oceans and plains,  
Has set my heart dancing  
And swaying and glancing,  
My bonnie, my Heather, like you—  
Like branches of Heather and dew.

There are drops on a twig in the sun,  
And they meet, and they melt into one,  
And they color and are not afraid;  
Like the blush of a sweet mountain maid  
When she smiles in a true lover's face,  
And they linger in tender embrace  
While deep in her eyes is empearled  
The love that can sweeten a world.  
You know all the story, my Heather,  
You know how it rushes together,  
The love that can sweeten a world.  
And the pledge, little floweret, was you;  
You hallowed those vows to be true,  
For you were the tether, my sonsie, my Heather,  
That held them, those lovers so true!

Reaching out o'er the roll of the sea,  
Pink tendrils that thrill me and cling,  
I yield to the spell that you bring  
From the land of the wild and the free,  
From the land of the Douglas and Bruce,  
When a Wallace was proving his word  
And a Murray was scorning a truce.

## *Heather*

Homesick for the land of the Heather,  
The mountains of purple and green,  
The Highlands I never have seen,  
I muse and I sleep, and I dream.  
I dream of Kinross and Dunnottar,  
Where the rock castles frown on the cotter ;  
Where Inverness gleams in the gloaming,  
And the deer by Craig-millar are roaming,  
Where Stirling to Mauchline is crying,  
And Clyde unto Tweed is replying,  
And the coronach sighs o'er Culloden  
And wails o'er the hillocks of Flodden.

Once again do I look, and I see  
A line of men storming a pass.  
The crimson is staining the grass  
And the piper is shot through the knees,  
But the pibroch plays steadily on—  
The "Cock o' the North" on the breeze—  
The Scotch girls are hearing  
The Highlanders' cheering,  
And the heights of the Dargai are won.  
And what was it carried the gap?  
It was stuck in a Glengarry cap—  
The Heather—the Heather—  
In good or bad weather  
It binds Highland laddies and lassies together!

You tremble, my beauty, my Heather!  
There tugs 'neath the sea at your tether

## *Heather*

The sound of the clansmen a-calling,  
The cries of the stricken ones falling!  
Are you dreaming of Ayr or of Airlie,  
Or the banner of flying Prince Charlie—  
Of Walter, the mighty magician,  
Or Robert, sweet nature's musician?  
Sweet Heather, I warrant your hue  
Is mingled of blood and of dew.  
From the hills and the valleys of story  
There filters the stream of the glory  
Of the land of the leal and the true.  
From the land of the burn and the ingle,  
The land of the gorse and the thistle,  
There meet in your blossoms and mingle  
And blend in your purple so royal—  
The souls of the daring and loyal,  
All fadeless as stars in the blue,  
They gather, my Heather, in you.

\*The piper of the Gordon Highlanders was shot through both knees at Dargai Ridge, but kept on sounding the charge.

## THE PURE IN HEART

**T**HE stones are turning—turning;  
The wheat—it will be fine;  
The souls of men are learning,  
Though slowly—line on line.

With all who are in travail  
And noble discontent,  
Fate will no longer cavil—  
The veil of truth is rent.

O, what the plea can clear you,  
And what the awful fee,  
When blessedness is near you  
And kindness is the key?

Wealth? Ho! the sun will send you;  
A clear eye breaks the bank;  
The beggar boy will lend you,  
The plowman give you rank.

Go, cleanse the temple newly,  
Scourge out disease and lust;  
The words are living truly—  
The changers all are dust.

*The Pure in Heart*

O purely, purely, purely,  
Our lives must play their part:  
The bluebird knows it surely—  
The lily's golden heart.

O purely, harps are ringing  
A down the vaulted blue;  
O purely—hear it singing!  
The message is for you.

On battlements of Heaven,  
On all the peaks of space,  
To these 'tis ever given  
To see the Father's face.

## THE MAN BEHIND THE PLOW

**H**E does not write you poems with his pen;  
But, with a plow and Nature's alchemy,  
That makes the gold leap up behind the share.  
He writes them in a mile of waving wheat,  
That bends and leaps and sings the whole day long;  
A song of lovely cadence in the breeze,  
A song of rosy children by the hearth,  
A song of mighty ships, that plow the main,  
A song of better races yet to be!

That there are backs o'er-bent with hopeless toil,  
That there are foreheads narrow, seamed and low,  
That there are eyes that scarcely think to raise  
A look of hope to God's o'er-pitying skies,  
Held down by burdens men conspire to bind—  
We grant you; but, why shall we court despair?

Look on this giant, our good western growth,  
And better, finer than the early gods,  
As with a smile he treads the teeming earth,  
Lord of the best that life and love can bring.  
Aye, proud indeed the curl of yonder lip,  
And scornful, too, the flash of kingly eyes,  
Knowing their heritage beyond the touch

## *The Man Behind the Plow*

Of emperor or Dives! His are heart,  
And health, and strength, and joy, in every vein!  
Come hither, Kings! Can ye boast any more?  
No, not so much, poor harried bones and brains!  
Man with the Sceptre, neither are *you* free;  
Go, stand beside your bondman with "the hoe!"

But you, our yeoman, with a heart and brain,  
Go on with Nature down the gladsome year,  
Winning her smiles that millions never know,  
The while her kisses turn your cheeks to bronze.  
Her favorite son, ere yet the East has made  
The prairies blush along their fruitful breasts,  
You rise as glad as breeze or birds or sun,  
And flanked by your good friends, the Steam and  
Horse,

And cunning implements of later days,  
You drive the furrows through the fragrant soil.  
You sow the seed in happy, wholesome faith,  
Cheered by the laugh of children, song of birds,  
And when the harvest smiles, the reaper hums,  
And yours the sheaves upon a thousand plains,  
And yours the cattle on a thousand hills,  
Then, if the flower of Human Life is best,  
The joy is yours who by your toil have made  
Two lives to grow in place of one before.

No scheming crammer of the limbs of Trade,  
No heartless lord of other people's lives,  
No Old-World despot with his sharpened sword

*The Man Behind the Plow*

Forever threatening another's neck;  
But simple, honest almoner of God,  
Upbuilder, not destroyer, there he stands,  
Our nature's gentleman, our son,  
Our noblest product of our noble land!  
And shall the men who loll in gilded halls,  
The dandy of the salon or the mall,  
Or millions who are tied to stool and desk  
Be slow to grasp the hand that sows the wheat?  
Firm as the rock-base of our snowy peaks  
Shall still abide this rock-base of our breed—  
The country blood and brain and bone and brawn—  
And God forbid, for many a century yet,  
The Harvest or the Harvester should fail!



## COWSLIPS

**W**HEN Winter's flight has left a void,  
And timidly yet stray  
The feet of Spring, as fearing yet  
His presence may affray,  
There comes a day within the wood  
When softly works the sun  
And weaves a magic marge of gold  
Where'er the streamlets run.

Perhaps some fairy buccaneers  
Do launch a countless fleet  
All filled with yellow coin to drift  
And make the brookside sweet!  
And then, to make the picture whole,  
There comes a goodly maid,  
Like May herself, in pink and white,  
Half shy, half unafraid.

She leaves her shoes upon the bank—  
Her dainty hose beside—  
And like an Undine thrids the stream,  
Sweet as a forest bride.  
Her dripping fingers swiftly fill  
Her arms with gold and green—  
Her white feet flash o'er mossy stones  
Beneath the sunlight sheen.

*Cowslips*

Go seek your beauties of the town,  
Or sail across the blue,  
But let me be a woodland god  
Where I, unknown, may view  
Sweet Maureen, all of pink and white,  
Go shimmering up the stream;  
Give me the maiden and her load,  
Or, let it be—a dream.

## TO INNOCENCE IN EXILE

**A** GAIN has morning brought my radiant dream  
Of snowy forms and golden hair a gleam,  
With no defence beyond the power that lies  
In moving glances of all-conquering eyes.  
Thine is the thought, a breath of classic air,  
Nymph of the snowy limbs and tawny hair,  
I miss the inspiration of thy speech,  
The ample brow, the eye-depth out of reach.  
It were a boon to see thee, posed at ease,  
In languid leisure, underneath the trees;  
Yet what so idle as to weave word-clothes  
For a fair thought that any drapery loathes,  
To veil Diana tripping o'er the lawn,  
Or Hebe bringing dew-draughts from the dawn?

The snow is dripping idly from the eaves  
While Nature sits and muses, longs and grieves,  
And aches to doff her gown of chilly white  
And wear what Spring and Innocence invite.  
So might we drop our rags, sit in the sun,  
But for the fear that two are worse than one;  
So dread we still the primal Eden frown  
And delegate our conscience to a gown!  
I watch the poor cramped bodies shuffling by,  
That yet might straighten 'neath the critic eye  
Of the great orb that shames them from the sky.

*To Innocence in Exile*

I wonder what the numbered year that must  
Find brawn and beauty rich in mutual trust,  
When Love, from misconception's shackles free,  
Shall say to Shame, "I have no need of thee!"  
Godiva rode to take a tax away,  
But who will bring a world-joy back to stay?  
And are some eyes too vulgar, then to see?  
What awes them like the Venus Medici?  
Yet still the people shamble through the night  
And eyes are cheated of their crowning right;  
A waste of beauty grows and fades and dies,  
The human form is hid from human eyes,  
Shame o'er the crowd his witless scepter sweeps  
And Purity, dishonored, waits and weeps!

Where is true beauty, choicest of bestowing?  
See the fair body in its grandeur glowing,  
Fresh from the wave, in tremulous pink and white,  
Emblem of purity, vision of delight,  
Dancing the blood, the pulses music playing,  
Glad as a wood-god hasting to the Maying;  
Wonderbuilt-dwelling, casket of the soul,  
Stamped by its Maker, sound and pure and whole!

Methinks I see a garden, passing fair;  
Spirits of flowers float upon the air;  
High-walled and safe, fear does not enter in;  
The hang-bird builds, the busy spider spins.  
The rose her budded maidenhood is shedding,  
And to the air her trusting bosom spreading;

*To Innocence in Exile*

The lily does not wish to hide her white,  
But leans and languishes upon the night;  
The thrushes don no veils, where none are bidden;  
There's nothing base, there's nothing to be hidden;  
The violet looks sweetly in my eyes,  
Her soul, her body, baring to the skies;  
Undraped, the hollyhocks, serene and stately,  
And fox-gloves, greet me purely and sedately.  
Surely, again, here is an Eden air,  
Where, unafraid, may walk a happy pair.  
My love shall be arrayed as is the rose,  
Wearing the garb that Nature's hand bestows,  
While bird and flower, gentle day and night,  
Welcome their queen, so royally bedight,  
Like happy children, round her shyly stealing,  
Framing her beauty, hiding yet revealing;  
So shall she walk, as innocent as they,  
White as the dawn and glorious as the day!

## THE STATUE

THE friends are gone, gone with the day,  
    Out through the open door;  
The moonlight steals in silently  
    And lies upon the floor.

Upon a marble maid it falls—  
    A statue of "The Stars";  
And runs along the farther walls  
    In narrow, silver bars.

Soft, sifting through the sighing leaves,  
    Comes sound of distant song;  
Through honeysuckle flowers it weaves,  
    And brings their breath along.

At the dim border of my sight,  
    Two whispering lovers take  
The path the moon has swept with light  
    Beside the little lake.

A dreamy note drops from a bird,  
    The perfumed wind strays by;  
Look at yon star! Has it not stirred?  
    'Tis soft as maiden's eye.

## *The Statue*

Gone are the lovers out of sight,  
The wind and song are still;  
A flood of silent, sweet delight  
All things around me fill.

A spell of brightest, purest peace  
Enfolds me in its power;  
The spirit of a glad release  
Has rested on the hour.

Softly a hand is laid in mine—  
All of my rest it mars;  
I see a maid with eyes that shine  
Like skyey-trembling stars.

All of my soul she doth compel  
By her all-beauteous white;  
O'er many a hill and many a dell  
We journey through the night.

Her glancing wings are fringed with rays,  
A star shines on her breast,  
And round her sweeps a golden haze  
That lights the hilly west.

