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COLLECTED POEMS
OF
HERMAN MELVILLE

COLLECTED POEMS of Herman Melville



edited by
Howard P. Vincent

CHICAGO
PACKARD AND COMPANY
HENDRICKS HOUSE

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PREFACE

This volume aims primarily at presenting an accurate text of all the poems which Herman Melville left to posterity, *Clarel,* for obvious reasons, excepted. The text of the first 256 pages faithfully follows that of the three volumes of poetry published during Melville's lifetime and under his scrupulous supervision; the text for the rest of the poetry is taken from manuscripts, of which all but three are in the Houghton Library, Harvard College.

Since in general the poetry speaks for itself, the explanatory notes have been held to a minimum. The textual notes give the readings of the manuscripts whenever they differ from the printed version, so that by a little patient labor anyone interested may trace Melville's "struggle with the angel—Art." Most readers will not use this textual apparatus; however, a sufficient number of students may be interested in the workings of Melville's mind to profit from a study of his alterations and corrections to make their inclusion necessary.

One of the very human pleasures and rewards of editorial labor is the kindness and helpfulness of other scholars, librarians, and friends. The staffs of the Harvard College Library, the University of Chicago Libraries, the Library of Congress, and the George Williams College Library have been unfailingly cooperative. The Illinois Institute of Technology has generously assisted in various ways. The Melville manuscripts are published with the permission of the Committee on American History and Literature of Harvard College. The Worcester Athenaeum furnished me with a photostat of "The Ditty of Aristippus", and Mr. Carroll Wilson

generously allowed me to use the fair draft of "Camoens (Before)" in his possession. Mr. John Birss, who directed me to the two manuscripts just mentioned, has been most helpful on various matters, while Mr. F. Barron Freeman supplied me with several readings used in the Rammon fragment. Mr. William McCarthy of the Houghton Library was especially generous with his time and knowledge. To Mr. Walter Hendricks, the publisher, I am indebted for assistance at every step, from the inception of the idea of an edition of the Poems to the completion of the book. Lastly, I wish to thank Mrs. Henry Metcalf for the use of the Daniel Shepherd poem and for the patience and kindness with which she has answered many questions. For her intelligent understanding of the greatness of her grandfather's accomplishment and for her careful custodianship of the Melville manuscripts, especially the poems in this volume, Mrs. Metcalf has earned the gratitude of all students of American literature.

H. P. V.

Chicago, 1946

INTRODUCTION

This volume is the first American edition of the collected poems of Herman Melville. That such a statement may be made today is a scathing indictment of America's neglect of her most powerful literary genius, a neglect which has been partially redeemed in the last twenty-five years by the growing appreciation of readers and the varied research of scholars and critics. This new appreciation is limited, however, among most people to three or four novels. Few of these readers are aware that Melville was also a poet. This volume of his collected verse will be of value in rounding out our understanding of the mind and art of Herman Melville.

Poetry was a lifelong interest of Melville's. Although we possess no evidences of his earliest poetic writing, we may reasonably conjecture that he had written verses before the ones printed in *Mardi.* The satirical account (*Pierre,* 1852) of Pierre's youthful effusions, especially the "world-famed production," "The Tropical Summer: A Sonnet", may well allude to actual verse written by Melville between 1835 and 1840. Chance and good fortune may some day uncover such juvenile verses, poems, possibly hidden in magazines under strange pseudonyms, or in long-locked attics under accumulated dust.