We reach a mount, without a name,  
Clad in most beauteous green;  
Among no mounts of earthly fame  
Have I such mountain seen.

## *The Statue*

Her clouds oft tarry when they faint,  
The wind his vessel fills,  
And fairies daily go to paint  
The sunset on the hills.

A dreamy, gladsome, mellow light  
Rests all the region round;  
Now first the maiden speaks to-night,  
With strange and silvery sound.

“Here in the chambers of the west  
The weary stars drop down;  
In all the world who loves them best,  
They give each year a crown.”

“Only such one must love their light  
Like to a maiden’s eyes,  
And he must listen well to hear  
Them calling from the skies.”

Forth from her bosom then she drew  
A wreath with jewels starred,  
That flashed in many a winsome hue—  
’Twas fit for king or bard.

All round the circlet swept a zone  
Of many colored rays,  
Except in front, where nothing shone—  
A dark and empty space.



## *The Statue*

Lightly the snowy maiden laughed,  
Her hand held o'er my eyes,  
And then an echo seemed to waft  
Out of the studded skies.

I heard a wondrous, high-wrought song;  
In melting notes and bars,  
The matchless music swept along—  
The chorus of the stars!

My eyes are free; the maid has gone;  
I ne'er shall see her more;  
There in the center of my crown,  
Gleameth the star she wore!

And so I journey back alone,  
Again I reach my chair;  
I reach to feel my matchless crown;  
Alas, it is not there.

Perchance I dreamed, and yet I deem  
That star still shineth clear;  
And know the maiden of my dream  
Will be forever near.

And as I pass, once in a while,  
The statue near the door,  
I fancy on her face a smile  
I had not seen before.

## THE DEACONESS

UPON the threshold of the hall  
Whence swept the cloistral aisles that led  
To either side, while overhead  
The stairway circled; fair and tall,

She paused, while to her pure white face,  
Madonna-cast, there sudden came  
A radiant light, reflected flame  
Of consecration to her race.

Not given to her the special tie  
That binds, bloodwarm and passion-blent;  
But by some subtler sacrament  
There seemed to rise before her eye

A vision of outreaching arms,  
Thin, tiny hands that groped for aid  
And would not be denied, but stayed,  
Imploring help from hideous harms.

With gentle Pentecostal flame  
These hands were burdened, smiles and tears,  
And grace and strength, while down the years  
A thousand voices called her name.

## *The Deaconess*

The years of work go by; one day  
The load is taken from her hands,  
And then, alone, released, she stands  
To watch the vision fade away.

Child faces, forms, grow dim and faint,  
And faintly sounds the chapel bell,  
And faint, the hymns she loved so well,  
While like some half-forgotten saint,

Long pictured, memory by her walks;  
White, silver-haired, her children fled,  
So Autumn o'er the garden-bed  
In revery unbidden stalks.

So lingers till the twilight falls,  
The gloaming God allots to each,  
When little hands begin to reach,  
And baby voices softly call

A welcome from the stately gate  
Of that Dream-Haven, white and grand.  
And so, at last, we understand,  
Like all who labor, love and wait.

## REFLECTIONS

**H**OW sweetly in the dreaming mere,  
Ere yet the sunset hues have died,  
The leaves and clouds are multiplied  
And heavenly vistas reappear!

And faint, how faint, the severing line—  
As if the shore would fain conceal—  
Divides the shadow from the real,  
The substance from the airy sign!

So paints the soul a sister scene  
When heart to heart all open lies,  
And all the tints of Friendship's skies  
Are doubled in that trust serene.

Nor could we draw the line to tell  
How much of all of life's delight  
Falls to our lot as native right,  
Or shines from those we love so well.

## HAND IN HAND

CLOSE, hand in hand, they went up the road  
With skipping and laughter and prattle of  
words,  
Light hearts and happiness all of their load,  
Eyes like the sky-color, voices like birds.  
And when they came back, O the tales they would  
tell—  
The lessons, the play spell, the drink at the well!

So, hand in hand, they went out on the way—  
Wafted away by the scourge in a night—  
Ahead of so many, old, sickly and gray—  
Sank 'neath the snow, side by side, out of sight,  
Just as two bluebirds, too pretty, too bold,  
Sink 'neath the March winds, so merciless-cold.

Are these but boxes of feelingless clay?  
Are they but glossy curls, evermore hid?  
Ah, here are hopes that were brighter than day—  
Music and laughter sleep under that lid!  
By the blue river that curls round the slope  
Softly a bird warbles—still there is hope.

In the long watches one mother will lie  
Listing the message they bring in the night—

*Hand in Hand*

Lessons of love from the school in the sky—  
Patience and sweetness to keep the path bright.  
'Til the day breaks when all angels shall sing—  
Then, for that mother, again 'twill be Spring.

## A KNIGHT OF THE COMMON ROAD

**B**RAVE tree that interposed  
That rugged bole of thine  
Before this Friend of mine  
When fierce the tempest closed,

And standing mute, unarmed,  
Was by the war-god cleft,  
That so there might be left  
Her lovely head unharmed:

Thine is the precious wood  
Of sacrificial things;  
Of lives that die, take wings,  
While others reap the good.

And when the flame-swept sky  
Illumined her white face,  
I fancy in that place  
Thou didst not shrink to die.

Might I, weak slave of time,  
For her or die or live  
So bravely, I would give  
More than this wreath of rhyme.

## A SHORT PRAYER

**A** LOW place in thy kingdom, Lord!  
A little plot to keep  
Where I may plow and plant awhile  
Before I go to sleep.

And then, if thou wilt bid me wake,  
Then let my garden gleam  
With flowers, the faces of my friends,  
And love beyond my dreams.

For what is all our striving here,  
Our fret for pence or place,  
Unless the heart turns toward the sun,  
Or light of some dear face?

So let my life a garden be,  
Reflecting, though so small,  
Some glimpse of that great unknown Land  
That lies around it all.

And if some wanderer seek its shade,  
Cheered by some bloom or scent,  
The gardener, loitering near, unseen,  
Will smile and be content.



## AUTUMN IN IDYLLAND

**I**N Idylland woods the walking is fine,  
The trees are a glory, the air is like wine;  
The fairies are dancing like windflowers in May,  
And there Love, if ever, will have all his say.

In Idylland woods the oak-leaves are brown,  
And there came my ladylove walking to town;  
She came like the Autumn, a vision of grace,  
And lighted the path with the look on her face.

She gave me a nod and she gave me smile,  
That charmed all the forest for many a mile,  
And Time dropped his glass, threw his scythe in the  
brook,  
And just took a furlough—to live and to look.

In Idylland woods! O there Nature weaves  
The softest of carpet from golden-brown leaves,  
The chestnuts are colored like Somebody's eyes—  
O Somebody sweet, and Somebody wise!

In Idylland forest you see what you please,  
Or goblins or squirrels, or dryads or trees;  
Or dogwood or woodbine in scarlet agleam,  
Or Romance, a-dangling a foot in the stream.

*Autumn in Idylland*

There's witchery surely in Idylland woods,  
You catch eerie laughter from leafy brown hoods,  
Dan Cupid goes hunting with arrow and bow—  
His bag is not empty, of that I well know!

Sometimes I go dreaming and thinking for days  
That Life is just walking through Idylland ways,  
We two in the forest, the trees overhead,  
And flowers and fairies just going to bed.

SONGS



## HUNTING-SONG

**O**VER the jeweled lawn—  
Follow, follow, away!  
Up to the hills of dawn—  
Follow, follow, away!  
Ah, 'tis a noble quest, my lads!  
Follow the game with zest, my lads!  
Holloa! Holloa!  
Follow! Follow!  
Up to the doors of Day.

Back to the glowing West—  
Follow, follow, away!  
Back to the gates of rest—  
Follow, follow, away!  
Back to the hearth and hall, my lads!  
This is the best of all, my lads!  
Holloa! Holloa!  
Follow! Follow!  
Follow the sunset ray.

Into the shades of Sleep—  
Follow, follow, away!  
Never a trail to keep—  
Follow, follow, away!

*Hunting Song*

Hang the horn on the wall, my lads!

Others will echo its call, my lads!

Holloa! Holloa!

Follow! Follow!

Peace to the hunter's day!

A LILT FOR A SAD HEART

**H**OW may I come to greet you  
Dear tenant of my thought?  
I send my song to meet you,  
Lest you be all distraught.

Think not, if grief is wetting  
Your lattice-bars with rain,  
That I am all forgetting  
The face behind the pane.

A full-strung heart shall send you  
Winged message o'er the miles,  
And sunny skies forefend you  
Ere you be strange to smiles.

A bird sings "Morrow, morrow."  
All in the sweetest way;  
We shall not rhyme with sorrow  
Forever and a day.

Up, hope and heart of gladness!  
Good cheer can mend the ill;  
Here's wings for laggard sadness,  
And welcome, goodly will!

*A Lilt for a Sad Heart*

My four-o'clocks are climbing  
Sheer skyward from the sod,  
And all the garden chiming  
With orisons to God.



I DREAMED THAT YOUR KISSES WERE  
ROSES

**I** DREAMED that your kisses were roses,  
I drawing them close to my breast,  
Each one like a bud that uncloses  
Because the sun loves it the best.  
And, stately as oldentime beauties,  
They courtesied at even and morn—  
As loving were all of life's duties—  
I dreamed I was glad I was born.

I dreamed that your kisses were roses,  
All life with their beauty a-blush,  
A pathway of pink-petaled posies  
Reaching on to the last earthly hush.  
And then by my low grassy pillow,  
They gathered and bent low and sighed;  
So thrilling me, through that green billow,  
I dreamed I was glad that I died.

## TWO HEARTS

**M**Y Love's true heart am I—  
My heart's true love is she.  
The world may hurry by—

'Tis all the same to me.

It shineth in the sky,  
It singeth in the sea:

My Love's true heart am I—

My heart's true Love is she.

The planets may grow old,  
The stars may lose their way;

Our hearts defy the cold,  
And love can fill the day.

It thrills the river's cry,  
It carols from the tree:

My Love's true heart am I—

My heart's true Love is she.

A million miles would make  
Me love her more and more;

A million years should break  
And find us as before.

Let time and distance try!

Love is a spirit free.

My Love's true heart am I—

My heart's true Love is she,

## COUNT ME THY SOLDIER, LOVE, TO-DAY

COUNT me thy soldier, Love, to-day,  
Give me thy spotless shield,  
And send me on thine errantry  
Forth to the fateful field.  
Give me thy banner, pure and bright,  
A sword that shall not fail,  
And lead me in thy glorious fight  
Till all thy foes shall quail.

The battleground lies far and wide,  
The hosts no man can tell;  
But here at hand I make a stand,  
One life to dearly sell.  
The laurelled wreath may not be mine,  
Nor plaudits greet my ear,  
But in this place, a little space,  
For Love I couch a spear.

The triumph over dark and wrong,  
The victory for the Light,  
Waits but each single soldier's stroke  
To put the foe to flight.  
O, do not doubt that far away  
Your comrades' cheers arise!  
Faith, and the blow that proves the faith,  
Shall win the peerless prize.

*Count Me Thy Soldier, Love, To-day*

Count me thy soldier, Love, to-day,  
And when the fight is won  
Then come and walk the battlefield  
At setting of the sun.  
And let me join the victor's shout  
Or, on my grass-green bed,  
Let me but dream I see thee smile  
Above thy soldier dead.

## BREATHE IT, EXULT IN IT

**B**REATHE it, exult in it,  
All the day long;  
Glide in it, leap in it,  
Thrill it with song.  
Boundless it clings to thee—  
Life-giver rare—  
Kind nurse that wearies not—  
Such is the Air.

Wake to it smilingly;  
Greeting thy eyes,  
Comes the day's miracle,  
Fresh with surprise.  
Nature's revealer  
At morning or night—  
Hail to the Cheerer!  
Such is the Light.

Lave in it, sport in it,  
Dream on its breast,  
Lulled by the infinite  
Sweetly to rest.  
Still it will bear thee  
To windward or lee—  
Trust to its strong arms!  
Such is the Sea.

*Breathe It, Exult In It*

Dearest, one element  
    Waiteth for thee;  
Far it surpasseth  
    Air, light and sea.  
Come and find rest in it,  
    All else above;  
Come, and be blest in it!  
    Such is my Love.

## COME TO THE WINDOWS OF YOUR EYES

COME to the windows of your eyes!  
Else all the day is drear!  
Behind each lid  
My sun is hid,  
O bid it reappear!  
Love's sun it is, that light beguiling,  
O part the clouds, and come with smiling,  
For in your eyes  
My heaven lies,  
So look, and light your lover's skies!

Come to the windows of your eyes!  
Too long you wait behind  
Those silken shades,  
My pearl of maids,  
Relenting be and kind.  
Then raise betimes each dainty curtain  
And let the morning know for certain  
The day's delight  
Now rules by right  
And every moment shall be bright.

Come to the windows of your eyes  
Else all the house is dead;  
Come forth and sing,  
The lattice fling,  
The dawn and dew are wed.

*Come to the Windows of Your Eyes*

When in those eyes your soul is glancing  
I see such roguish Cupids dancing,  
    I can but weep,  
    Nor patient keep,  
To think such lovely eyes should sleep.

Come to the windows of your eyes,  
For only thus I see  
    That spirit pure  
    That shall endure  
Throughout eternity.  
Through ages still let me be dreaming  
The glory in your eyes is gleaming,  
    And never night  
    Shall quench the light  
That keeps those heavenly windows bright.



## JUST TO BE NEAR TO YOU

**J**UST to be near to you,  
Just to be dear to you,  
Just to be sure that you welcome me there,  
Lightly caressing you,  
Folding and blessing you,  
Counting my wealth in the gold of your hair.

So, loving blindlier,  
So, living kindlier,  
We shall not fear the assault of the years,  
Sharing, my beautiful,  
Everything dutiful,  
Labor and happiness, trials and tears.

Spring flowers, vernaly,  
Sunshine diurnally,  
These shall transfigure your cottage, my queen;  
Common or holiest,  
Highest or lowliest,  
Love is the touch that ennobles the scene.

Fondly I'll sing to thee,  
Evermore cling to thee,  
Wedded like music to verses and bars;  
Though skies were never blue  
Eyes that are ever true  
Make their own heaven, for they are the stars.

## A HIGHLAND ROSE

**I** Know a door where the shingles gray  
Go lap, lap, lap, the old, old way,  
And make a dear, wide gray old frame  
For that one rose I will not name.  
Heigho! the rose by the old gray door!  
World has a million roses more!  
But only one like she gives me—  
Only rose of her heart—you see?  
Heigho—my sweet red rose!

Ah, there's my rose that woos the sun—  
You take the million, leave me one—  
Seek and follow over the sea,  
Leave me mine by the gray roof-tree.  
Heigho! the clocks go slow!  
I pick roses when sun is low.  
Other men go some other way—  
When I stop I like to stay.  
Heigho—my sweet red rose!

Red, red lips and pink-white cheeks—  
O that's my rose that laughs and speaks!  
Her deep dark eyes, her heartfelt words,  
I share alone with the humming birds.

## *A Highland Rose*

What must it seem a king to be?  
Give me a day, all young and free,  
Build my throne by the door I know  
With my own rose down-bending low.

Heigho—my sweet red rose!

You know wild roses along the wall  
Will halt and hold you in their thrall,  
And will not let you pass them by?  
Love spread that net for Rose and I.  
Heigho! my lass at the old gray door!  
I don't care to travel any more.  
I found one flower to meet my taste,  
I round the world when I round her waist.

Heigho—my sweet red rose!

Velvet feet go swift and soft,  
Brown hawk flirts with his mate aloft,  
Robin wooes in the cherry tree,  
But O, the song for her and me!  
When we meet it will be sweet—  
Strong wind searching the bending wheat—  
Roses blushing along the West  
And my red rose upon my breast.

Heigho—my sweet red rose!

## SWEETHEART

SWEETHEART!"

"Sweetheart!"

Robin, is it you a-singing,  
Or my heart that is a-ringing  
Music on that magic word,  
While the moonlit leaves are stirred?  
And the flowers, half asleep,  
Softly murmur, slyly peep:

"Sweetheart!"

"Sweetheart!"

"Sweetheart!"

"Sweetheart!"

When the song to you is climbing,  
How can I tell what is chiming?  
For my heart is like a bird,  
And the sweetest ever heard  
Is the carol in my breast,  
Echoing in fond unrest:

"Sweetheart!"

"Sweetheart!"

"Sweetheart!"

"Sweetheart!"

There's no meeting without parting,  
There's no healing without smarting,

*Sweetheart*

Kiss and close, my little rose,  
Sleep until the morning glows,  
And again a rush of wings  
Brings the bird that ever sings:  
“Sweetheart!”  
“Sweetheart!”

## CLARIBEL

**C**LARIBEL, Claribel, sing for my pleasure!  
Claribel, Claribel, dance me a measure!  
O let us wiser be,  
Do not a miser be,  
Youth journeys flyingly,  
Love lingers sighingly,  
Life is so fleet of it, Claribel, dearest;  
Gather the sweet of it, Claribel, nearest;  
Scatter thy glances  
Keener than lances  
Into my heart to stay.

Claribel, Claribel, lend me thy fingers!  
Claribel, Claribel, while the night lingers;  
Bright with the light of thee,  
Glad with the sight of thee,  
Soul of the beautiful—  
Lean to me, dutiful,  
Now is no sleeping-time, Claribel, dearest!  
Now is no weeping time, Claribel, nearest!  
Let the glad kisses  
Carry their blisses  
Into thy heart to stay.

## PROCESSIONAL

**G**OD is Love and God is Beauty,  
God is Music, Truth and Light,  
God is Hope, and Faith and Duty,  
God is Morning, Noon, and Night.

God is Joy and God is Sorrow,  
God is Pleasure, God is Pain;  
God is Yester, Day and Morrow,  
God is Loss and God is Gain.

God is Patience, Trust and Trial,  
God is Waiting, God is Zest,  
God is Promise and Denial,  
Purity and Peace and Rest.

God is Body, God is Spirit,  
God is Whole and God is Part,  
God is Word and All who hear it,  
God is Mind and Soul and Heart.

God is Star, and Mount and Valley,  
God is River, Lake and Sea,  
God is Field and crowded Alley,  
God the Lily on the Lea.

*Processional*

God is all things that He sendeth  
To the Creatures of His love;  
Sun and Storm He wisely blendeth—  
Soil below and Sky above.



## PRELUDES

**A** LITTLE time to ponder the uncertain,  
And then to wake and understand the whole;  
A little while to wait before the curtain,  
Uprising, shows the lost dream of the soul.

A little while to watch life's barren fountain,  
And then to see sweet waters flash and flow;  
A little waiting on the dreary mountain,  
And then the miracle of morning's glow.

A little time to bear the storm and thunder,  
And then to hear the melodies of peace;  
A little while to suffer, toil and wonder,  
And then the sense of ease to never cease.

A little while to say: Not mine but Thy way;  
And then to wonder we were not more wise;  
A little stumbling in the stony highway,  
And then the meadow lands of Paradise.

## VESPER HYMN

**F**ROM out the day and all its ills,  
Lord, take us to Thy rest,  
As o'er the everlasting hills  
Fair shines the glorious West.

Teach us to lay these hearts of ours  
In Thy all-holding arms,  
All trustful, as the closing flowers,  
That nightly fear no harms.

So lead Thy flock to perfect peace  
Among Thy hills of sleep,  
To slumber in that sweet release  
While Thou the watch doth keep.

Then, if Thou wilt grant us the grace  
To keep Thee in our sight,  
And fitly run the morrow's race,  
Grant us to see its light.

## THE FLAG

**T**HE flag, the flag, to heaven it climbs,  
As borne on hidden wings,  
Bearing our prayers and songs and rhymes,  
It lives and leaps and sings!  
Against the blue it loves to wave—  
The peerless banner of the brave!

Strong, young as on its natal day,  
In deathless colors drenched,  
This beacon of our land shall stay  
And ne'er a star be quenched;  
But, flaming with a people's will,  
Bid all the waves of wrong "Be Still."

Small wonder that the flag-staff thrills  
With pride to hold it high,  
And lives again as on our hills  
It reaches toward the sky—  
The nation's glorious symbol-flower,  
The flag of Freedom, Hope and Power.

And as we gaze, the souls of might  
Seem summoned from the past;  
From *Ironsides* deck, from Yorktown fight,  
They gather round the mast.  
With them we pledge their battle-toast:  
"The flag, on every sea and coast."

*The Flag*

The flag, the flag, with every sun  
It rises to the peak,  
And till that royal orb is done,  
Blooms against Heaven's cheek;  
While dew of tender tears shall wet  
That symbol till all suns are set.

A ROSARY OF SONNETS



## LOVE'S BLINDNESS

**P**OOR little Boy," the people said, "he's blind;  
He cannot see, even to choose his mates.

That girl was thrust on him by evil fates—  
She is so plain, of such a common kind.  
Yet still to common things he is inclined,

Wearing that smile they carry in such states,—  
So pitiful—the blind; neither repines nor hates,  
But, if you ask him, says, 'I do not mind.'"

Love smiles!—a smile of pity, kin to tears!

For Love, "blind Love," sees beauty all around,  
And in the darkest storm his day is bright;  
"Plain" faces grow divine, and all the years  
His path is strewn with flowers that hide the  
ground—  
Love's "blindness" so transcends all loveless sight.

## LOVE'S DISSEMBLING

**M**Y love has locked her love within her heart  
And on her tongue has set a dainty seal,  
That I may not divine what she may feel;  
But Eros, laughing boy, has pried apart  
The bars that hold him and doth slyly dart  
Out by her eyes, that still to love are leal,  
While o'er her cheeks the changeful roses steal,  
Those hues of which Love only knows the art.

Upon her lips, that proud defiance dare,  
Love lays a gleam of cherry, while her words,  
Inconsequent, he sets to music rare,  
The envy of an audience of birds.  
"I love you not," she murmurs, all a-tremble.  
Ah, lovely lips, so sweetly to dissemble!



## LOVE IMMEASURABLE

**T**HE world is large, dear. Far and far away,  
The mountains, hand in hand, link sea to sea.  
And up and down the globe's immensity  
The wind's untamed wild horses ever stray.  
Apollo's self must need a night and day—  
The chariot team that makes the shadows flee—  
To round the course that none but gods can see.  
The world is large, but let it not dismay.

For still the world is small, dear. Look above  
To where the stars in shining judgment wheel.  
They are but mirrors, flashing back my love,  
Winging through space, too little to conceal  
Or hold or hide the passion I impart  
From that unfathomed deep, a loving heart.

## THE QUEEN'S DEMESNE

**Y**OU have not said, "I love you," dearest maid,  
Yet can I doubt when I so far have gone?  
I am like one whose footsteps have been drawn  
Through some fair portal, from which he has strayed  
By winding stream and lake and leafy glade,  
While nodding flowers, and footpaths o'er the lawn,  
All virgin-sweet as springtime to a fawn,  
Have made him push still farther, unafraid.

Ah, do not say that these fair pleasure-grounds  
Have no sweet center, no white palace home,  
The lovely crown of all this rich demesne!  
Have I not traced the paths and heard the sounds  
Of music, and one voice that bids me roam  
No longer from your heart, my love, my queen!

## WHEN I SHALL FALL ASLEEP

**D**EAR Heart, when I, at last, shall fall asleep,  
I would some message might survive that  
hour,

Full of my love, that by its tender power  
It might console thee to forget to weep.  
And this I charge these chosen lines to keep,  
As Winter's message slumbers in a flower  
Till Spring shall find it, in some happy bower,  
With love-lit eyes, and pulses all a-leap.

The fullness of my joy and pride in thee,  
The tender beauty of thy spirit's touch,  
The trust, the peace, the hope thou art to me—  
O, in that hour, believe that thou art such!  
And as my living voice these words shall be—  
My darling girl, I love thee, O, so much!

## THE OLD VIOLIN

**L**ONG friendship with her chosen instrument  
Claims Harmony before she will disclose  
The finer beauty that so shyly glows—  
A glorious form in vestal raiment pent.  
Through fibres of the ancient wood are sent  
The rarest moods that music's nature knows;  
The violin her whisperings echoes  
Only when years their influence have lent.

So may we thrill with secret melodies  
That through the spirit's fiber course and fly,  
Played by an unseen hand. Ah, if we would  
List to such voices of the winds and skies,  
Then might we dare some little part to try  
In the great symphony that makes for good!

## NOT DEATH, BUT LOVE

NOT death, but love!" I take the words you  
spake

And so repeat them as a valley-side  
That hears a sweet voice calling; all my pride  
And joy start leaping, trembling for your sake,  
Hoping out of time's thicket soon to break,  
As might a deer who hears his forest-bride  
Break but a twig, and o'er the woodland wide  
Peers, scents and listens while his sinews quake.

And shall it be that, after all my pains,  
The stumbling, falling, quest of fleeing stars,  
The hunger for the love that satisfies,  
That love indeed shall wash away my stains,  
An angel woman break the prison bars,  
And she and I stand glad beneath the skies?

## ATTUNED

*(The Violin Speaks.)*

**I**N days when, long ago, I was upbound  
In a tall, swaying bole of lordly pine,  
Thou wert the zephyr that, with fingers fine,  
Thrilled all my being with a soothing sound.  
Changed to a maid, still is thy spell enwound  
Around my vibrant spirit; all of mine,  
Fiber and soul, thrill with a joy divine,  
When, at thy touch, the sweet notes float around."

"Ah, Love, sweet Love! how gently thou hast turned—  
With eyes and voice and spells of maiden power—  
These heartstrings, tuned forever and a day!  
And now the silence aches—the score is learned—  
The music longs to burst in perfect flower.  
On the tense chords, dear Love, in pity, *play!*"

## A CHRISTMAS SONNET

**A**S haply when some choral music cheers  
The weary heart, there sounds some strain  
transcending,

Subduing all the rest in its ascending,

Till, in lone beauty, to our captive ears

It flutes the golden music of the spheres,

All discord to its regnant sweetness blending,

While grief and loss and hate find speedy ending,

And Love's fair features shine above her peers;

So, even as a daybreak that surprises

The weary watchers for the glowing east,

That Song Supreme, that Charity that rises

Like perfume from that Life that was "the least,"

Shall blossom perfect when no man surmises,

And a glad world shall wonder at the feast.

“IN WATER”

*“Here lies one whose name was written in water.”*

—JOHN KEATS

NAME writ in water? Aye, and it is well!  
So, gently, on the earth descends the dew,  
As round the globe it nightly doth renew  
The fresh delight of turf and asphodel.  
So falls the rain, while over moor and fell  
New life upsprings; and lastly, in the blue  
Wide waste that binds the world, we view  
Waves that “eternal whispers” of you tell.

Fall ever, gentle dew of Poesy,  
Soft, grateful, on each world-a-weary heart.  
Rain on the lowly grave in Italy  
Till, open-eyed, the sentry violets start!  
And as the sea be the green memory  
Of the young bard, immortal in his Art!



## THE ROOTS OF THINGS

**T**HE roots, like miners, underneath the ground  
Work out their lives in galleries dim and  
blind,

Hurry aloft the treasure that they find,  
That boughs with gem-like blossoms may be crowned.  
Bird courtiers thrill the boughs with merry sound,  
But down below, to their dark task resigned,  
The roots dream not what riches they have mined,  
Happy to toil that beauty may abound.

Contented in the good that others reap,  
But shareless in the crowning of their toil,  
The cheery delvers of the undersoil  
Thus softly sing and work while others sleep.  
God wot that there are souls who work like these—  
The brothers to the miners of the trees.

## “ UP FROM SLAVERY ”

*(The Life of Booker T. Washington.)*

**W**E see a man who wakes in some deep well.  
Dark, damp, and close, the narrow cell  
appalls;

The dull earth brings no answer to his calls;  
Nor comes remembrance how or when he fell.  
Yet in his breast Hope strikes her sudden bell!  
Feet, hands, seek out each crevice in the walls;  
Back braced, nerves strung, unheeding fears or falls,  
He hears that light that glimmers down his cell.

How grew this man out of a cabin's grime?  
What wonder that his simple story fires  
Wide admiration for his strenuous fight?  
And he shall cheer a host of men who climb  
Out of the depth and doom of low desires  
Into the freedom of the upper light.

## FORBEARANCE

**Y**ES, bear for others, check the chiding word,  
However richly is deserved the blow!  
Learn how divine it is to lock below  
The imps of war, that, once their ire is stirred,  
May rend all peace to fragments. Therefore gird  
Thy armor of repression tighter, speak so slow  
Thy foes shall feel their admiration grow,  
And stifle anger, howsoe'er incurred!

So do all kindly feelings feed the heart,  
And in the dark, as by a secret spring,  
Nourish the fruitage of a brighter hour.  
Forbear! It is an echo and a part  
Of God's own goodness to each puny thing—  
Sparing our lives, and bird and beast and flower.

## A WORD BEFORE THE CURTAIN

**W**E dance before the curtain. What is spread  
Behind—good people—none of us may  
know;

Nor when the play was staged, how long ago;  
Nor when the veil will lift. Forgotten, dead,  
Is all the action of the play now sped:

We simply fill the moment; all we know  
Is we are called one instant to this glow  
Of light, warm hearts, and song too quickly sped.

We sing before the curtain, while the hand  
Of the great Master sets the coming scene,  
And all our little part is quickly flown,  
As, eye to eye, one instant we may stand—  
Speak—pass—and o'er the lights that intervene,  
Bow, thankful, if a rose to us is thrown.

## McKINLEY

**G**ENTLE the tension of a master hand!  
The State had learned to love his mild  
control,

There was a sympathy of soul to soul  
That eased the reins and softened the command.  
Mark for the meanest missile in the land,  
He bared his breast and sought one simple goal—  
Not wealth, nor pomp—but that high self-control  
That little souls can never understand.

So he went forth, a warrior young and brave,  
So he came back, a knight upon his shield.  
A knightlier record, no, we could not crave—  
Crowned with that trust that naught could make  
him yield.  
So, o'er the hills, and linking sea to sea,  
Breathes still his whisper: "Nearer, God, to Thee."

## THE PLAYROOM

**T**HE children's room! all open to the light,  
And dedicate to happy girls and boys!  
Here none may chide at scattered books and toys,  
But curly crowns rule all by royal right.  
The eyes of love rest kindly on the sight  
Of scrawls and breakage, and the revel's noise  
Is welcome to the ears where childhood joys  
Echo, receding, to the hours of night.

Dear God! Thou lookest on our little world  
From where thy stars roll, free from human taint,  
Above our playroom; and Thou smilest still  
While on thy forms, where beauty lies impearled,  
We try our childish arts, thy roses paint,  
And build and carve and tunnel as we will.

IN LOVE'S SERVICE





## ON THE ROAD

A MAID and I met on the road—  
Each of us carried a grievous load—  
I looked at her, she looked at me—  
Then I bespoke her civilly:

“ Dear Miss, the way is long and steep,  
There’s many a mile before we sleep.  
Come bind our burdens together, pray!  
We’ll fare together along the way.”

We put in sorrow and care and pain,  
We put in changes and loss and gain,  
We put in tear and groan and sigh,  
With song and laughter to light the eye.

And aye we tried it, and aye it seemed  
To be full heavier than we dreamed,  
Until I spoke: “ It might be well  
To put in love ”—then luck befell!

We seized the staff between us two,  
We climbed the hills with courage new,  
We raced along with a laugh and song,  
And smiled at grief and frightened wrong.

*On the Road*

At eve we found a gentle host,  
He gave us the best his house could boast;  
Then, side by side—forgot all weather—  
We found good rest who fared together.

## THE FRUIT BLOSSOMS

**W**HEN May goes tip-toe o'er the land,  
Strewing her flowers with either hand,  
I love to watch the colors grow  
Upon the fruit trees all arow  
Where peach and pear and cherry vie  
With pink and white against the sky.  
As their sweet branches interlace  
They seem like blushes on the face  
Of dainty Nature, as she feels  
The old delight that gently steals  
Through root and branch, through sun and rain,  
Bidding the world be young again.

But dearer yet I love to trace  
The floral garden in a face,  
And see how on that lovely field  
The pink and white do wax and yield;  
How bursts the bloom upon a cheek  
When love some word doth softly speak,  
And seems to spread through airy tents  
The sweet perfume of innocence.  
Then take the flowers, and wear the best  
Above thy snowy, swelling breast,  
And on thy cheek the silent speech  
Of cherry white and rosy peach.

*The Fruit Blossoms*

Nor will we fear to sing in rhyme  
The coming of the after-time,  
When drifting on the wooing breeze  
The petals softly leave the trees,  
And when the pink that lives to speak  
The lore of love shall leave the cheek.  
For gently then shall swell and grow  
The fruit where now the flowers blow,  
Again the color and the scent  
With royal nectar richly blent;  
So to the tender, loyal face  
Time can but add a richer grace,  
And in the golden autumn hours  
The fruit shall yet outshine the flowers.

## HER CHIN

**M**Y love is full of loveliness,  
A poem of delight;  
I rave about her form and face,  
Her eyes, so soft and bright.  
The witchery of her glossy hair  
A hermit's heart might win,  
Yet now I'll sing alone about  
The beauty of her chin.

That sculptured, snowy, fruity chin!  
It drives me to despair  
To picture such a dream of grace  
As proudly parts the air,  
No matter how she holds her head—  
Up, down, or on her arm,  
Poised, to one side—that little chin  
Is still her final charm.

How sweet its swelling lines converge  
To one white single hill,  
The last redoubt of Beauty's fort,  
So statue-like and still.  
It seems indeed her sure defense;  
Wherever she may stray,  
That dauntless chin has subtle power  
All harm to drive away.

## *Her Chin*

O why should naughty Cupid put  
Such thoughts within my head?  
For I am wondering how our chins  
Would match—if we were wed.  
For mine is cleft and rather broad,  
Hers, single, short and strong;  
I do believe that they would mate  
Like music unto song!

Here's luck then to the sweetest chin  
That ever graced a girl!  
Her chin—the only cup I drink  
That sets my head awirl!  
The apples of Hesperides  
The prize could never win  
If they should dare a contest with  
That peachy, perfect chin.

## MY PSYCHE

**M**Y Psyche need not seek some glade  
Where Nature's mirror vies with art,  
For she can always see displayed  
Her fair reflection in my heart.

My Psyche doth not need to light  
Her lamp to see Love's very face,  
When all can steal such radiance bright  
From her to rival Cupid's grace.

My Psyche doth not need to fear  
The jealousy of gods or men,  
For her sweet mien, so kind, so dear,  
Can charm all eyes within her ken.

My Psyche doth not need her wings  
To seek afar some shining god;  
Contented as a bird, she sings  
In our own nest, nor flies abroad.

That Love with Psyche should be paired—  
That each from each could never part—  
I wonder not, for I have shared  
With Love and Psyche all my heart,

## THE ANSWER

**I** BRING my flower of love and plant it here,  
Only a rose, red as my eager heart;  
Thou must not look, my love, nor see nor hear,  
And yet thou knowest all by love's own art.

Full clumsily I plant the tender thing,  
So live, so sweet, so blood-red in its bloom.  
I plant it, love, to grace a wedding ring,  
Or else to drape Love's solitary tomb.

Into the empty vessel thou hast set  
I press it. O, to press your lips and hair!  
Its roots with true-love tears must now be wet,  
Its tendance now must be thy faithful care.

As Isabella watched the basil grow,  
So thou must watch, it rests alone with thee.  
O fairest one! thy lover boweth low,  
His heart, his soul, his strength are thine in fee.

Farewell, dear one, the little plant is faint.  
O quick with water and thy defter hands!  
Yet look not at me, love might suffer taint,  
Though I be parching as mid-desert sands.



## *The Answer*

She comes! she flies! with passion-winged feet,  
Love's tears and kisses shedding on the flower;  
Aye, it shall live, such is her answer sweet.

Dear rose! bloom quick, to grace our wedding  
bower!

(The Japanese lover secretly brings a plant and places it in an empty jar set by his lady's door. If she cares for it and makes it live, he is accepted; if she neglects it, his suit is in vain.)

## MY LADY DAINTYNESS

I HAVE a Lady Daintyness—  
The dawn is in her eyes.  
She whispers secrets to the rose,  
Which smiles, all sister-wise.  
So spirit-like she thrids the world,  
The winds are not so fleet,  
Yet I will spend my life to trace  
The light print of her feet.

I have a Lady Winsomeness;  
Ah, what a voice is hers!  
It trickles through my inmost heart  
Like rain among the furze.  
So arch her glance, so gay her laugh,  
Her motion like the May,  
The very rustle of her skirts  
Has witched my heart away.

I have a Lady Kindlyness,  
She bends to stricken things  
And heals them with a tender touch—  
The waft of pitying wings.  
It is her joy to spend the days  
In lowly paths of ruth,  
To burn beside a sufferer's bed  
Her lamps of cheer and youth.

*My Lady Daintyness*

I have a Lady Loveliness.

But here my tongue must fail!

In her dear looks all shy things live

That peep through brake or pale.

A sanctuary for a King,

When every tendril slips,

I have a forest in her hair,

A palace in her lips.

I know a Lady Pityless.

Alack, alack, the word!

She coldly turns away from me

To stroke a dog or bird.

Does she not see outside her heart

A world of dark, and rain;

Nor list when poor, light-blinded things

Dash, fluttering, at the pane.

Ah, Daintyness! Ah, Winsomeness!

Ah, Loveliness! dear heart!

And Kindlyness—the four are one—

Each of my Love a part.

Then rede me how so sweet a soul

May so compacted be,

And yet disdain this duteous slave

One smile alone might free!

## A FIRESIDE DIVINITY

**I** WOULD sing of a model housekeeper,  
Just to hint of her wonderful ways.  
She is fit for a prince or a reaper,  
Yet I doubt if she pardons my praise.

Not alone that her linens are fragrant,  
That her viands are dainty and fine,  
That a fly in her house is a vagrant,  
That her brasses so spotlessly shine.

Not alone that her house is a pleasance  
Where the river of time sweetly flows,  
While you feel in the light of her presence  
The breath and caress of a rose.

But my lady has got her some pinions,  
She has polished the face of the sun,  
She impresses the stars for her minions  
And the clouds at her beckoning run!

She has painted the fields over newly,  
Touched the hills to a lovelier hue,  
Made the dewdrop to sparkle more truly,  
And the sky wear a lovelier blue.

## *A Fireside Divinity*

With the robin and blue-bird conspiring,  
She has bribed them to carol her name  
Till I care for their mellow-sweet quiring  
Far more than the trumpets of fame.

Or perhaps with some ballad communing,  
She will bring me the voice of the breeze,  
And the instrument never needs tuning  
With her touch on the ivory keys.

But the strangest of all of her revels  
Is to get her a key, 'by some art,  
And to sweep all the dust and blue-devils  
From the cobwebby rooms of my heart.

What a marvel my mistress is surely!  
And her secret she will not confess—  
How she does all so sweetly and purely—  
Is there no one will help me to guess?

## WITH WAYSIDE MUSIC

**F**AIR comrade, take these woven strains,  
The first glad matins of my muse,  
When life was young and love's dear pains  
Could make the dullest heart enthuse.

However clouded since my skies;  
Believe me when I simply say:  
The frank sweet radiance of your eyes  
Can bring again my dreams of May;

Bring me again that first delight  
In something finer than my dream;  
A form so fair, a step so light,  
A voice like music of the stream.

And, lovelier than the winsome face,  
I know a heart most kind and true.  
Ah, who shall have the knightly grace  
To win that heart away from you?

## A VALENTINE

**W**HEN mid-February comes,  
Then the farmers do their sums;  
In midwinter then they say:  
“Half your wood and half your hay.”  
But for Love there is no fear,  
Whatsoever time of year,  
Cold and storm he can defy,  
For his bins are heaping high.  
Cupid thus his revels keeps  
While the snowdrifts lie in heaps,  
Drinks the frosty air like wine  
With “A health, Saint Valentine.”

Maiden, with the face demure,  
Woman-wistful, sweet and pure,  
Spring will be with us ere long,  
Take a brief midwinter song.  
In it fancy you have heard  
Echo of the first blue-bird,  
Fancy the first violet sips  
Added sweetness from your lips,  
And the apple-blossoms hush  
While they watch your cheeks blush.  
Happy little song of mine  
If it be your Valentine.

*A Valentine*

So let good old Winter roar!  
Passing by each other's door,  
We shall see, full to the brim,  
'Neath a Tam O'Shanter rim,  
Wells of love that cannot wane,  
Proof to cold and ill and pain,  
And a merry smile would melt  
Icebergs in the Arctic belt.  
Thus the summer longings start  
In the sun-room of the heart,  
And a love like yours and mine  
Proves the dearest Valentine.



## BENEDICITE

**G**OD bless Clarise, where'er she stray,  
In crowded street or wooded way.  
May sense of safety wrap her round  
And courtly come each sight and sound,  
While, like a bird hid in the trees,  
I softly sing: *God bless Clarise.*

God bless Clarise! the thought will rise  
As flights of birds to morning skies,  
Or, as a fountain in the grass  
Plays on and on while seasons pass,  
All careless no one hears or sees—  
So doth my song—*God bless Clarise.*

God bless Clarise, for she has made  
A sunshine in a life of shade,  
And makes a somber soul rejoice  
By tender tones, hid in her voice,  
That seem to mould me as they please  
The while I pray: *God bless Clarise.*

God 'bless Clarise! It may not be  
That He will bless her more for me,  
Yet let my simple prayer ascend  
And with His mighty purpose blend;

*Benedicite*

At least it gives the heart surcease  
To say the words: *God bless Clarise.*

God bless Clarise. What if a tear,  
Drops unashamed to call her dear?  
The vision may depart or stay,  
December keeps his dream of May,  
And into flowerlike forms will freeze  
His latest breath—*God bless Clarise!*

MY LOVE IS ALL AROUND THEE

**M**Y love is all around thee,  
Though spoken be no vow;  
Its soft embrace hath bound thee,  
Thou canst not 'scape it now.

The air that round thee presses,  
In atoms that immure,  
Are but my close caresses  
That hold thee fast and sure.

While round thy moulded beauty  
The floods of sunlight flow,  
They shall discharge in duty  
The debt my heart doth owe.

The light of Eve's dear planet  
Shall throw to thee its lance;  
Yet there, if thou wilt scan it,  
Is but my loving glance.

And flowers, with sweet surprises,  
Shall blush thy happy shame  
When with their perfume rises  
Remembrance of my name.

*My Love is All Around Thee*

Each breath thy bosom heavest  
But echoes sighs of mine,  
No web thy finger weavest  
But I have spun the line.

O, welcome their sweet urging  
Star-light and vocal tree!  
As I, in all things merging,  
Shall minister to thee.

My love is all around thee,  
Though silent be my vow,  
Its soft embrace hath bound thee,  
Thou canst not 'scape it now.

## THE PHOTOGRAPH THAT FAILED

**T**HE laces by the window  
Were jealous of the light;  
The lens was struck with blindness  
By linens pure and white.

The plate, to light so tender,  
Forgot to keep a line  
Of maidenhood's sweet refuge,  
Her ways and moods divine.

Or was it I who blundered;  
Who, in nymph-haunted ways,  
Found my enchanted island,  
And dreamed away the days?

And so, dear maid, I bring you  
No product of my art;  
The room is pictured, certes,  
But merely in a heart.

So was I doomed to failure,  
Nor could I hope for less,  
Where every wall reflected  
The soul of dainty-ness.

*The Photograph That Failed*

And if I fail so wholly,  
Your room to copy fair,  
How shall I dare to venture  
In that diviner air

Where thoughts indeed are graven  
Upon the sacred walls,  
And hopes and loves embellish  
The heart's dear-remembered halls?

Yet, nathless, there has fallen,  
By will of kindly fates,  
To this poor artist kneeling  
Outside your palace gates,

Some glimpse of inner glories  
To cheer his eager brain,  
Some gleam of light to tell him  
He worships not in vain.

For I have basked one moment,  
Which I cannot portray,  
In rays of one heart's beauty  
That cheers me all the way,

Nor know I sweeter heaven  
Than that one haunted floor,  
Nor ask for fairer angel  
To ope for me the door.

OCCASIONAL POEMS





## THE LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM IN THE HILLS

**S**HE has no introduction to Fame,  
And plain English is all she can speak;  
She has no Ph.D. to her name,  
And her wages are seven a week.  
But she rises at five in the Spring,  
And at six when the white blizzard shrills,  
And she walks her two miles with a swing—  
This little schoolma'am in the hills.

It's a plain little college she runs,  
One room and a close little hall—  
That smells of farm cookies and buns—  
A finger-print frieze on the wall.  
“Pure Colonial,” all the design,  
From the rafters of oak to the sills,  
And she looks out through panes seven by nine—  
This little schoolma'am in the hills.

In a monarchy all of her own,  
She's a model for many a queen;  
She must govern her world all alone,  
For no other may touch her demesne.  
The hard-headed boys she must win  
And be patient with passions and ills,

*The Little Schoolma'am in the Hills*

And a silence must weave out of din—  
This little schoolma'am in the hills.

And it's air for the hot little lungs,  
And it's heat for the cold little feet,  
And it's soap for the bad little tongues,  
And more, if the hands are kept neat.  
Or it's "Patsy Burke threw a big rock,"  
Or "Mamie is sick with the chills,"  
But nothing must worry or shock  
The little schoolma'am in the hills.

If the tempest or blizzard's afoot,  
She must hurry each kid to his home;  
If the torrents and freshets uproot,  
She must be as a rock in the foam.  
If the thunderstorm overhead wings  
And the air with the cannonade thrills,  
You will find the chicks under the wings  
Of the little schoolma'am in the hills.

She can use moral suasion, when best,  
And she also can wield the big stick.  
When a tramp thinks to act like a guest  
She can show him the door pretty quick.  
She can play, and can sing and recite;  
She can outrun the school if she wills,  
And can make a church social go right—  
This little schoolma'am in the hills.

*The Little Schoolma'am in the Hills*

For she starts in the day with a smile,  
And a snap in her eyes that boys like;  
They may be overflowing with guile,  
But for her they are willing to hike.  
She can read the Good Book, or can pray  
Like their mothers, without any frills,  
And so they all hope she will stay—  
Their little schoolma'am in the hills.

Yes, the little old schoolhouse is red—  
Like the cheeks of its whole merry crew;  
And the schoolma'am—be sure she is white—  
And the eyes of the children are blue;  
Like the tints of the blessed old rag  
That, daily, the mountain breeze fills,  
And no one dare pull down the flag  
Of the little schoolma'am in the hills.

So give me a pass to your ears,  
Chief rulers and scribes of the land,  
I don't ask to move you to tears,  
But I hope you will all understand.  
Give this lady full swing in her way,  
And tell her to send you the bills!  
She is moulding the nation to-day—  
This little schoolma'am in the hills.

## A CENTURY SONG FOR NEW CANAAN

*Read at its Centennial Celebration.*

(FOR DAYS OF "AULD LANG SYNE")

**B**EGRIT with brooks whose music breathes  
The ancient, dreamy spell  
Of golden days, when simple folks  
Deemed simple living well,  
Our fair old town has paused a while  
To count her treasure-trove,  
Long-cherished, since she sprang, full-born,  
A goddess-child of Jove.

And on these hills, whose beauty weds  
The charm of sky and sea,  
While June spreads out her rippling tide  
Of virgin greenery,  
How shall we judge of what is new  
Or, rightly, what is old?  
No date is printed on the rose  
Or daisy-disk of gold.

Again the locust weights the air  
With heaven-distilled perfume,  
And, glowing o'er New Canaan's hills,  
The summer stars illumine.

## *A Century Song for New Canaan*

The master-touched world-scenery,  
Sets out the stage to-day,  
As when our saintly sires did deem  
Such colors vain display.

These maiden cheeks that with the rose  
Form blushing sisterhood—  
Did they not glow, an age ago,  
Neath bonnet, hat, or snood?  
Dear grandmammias, well wimpled, too,  
In bodice chaste and neat,  
They bloomed here then, the same hill-flowers  
As those we know so sweet.

And, loitering on the village green,  
In stock and silken hose,  
So garden-like his waistcoat,  
And Apollo-like in pose,  
The "granther" of our present "blood"  
Would worship as divine  
Some dainty dread storm-centre  
In a whirl of crinoline.

So, with tradition's magic wand,  
We weave once more the spell  
Of wondrous samplers, hand-knit hose,  
The mothers wrought so well;  
The flint and steel, the tallow dips,  
Post-chaise and pillioned ease—  
If ease it were—who clung not tight  
Got brushed off by the trees!

*A Century Song for New Canaan*

So bring the ancient relics out,  
And e'en the ancient beau,  
And place him by the white-haired belle  
Of decades long ago.  
For dust lies on the harpsichord,  
The spinet's soul is mute.  
And lips that once have kissed her cheek  
Shall kiss no more the flute.

What if those days shall these dispraise—  
Perhaps to heaven nigher—  
The small-paned, shingled meeting-house,  
The curfew and the crier?  
They had their own stern virtues then—  
Howbeit little rhymed—  
Believed in God and Indians,  
And kept their flint-locks primed.

Peace keeps her happy vigils now,  
From off the distant Sound,  
No lights of hostile navies gleam  
To vex this sacred ground.  
The bondman's chains have been unloosed,  
The islands of the sea  
Have learned to sing in unison  
The song of Liberty.

To-day, where'er "God's acre" sweeps  
In billowy mounds of green,  
Whereon the rude and mossy stones  
The names are dimly seen,

*A Century Song for New Canaan*

Heroes of axe and rifle sleep  
All soundly, side by side,  
With heroines of wheel and loom,  
Who, toiling, lived and died.

A century hence the rose will bloom,  
And with the daisy vie  
To rival fair New Canaan cheeks,  
Where blushes wax and die;  
And all our times be dim and quaint—  
“The queer, old long ago”  
Of travel in electric cars—  
An age so odd and slow!

And shall a stronger breed of men  
Come from the common mould?  
Shall life be fuller, love more sweet—  
Proof against greed or gold?  
Hope, smiling, gilds each humble task,  
And whispers to each breast  
To plow and sow as best we know,  
And God will do the rest.

## TO ENGLAND

(1898)

**B**ROTHERS, who face with us the boisterous  
brine,  
That, through the storied immemorial years,  
With buffets of sharp salt and mighty surge,  
Has taught our fathers courage, patience, faith—  
Bear with us yet if in these strenuous days,  
Full of reverberations, we seem deaf,  
Or hardly mindful, to the kindly words  
Breathed under the Atlantic for our cheer.  
Ah yes, we hear them, and they nerve anew  
The grip upon the sabre and the hands  
That keep the grim-lipped guns in ready leash!  
From salutations such there comes a thrill  
Filling tense veins with ancient battle-joy  
That threads a lineage bright with daring deeds.

The sons of men who heard Will Shakespeare speak,  
Whose fathers were with yours at Stamford Bridge,  
When Saxon Harold made the Derwent red,  
But not with blush for England: we who trace  
From those old sea-kings whose swift galleys made  
King Philip's proud "invincibles" a myth;  
We, mindful how our pulses take their rhythm



## *To England*

From that unending drum-beat that has rolled  
Round Trafalgar, Sebastopol, Lucknow,  
And kindred monuments to England's arms,  
That make familiar all the Old-World map—  
We thank you for your thought of us to-day.

Nor were we e'er unmindful of your stress.  
We joy with you when to your destiny  
Uprising, equal, you dispense new rights—  
New rights as old as Freedom's honored seat  
In human hearts. We offer stintless praise  
For your great giant souls like him just dead,  
Who gave fair Ireland bigger chance to breathe,  
Shorn of old bondage; watch with glistening eyes  
Your ancient cross spread freedom in the East  
And keep God's harbors open to all sails  
That carry knowledge, justice, order, peace.  
If Afghan bullets stain a Highland plaid,  
If the grim crescent drips with Saxon blood  
Shed to defend a bruised and trodden race,  
Know we shall feel the hurt as quick as you!

Now, in this solemn task, we only blush  
Because we were too patient. Eager never  
To hold red hands up for the world to see,  
We writhed in silence at a mighty wrong.  
But, well-determined on this great redress,  
We reckon at nothing if our aims are right.  
You, too, who give your plaudits, would esteem  
Us less if we did not at once declare,

## *To England*

(Had we no war-base but our consciences)  
That we will wipe the wrong and wronger out  
Forever from this fair, free Western world.  
Take, then, the simple phrase that suits the times.  
The hand-grasp and the meeting of the eye  
Shall write our pact in stronger bonds than ink,  
And, sealed by faith in which our shoulders touch,  
Shall keep the old world rolling up the hill  
To that high plane on which good hearts are set,  
When your brave cross and our fair sister stars  
Shall jointly guard a universal peace,  
And equal right and opportunity  
Shall be the glory of the human race.

## NEMESIS

### THE "MAINE"

SHE glided on her peaceful quest,  
What though her starry flag might bear  
To some a silent, stern behest,  
To some a breath of freedom's air;  
Then, in her berth, a stately guest,  
Slept, trustful, in that alien lair.

But what are bulkheads, fashioned well,  
And what are sides and decks of steel,  
Or cunning dialhands to tell,  
Through night and day, of woe or weal,  
When human hearts can league with hell  
And sow volcanoes 'neath a keel?

So by a deed whose blackness made  
The night it chose seem white beside,  
Struck in the dark by coward blade,  
The valiant *Maine* leapt once and died—  
A name to make a throne afraid,  
A wreck that moaned beneath the tide!

*Nemesis*

THE " OREGON "

But o'er the land the tidings swept,  
And death-cries quivered through the wire,  
Down in the hold the engines leapt,  
The coal sprang eager to the fire,  
And never slacked, and never slept  
The sister warship's grim desire!

With patient throbs that never wane  
A continent's long coast is won;  
That proof of more than royal reign  
Shall teach the lesson to the Don  
That he who strikes a blow at *Maine*  
Shall reckon yet with *Oregon!*

Ah! when her helm goes hard a-port,  
And all her broadside speaks in fire,  
And from the proudly floating fort  
The cheers ring out with brave desire,  
That sound shall shake a trembling court,  
And thrill Havana's sunken pyre!

## THE ROUGH RIDER

UNPRETENDINGLY he dropped the brand-  
ing-iron upon the plain,  
Threw the lariat to his partner, waved the eastward-  
glimmering train;  
Bade adieu to dog and bronco, friends that drew a  
'brace of tears;  
Wondered if he'd round-up Spaniards handy as he  
corralled steers.  
Then he sweated in the transport, broiled upon the  
torrid sand,  
Fingering the Krag-Jorg lever 'til 'twas ready to his  
hand;  
Got his clothes to setting on him, got just chummy  
with the sun—  
Cooked immune in showers that sizzled when they pat-  
tered on his gun.  
Then he took the trail, all quiet, stepping in his com-  
rade's tracks;  
Stripping slowly for the tussle, dropping extra togs  
and packs;  
Gripping to the stock and barrel, ready for a Dago rise,  
Humming softly little songs of Sunday-school and  
Paradise.  
He'd a wad of antiseptic ready for the Spanish hits,  
He'd a cracker for his supper, if it wasn't knocked to  
bits;

## *The Rough Rider*

With the cactus in his leggin's he went pricking o'er  
the plain,  
And the sound of "Cuba Libre" grew to seem a trifle  
vain.

Lying in the pelt of Mausers, waiting for the word  
to go,  
Thinking that the old camp-meeting opened up a  
trifle slow;  
Then, a jaunty laugh illuming canyons of his grimy  
face,  
Through the jungle slipping, jumping, setting Death  
a rattling pace!  
Punching bullets in the bushes, catching all that came  
his way,  
Taking them as invitations from the Dons to come  
and stay;  
Teaching cruel, haughty Spaniards points about a  
better breed,  
Till he rested on their ramparts, gone plum hungry  
for a feed.

Back, to hear a Nation's welcome roar along a  
crowded street;  
Back, so soon to be upswallowed in the tramp of mil-  
lion feet;  
Back to canyon and arroyo, back to maverick and  
ranch—  
Living just to keep a steer from crossing Little Coyote  
Branch!

## *The Rough Rider*

Not the less the picture brightens on the Nation's  
ample page,  
History bending fondly o'er the hero-figure of the  
age,  
Roosevelt, and his gallant Riders, with their polka-dot  
guidon,  
Crashing, slipping, leaping, cheering, up the tangle  
of San Juan!  
To the cowboy in his saddle, herding by the prairie  
stream,  
Even now it seems half real, half an unremembered  
dream,  
Not to Fame! who, proudly musing on that glorious  
charge and rout,  
Guards San Juan, while weak oblivion tries in vain  
to wipe it out.

## THE HOME-COMING

**T**HEY ride the racing train,  
The cinders fleck the pane,  
The cars rock to and fro,  
The steel track seems to flow,  
Yet, O, how slow! how slow  
They come who come toward Home!  
Home, boys, yes, coming Home—  
You come toward Home!

A roar—a rush—they're here!  
O give them cheer on cheer!  
The hoarded tears let flow,  
Laugh, cry, O let them know  
This is no common show  
That bids them welcome Home—  
Home, boys, yes, welcome Home!  
We have you Home.

Back now from faces strange!  
Back from your farthest range,  
Where South-land breezes tried  
To coax you from our side!  
But 'twill not be denied—  
The cord that draws you Home.  
It will not let you roam  
From Home, from Home.



## *The Home-Coming*

The strong, bronze faces pass—  
Gleam in the serried mass—  
That might have silent laid  
Deep in some Southern glade;  
But now—you smile, fair maid!  
The one you love is Home,  
Home, for your kisses, Home!  
Your lad is Home.

“ Home,” “ Home ”—the great bells ring!  
“ Home,” “ Home ” the pulses sing!  
The steeples rock and sway,  
The trumpets blare and bray,  
All hearts are yours the day  
When you, at last, come Home—  
Come back to love and Home—  
To love and Home!

When hands no more can fight,  
Then camp—the one last night.  
From shape and shadow harms,  
From war and black alarms,  
To Peace and her white arms—  
O call the soldiers Home—  
The bugle-call for Home—  
The call for Home.

## ABSOLUTION

*"Greater love hath no man than this."*

**I**T'S a sleeping girl in a blazing room,  
And a blue-coat lad below.  
But they cry: "You'll never do it, Mike!"  
And he—"I'll try, you know."  
And the building swayed in the smoke and glare,  
And the ward was all aglow.

The ladder broke when it struck the wall,  
But Mike Kilrain hung there;  
And he came again with the clinging child,  
And smothered her blazing hair;  
The saved and savior, framed in flame,  
While a glad cry rent the air.

And should we live for a hundred years,  
There's some would see them still—  
The big-heart boy and the white-faced lass  
As they clung there on the sill;  
But the windows vomit hell beneath  
And it makes the heart-blood chill.

"Hold quick the net; now boys, hold fast,  
Hold fast for Mike Kilrain!"

## *Absolution*

“ Jump, Mike!” He throws the girl instead.

She comes like a drop of grain.

“ Hold high and fast! God bless ye, girl!”

“ Now boys, hold fast again!”

“ Too late! Too late! Stand back for life!

Here’s Mike, and the wall on top.”

They tore his body from red-hot bricks

Like tigers that would not stop;

But the pride of No. 6 lay still.

Dear boy, ’twas his last drop.

You’re late, good Father, the lad is dead,—

We know you don’t drive slow—

But I’m bold to say there’s One above

Who’ll sponge his slate like snow,

And he’s got his absolution now

Where the brave, good firemen go.

## A BALLAD OF BERRIES

A BALLAD of berries,  
Fresh gathered by peris,  
By peris or fairies,  
Whose beauty so rare is,  
A fragrance still lingers  
From delicate fingers  
That plucked them  
And tucked them  
Beneath the green cover  
Of leaves that would hover  
Them safe from all vision  
As food too elysian  
To pass the lip portals  
Of poor common mortals!

Yet now there discloses  
These edible roses,  
These great ruby kisses  
As if all the blisses  
Of June and her lavish  
Sun-riches would ravish  
Our senses to fancy  
'Twere all necromancy.

Then thanks for each berry  
So lovely, so very

*A Ballad of Berries*

Delightfully useful,  
Enticingly juiceful,  
So fine a variety  
It were but a piety  
If such *avis rara*  
Were christened la Clara  
To honor the maiden  
Who came with them laden.  
And thanks for the beauty  
Of thought made a duty  
To gather such sweetness  
And give it completeness  
By bounty so spacious,  
By kindness so gracious!

## THE MILLION-JEWELED WATCH

**F**ROM far above I seem to hear the beat of  
rhythmic powers—

The million-jeweled watch that marks the universal  
hours—

While like the wistful laddie who sits upon my knee,  
I marvel at the Movement and wonder at the Key.

Shall wheel in wheel forever glide and never tire or  
stop,

And shall the whole on viewless cord be hung and  
never drop?

And then my awe grows greater, as it must surely be,  
For One who is the Maker, the Hand that holds the  
Key.

The stars, the stars, the changeless ones, the verities  
of space!

In dazzling dance they meet and part and change and  
interlace!

To me they are but points of light and I a speck of  
dust,

Yet will I ride those shafts of light on pinions of my  
trust.

I watch the course of planets on their year-long courses  
hurled,

And mark the dainty curving of the orbit of a world.

## *The Million-Jeweled Watch*

A comet lights its torch and speeds upon its century-  
race,  
Enlarging lines of light upon the map of endless  
space,  
A never-wearied courier he, eluding as he runs  
The fateful dead-world derelicts or mountain-flaming  
suns.

Now flies a shouldering orb of groaning, crashing,  
thundering mass,  
And next a Titan-born tornado whirls its deadly gas,  
Or here some life-illumined globe, safe bearing in its  
arms  
The muffled hum of cities and the murmur of the  
farms.

And ever on the plains of space the rays of light do  
ride  
To charge the hosts of darkness that besiege on every  
side;  
On, on, each white-horse rider with pennoned lance  
of light,  
While, banded deep, the black knights cheer the sable  
steeds of night.

For now a world is smothered and the hosts of dark-  
ness laugh,  
The rays are blown and scattered as a breath will  
fright the chaff;

### *The Million-Jeweled Watch*

But soon the gloom is rent again as beams adown the  
aisles

The headlight of a Sirius that shines a billion miles.

There plunge the Leonids through space of inter-  
stellar cold,

There gleams a sun in flames league-high, a dazzling  
orb of gold,

And all by countless aeons live, the petty dust of time  
Rests lightly on the cosmic wheels as might a poet's  
rhyme,

While from aloft there seems to sound the beat of  
rhythmic powers,

The million-jeweled watch that marks the universal  
hours.



S. C. S.

(SEPT. 27, 1900.)

AS weary tenants of the cots of pain,  
When some sweet nurse must leave the hallowed  
ward,

Reach out and ask: When will she come again?

We cannot spare our comfort, saint and guard.

So, in the silence of grief-muffled hearts

We cannot understand why we should lose

Our uncrowned queen of all the kindly arts,

The one we all would keep if we could choose.

This was her battle-ground; the girded hills

Look down upon the tree-encircled home.

Within such battlements she fought the ills

We all must meet howe'er we stay or roam.

By night or day she sallied from her post

To ease the pain of others, soothe the cries

Of little wanderers, stranded on life's coast,

Or close the lids of aged, dying eyes.

She made ideals possible; she made

The cynic speechless when she but upraised

Her face, so meek, so duteous, unafraid

Of toil and care, but dreading to be praised.

S. C. S.

Then that quick sympathy, that liberal heart!  
That seemed to hold a shrine for all who came;  
For every one the smiles or tears would start.  
For every wanderer shone the welcoming flame.

And she was radiant in unclouded hours,  
A graceful presence at the joyful feast,  
Queenly, and quick to greet all finer powers,  
But always prone to count herself the least.

Meek sister in the church of lowliness,  
Her life o'erflowed the measure of the creeds,  
In few, low words her faith she would confess,  
But ah, how large she wrote it with her deeds!

For us is left a legacy of gold,  
Of golden worth, new courage for the strife,  
Pride for her life, joy that she could uphold  
So long, so well, the stainless flower of life.

So do they win our love, these souls of light,  
Conquerors of the world with triumph true,  
And coming forth at last with shields as bright  
As yonder moon when she regains the blue.

S. F. S.

'TIS blessedness just to rejoice  
That other souls find grace,  
'Tis winter only when we lack  
The sight of some dear face;  
'Tis summer only when we see  
The loved one in her place.

So welcome, welcome, sing the birds  
Among the listening eaves;  
And welcome, cry the passing winds,  
And welcome, lisp the leaves.  
And welcome, smiles the golden grain  
That dances into sheaves.

For where beside are we so sure  
Of kindness linked with truth?  
And who shall wear so well at once  
The grace of age and youth?  
Or rule us with so light a touch—  
Why, who but thee, in sooth?

For thou has taught us how to meet  
The somber days of pain,  
And how to see the hidden sun  
Behind the clouds and rain,  
Or wear a love-illumined face  
Although the light may wane.

*S. F. S.*

So welcome to the outer world!  
Our cups of pleasure fill.  
And Daintyness and Gentleness  
Shall be thy handmaids still.  
Thy throne is set—our hearts are thine—  
And we await thy will.

## THE KNIGHT OF TO-DAY

**I**N days of old, when knights were bold,  
And chivalry held sway,  
In armor dight, with bucklers bright,  
Men speeded to the fray.  
Each level lance would meet and glance  
And dint the blazoned shield,  
While ladies' eyes adjudged the prize  
Upon the glittering field.

The knightly strain still warms the vein,  
Still longs for nobler strife;  
For common weal we draw the steel,  
And dearly sell our life.  
Yet not in mail we now assail,  
The pen is now the sword,  
Quests are begun and tourneys won  
With but the trenchant word.

In meek disguise the knight now tries  
To overthrow the wrong;  
Love, though revealed upon his shield,  
Mistaken by the throng.  
No Arthur grave, no Lancelot brave,  
In war now follows he,  
But treads alone the way once known  
By One of Galilee.

*The Knight of To-day*

Yet as of old the warrior bold  
Has need of woman's cheer,  
And finds his prize in faithful eyes,  
The answering smile or tear.  
So in this room no care or gloom  
On any heart shall bear,  
While fortune bright we wish our Knight  
And eke his ladye fair.

THE GLEANER'S SHEAF





## GIFT-BEARERS

*(A Christmas Rhyme.)*

**T**HOSE Ariel messengers, the Rays,  
Bear gifts so graciously and wide,  
Through narrow walls or country ways,  
Or echoing avenues of pride,  
As with the endless flood of days  
Still on their gladsome quest they ride!

So soft they steal from sun to star,  
And bring that heavenly glory down;  
Or gather beauty near and far  
From earthly scenes, a goodly crown,  
The haunted lines of sea and scar,  
Or night-hush of the dreaming town.

No longing eyes with gift of sight  
Need lack the joys the Rays may bring,  
And sightless orbs, that dwell in night,  
Methinks shall feel their pitying wing  
And dream of scenes so fair and bright,  
The blind for joy, shall leap and sing.

To them all days are Christmas days,  
The blessed joy of doing good;

## *Gift Bearers*

And as they paint the summer's ways,  
Or trail the sunset through the wood,  
They turn dull hearts to silent praise  
And on earth's trouble softly brood.

Thus would I bring to you, dear child,  
Gifts only meet and rich and fair;  
Or thoughts or dreams all undefiled,  
The heart's own comfort, true and rare.  
As Autumn's lap with gold is piled  
You should have coin and gems to spare.

So do the blessed angels fly,  
And bring their wondrous gifts each day;  
They know our need in that far sky,  
And fill the want ere we can pray.  
And if they on such missions hie,  
May we not love and give as they?

Pity me, Friend, for what I bear—  
So idle seems the gift I bring—  
I, who no tireless sandals wear,  
No never-wearying angel's wing;  
Yet Friendship's light—so kind and rare—  
May make it seem a precious thing.

## I AM READY FOR THE ROAD

**I** AM ready for the road,  
Though I know not of the way,  
I will gather up my load,  
Be it night or be it day.

There are none who are returning,  
Who can warn us of a snare;  
We can see no beacon burning  
In the region where we fare.

Yet, whene'er we pass the valley,  
We shall know our comrades' fate —  
Victors in the final rally,  
Heroes at the iron gate.

Though it be a road untraveled,  
Though it be a land unknown,  
Riddle never yet unraveled—  
Strangest guess—to guess alone.

Something tells us we are faring  
To a God-appointed place,  
That He does not shoot, uncaring,  
Human arrows into space.

## UNGATHERED

'T WAS June herself who tempted me  
To walk those garden closes,  
Nor prudently exempted me  
From loving her own roses.  
So when a dear one bent to me—  
My shoulder scarcely missed it—  
I could but deem it sent to me,  
And bending low, I kissed it.

Some might have called it waste of time  
In such delightful weather,  
But I cared not to haste the time  
Our lips were pressed together.  
While all the flower's divinity  
Enveloped sense and seeing,  
And that rare rose virginity  
Breathed softly through my being.

Ah, yes, I longed to tether it  
Unto my side forever,  
And yet, how could I gather it,  
Such grace from life to sever?  
But how that rose-face burned on me  
When late I left the garden,  
And smilingly still turned on me,  
Like Rosalind in Arden.

## NATURE'S FACE-WASHING

**T**HE Earth had been so long at play  
She was all soiled with dust,  
Her nice green gown was sad and gray,  
Her tresses badly mussed.

Quoth Nature: "To be so defiled  
Will bring us sore disgrace.  
I'll bring a big wet cloud, my child,  
And wash your dusty face."

It rained and rained, a night and day,  
And rinsed the hills and creeks;  
And yet it was but Nature's way  
To wash her daughter's cheeks.

The Earth began to squirm and tried,  
At first, to dodge the water;  
But Nature held her fast, and cried:  
*"Now, don't be naughty, daughter!"*

So was the Earth made fresh and neat,  
The dust all washed away.  
"I feel," she said, "so clean and sweet.  
May I go out and play?"

Her frock of green was new and clean,  
She romped with careless grace,  
And merry birds sang welcome words—  
Because—she washed her face!

WOULD YOU CARE?

**S**HOULD I drop something light  
On the top of your head,  
Would you care?  
And what if that something  
Should turn out a kiss  
On your hair?

Might I pause but a moment  
To reap the perfume  
Of each tress?  
For your hair is like grapes  
And the odor is wine,  
And my lips are the press.

## ON A PICTURE

**I**F some rare beauty, long since gone,  
Should step from out her gilded frame,  
And trip across the jewelled lawn,  
While you went back to dust and fame;

I wonder if that dainty belle  
Would say to you, as pictured here,  
(When she had scanned your features well),  
“ My great-, great-grandma, what a dear! ”

## MAYING

**I**F June with May were maying  
How fond would be his playing!  
He'd heap his roses on her  
Until their breath had won her,  
But faraway October  
Would grant him not a low burr,  
A cosy nest perfected,  
But ah, so well protected!  
Yet those who wait in reason  
Shall see each month and season  
Doth sunward turn its bosom  
And gather fruit and blossom.  
So, breezes, on this maiden,  
Blow gently, blessings laden!  
May birds, true-hearted, sing her!  
Faith, Hope and Love enring her!



## POPPING THE LEAVES

WHEN Mazie pops the maple leaves  
There's mischief in the air;  
She knows she puts my nerves on edge,  
She means it for "a dare."  
She lays the leaf against her lips,  
Her breath draws like a kiss,  
And crack! the thing is done so quick!  
She never makes a miss.

I wish I were a maple leaf,  
I'd willingly be green,  
If she would use me thus within  
Some leafy bower unseen.  
What if all shattered I should be  
By that concussion smart?  
Her popping leaves alone, methinks,  
Makes punctures in my heart.

Dear maiden, cease your cannonade,  
Unless you bid me dare  
To charge upon your firing-line  
Where "pops" so rend the air.  
For, pressing to the cannon's mouth,  
With heart full to congestion,  
That battery I'll capture, though  
I'm forced to pop—the question.

## WHEN FLORENCE PLAYS

(RONDEAU)

**W**HEN Florence plays, the elves and fays  
Cry: List, oh list, the lady plays!  
Joy plucks a rose and lies at ease,  
And there's a fluttering in the trees  
Of feathered guests that downward gaze—  
When Florence plays.

Graybeard neglects to turn his glass,  
Forgetting that the moments pass;  
While all unloosed by lovely notes,  
The soul in tender vision floats,  
Until the swaying, dulcet strains  
Seem ladders to those skyey plains,  
With golden rounds, where to and fro,  
Bright-vested angels come and go—  
When Florence plays.

## HER BRIEF

**N**O, I never cared for him.  
He was stupid, he was old,  
And he was so over-bold ;  
Only, when you sought his eye,  
Sometimes he would be too shy.  
Then I, too, would show my power.  
Friend? Yes, friendly for an hour!  
Always tracking in some muck,  
Filled the parlors up with truck,  
Books that no one cared to read,  
Field-flowers, faded, gone to seed—  
Some big apple or a pumpkin—  
He was such a country bumpkin!  
Oh, but when he tried to sing  
How the notes went skittering!  
And I pitied him so much  
Till there came some little touch,  
Half pathetic, just a quaver,  
When the pulses seemed to waver.  
Then the notes would well up strong,  
Like a sea-crest. Borne along,  
I could float on them away  
To the isles of Ever-Day.  
Oh that song should never end!  
Mother says our voices blend.

## *Her Brief*

(What a brief! My eyes are baddish!)  
(Millie, are you grating radish?)

I've no sympathy to grieve  
For a heart worn on a sleeve,  
And I would not let him see  
Mine for all the world in fee.  
Not that there was any feeling  
Fond enough to need concealing.  
Hide the heart behind the blind!  
Let them guess if it is kind!  
What have men to do, forsooth,  
But to sue and court in truth?  
Still, I must confess, this fellow  
Had a heart himself, all mellow;  
Mine, perhaps, too, in such air  
Grew a red cheek like a pear,  
Till, in Love's warm sun a-basking,  
He could have one for the asking.  
Fie, but this is all a whim!  
No, I never cared for him.  
(Millie, is the table spread?)  
(Put some roses on for Fred.)

How could I, a light-heart maid,  
Blend with one so grave and staid?  
I was fond of dainty dress—  
He was pledged to storm and stress.  
“Duty, service,” was his cry,  
And—“A good time”—answered I.

## *Her Brief*

But I caught him—in a dance—  
Smiling at the girl—O shocking!  
Then he caught me at my aunt's—  
Darning—Dorcas-like—a stocking.  
Though I could not yield my will,  
Yet he had it—willy nil.  
That's the touch that won me quite—  
Anything I did was right.  
Was he handsome? O well—now—  
Yes I liked the open brow.  
And the eyes? Yes, if you win them,  
You will find there's something in them.  
But I led him such a chase,  
'Twas no wonder when the race  
Ended, I, so out of breath,  
Could but murmur—"Yes, till death."  
Wonder why he came that day  
When I did not wish to play!  
Then, that whim of spite or pride,  
When I would not go to ride!  
Dear old Patience, how I tried him!  
Now I've no one left beside him.  
Bother! How I mix my brief—  
This will never do—this leaf.  
(Millie, is it nearly eight?)  
(O that Fred! Why is he late?)

Ah, Sir Knight, you're here at last,  
And the dinner-hour is past,

## *Her Brief*

So I took revenge, you see,  
Writing out a pretty plea  
That I never cared for you.  
Yes, I proved it—through and through.  
Ah, don't read it—that's a dear!  
I shall cry—I'll shed a tear!  
And besides, I change my plea,  
Here, dear Judge, on bended knee,  
Cry you mercy—yes, I love—  
Love you—all the world above.  
Guilty—guilty—here I sue  
Pardon, gentle heart and true.  
Is it freedom? Ah, what bliss!  
And the Court must grant a kiss.

## PLOWMAN BURNS

*Read Before the Stamford Scottish Society,  
January 25, 1909*

**R**ABBIE! maister with the pleugh!  
Rabbie! singer, sweet and true!  
Bairn of Scotia's braes and dew!  
Half three hundred years ago,  
Agnes Burns sang to you low,  
In a clay hut roofed with snow;  
Sang of warlocks, witches' dance,  
Candle-elves and Kelpie's trance,  
Ancient wars and old romance,  
Nature's nobleman and God's,  
Mossgiel's farmer turned the clods—  
Now a world your songs applauds.  
Love for home, in hut or hall—  
Wounded hare or daisy's fall—  
Yours a love that compassed all!  
So, God speed you, Robert Burns,  
While the world you brighten turns,  
And, more tender, toward you yearns!  
Daisies make the furrows sweet,  
Wheresoe'er a ploughman's feet  
Follow yours more glad and fleet!  
Grow, with every year, more young,  
While your lines live on the tongue,  
Wheresoe'er your songs are sung!

## THE FOREST CURE

**A**WEARY of burrowing,  
Tired of the town,  
The shadows of palaces  
Weighted me down;  
The smell of the gutters  
Slow-poisoned my breath,  
Each wheel on the pavement  
Was coupled to Death.

The clinking of dollars—  
For pride, lust and fame—  
With all the dice loaded?  
Away with the game!  
Where all are so hurried  
It's crime just to stand.  
Just trample—be trampled—  
And ask not a hand!

I stole to the forest—  
I silently prayed—  
The partridge sat, watching,  
And called, unafraid.  
The vestals of Spring-time  
Went tiptoeing by;  
'Twas birth-time in Nature,  
But soft as a sigh.



## *The Forest Cure*

I questioned the universe,  
Begged for a clue;  
"Up, up," spoke the green world;  
And "Hope," said the blue.  
"Take time, as I take it,"  
The gray boulder spoke;  
And "wait," quoth the acorn,  
And "trust," said the oak.

Green leaf on the tree-top—  
Brown leaf in its bed—  
One glad it was living,  
One glad it was dead!  
"Grow," whispered the rootlet;  
"Smile," echoed the flower;  
"Joy," rippled the brooklet,  
"If only an hour."

World-wisdom, rejected,  
Here meets but a "hush"!  
Yet "work," chirps the squirrel;  
And "sing," pipes the thrush.  
Just touching my pulses—  
The treatment sufficed—  
"Live," said the Creator,  
And "Love," said the Christ.

MAR 31 1909

*By the Same Author*

## REPRESENTATIVE SONNETS

BY

AMERICAN POETS

*(Boston, 1891)*

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*(New York, 1893)*

*Out of Print*

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be glad and go forth his journeying.”*


HENRY VAN DYKE

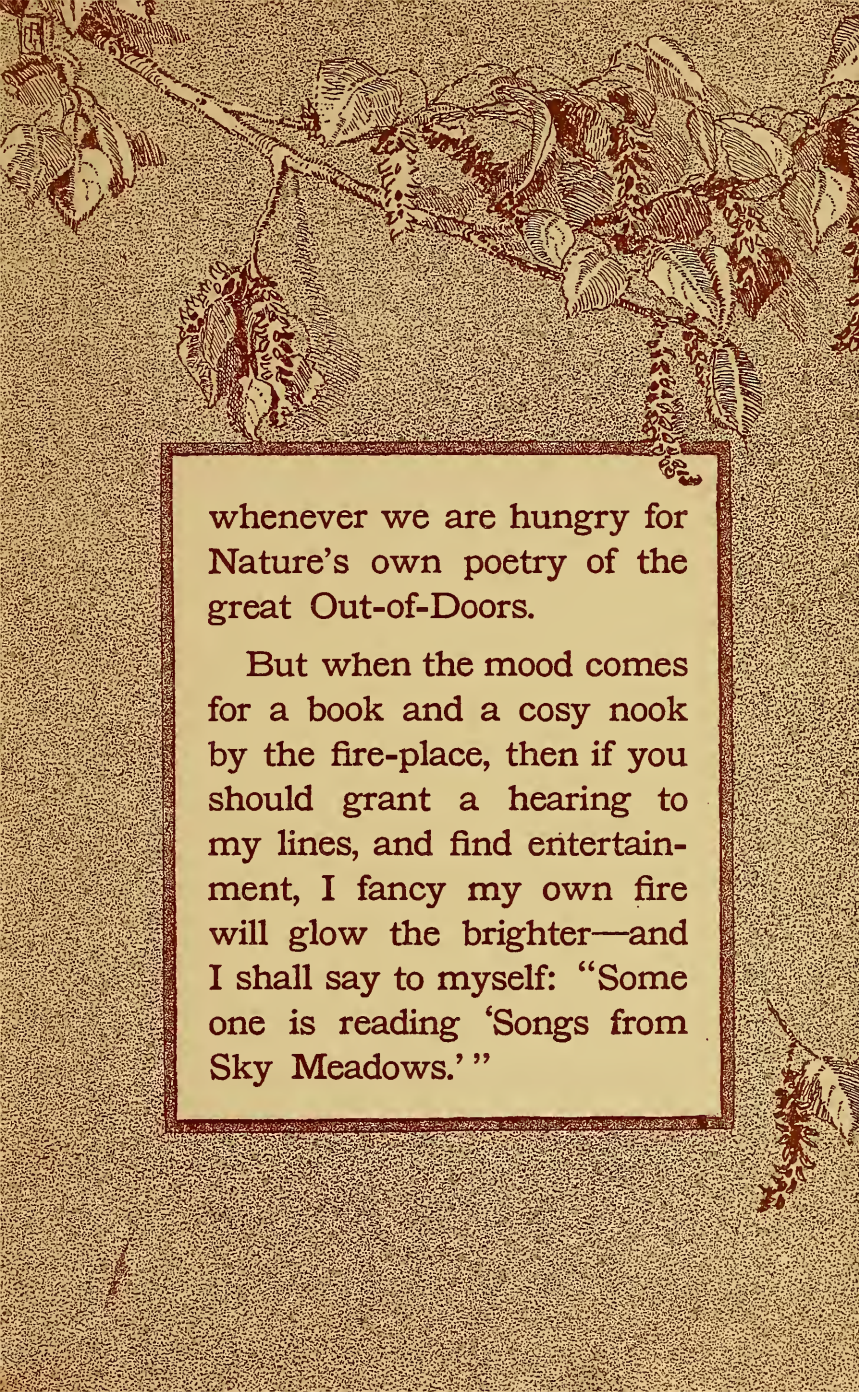
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**I**F you are one who would not sell, at a price, the poetry of life; if you love a stroll over the autumn hills at chestnut-time; if you enjoy buffeting a winter storm; if you have the heart of the boy or girl that thrills with joy at the sight of the first violets, or the sound of the first blue birds, I am sure we shall agree to drop all books

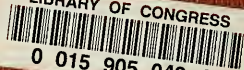




whenever we are hungry for  
Nature's own poetry of the  
great Out-of-Doors.

But when the mood comes  
for a book and a cosy nook  
by the fire-place, then if you  
should grant a hearing to  
my lines, and find entertain-  
ment, I fancy my own fire  
will glow the brighter—and  
I shall say to myself: "Some  
one is reading 'Songs from  
Sky Meadows.'"

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