Herman Melville's earliest printed poetry [1] as we know it

[1] Mention must be made of a curious and excessively rare volume—of traditional slenderness—published in 1845 and titled *Redburn.* It is a narrative poem recounting the adventures of a young schoolteacher in rural New York State. Mr. Minnegerode has gathered arguments, without necessarily accepting them, for Melville's authorship. Having studied the poem, I feel that the evidence is too uncertain to allow the inclusion of *Redburn* in the Melville canon.

appeared in his third novel, *Mardi.* These poems should not be taken so seriously as some critics have seemed to, for they are the outpourings of the effusive Yoomy, Melville's ironic portrait of the romantic, long-haired poet whose verses are emotion recollected without tranquillity. It is not unlikely that Yoomy is also a portrait of Melville, or one part of him, (just as Babbalanja portrays the metaphysical-philosophical facet of Melville's mind) and that Yoomy's versification mockingly parodies the youthful poetry from Melville's pen.

The maturation of Melville the poet is clearly shown in the contrast between Yoomy's high-spirited gush and the poetry composed by the serious minded Melville in 1859. By then Herman Melville was an artist who had grown to the conviction that the poet should be not only a Yoomy but also a Babbalanja, that the spontaneous overflow of Yoomy should be tempered by Babbalanja's critical penetration—or that emotion and ideas might well mix.

"Herman has taken to writing poetry," Mrs. Melville wrote to her mother in 1859, "You need not tell any one, for you know how such things get around." These words are the first record we have of Melville's abandonment of the novel for the craft of poetry. Convinced, after the failure of *The Confidence-Man,* that fame and fortune were not to be achieved by fiction, Melville had made up his mind, he told Hawthorne, to be "annihilated." In the independence of annihilation Melville was at liberty to follow his own literary desires; freed from the hope of making his living by writing novels, he might now find his private creative outlet in the intensities of poetry. The poems referred to by Mrs. Melville are undoubtedly a number of the lyrics scattered throughout *Clarel* (1876), the poems which were printed in the *Timoleon* volume (1891) under the heading

of "Fruit of Travel of Long ago," and many of the poems published here for the first time, especially the two long poems under the title "The Marquis de Grandvin." The principal inspiration for all these verses was Herman Melville's trip to the Near East during the winter of 1856-1857. He recorded impressions in a journal, and then later, after serious reflection,—this in contrast to Yoomy's unfortunate spontaneity,—transformed them into poetry.

Melville wished to have his poems published, but he had no great expectation of public acclaim. "Of all human events, perhaps the publication of a first volume of verses it the most insignificant; but though a matter of no moment to the world, it is still of some concern to the author." Indeed, it was of such delicate concern to Melville that he fled the task of finding a publisher and took passage for San Francisco on his brother's ship, *The Meteor.* Melville, however, had definite notions as to what he wanted; he left detailed directions to Allan Melville for overseeing the printing. Allan shared the publication responsibilities with Mrs. Melville. They enlisted the services of Evert Duyckinck, the well-known editor of the *Literary World.* Mrs. Melville asked Duyckinck not only for his help but also for his opinion of the poems. His efforts, however, were of little avail in securing a publisher. Mrs. Melville took the disappointment bravely, but Duyckinck's opinion of the poems afforded her considerable pleasure. She wrote him that she did not consider rejection by the publishers as any test of merit in a literary point of view—"well knowing, as Herman does also, that *poetry* is a comparatively uncalled for article in the market . . . . I think infinitely more of yours and your brother's opinion of it, and feel more confidence in its worth, since it has been such a profound secret between Herman and myself for so long that I rejoice to have my own pre-

judice in its favor confirmed by someone whose appreciation we can feel confidence—for I do not believe you would speak favorably of it, unless you could do so sincerely." Her added words were a revelation of the sensitiveness and shyness of Herman Melville: "indeed I feel that it is in better hands than even with Herman's own management for he might be disheartened at the outset and perhaps withold it altogether, which would be a great disappointment to me." The loyalty and faith of this letter are but one evidence of a lifetime of such devotion on the part of Elizabeth Shaw Melville.

The poems never appeared as planned. Melville's own facetious account of their fate may be read in a letter to his brother Tom:

> Since I have quoted poetry above, it puts me in mind of my own doggerel. You will be pleased to learn that I have disposed of a lot of it at a great bargain. In fact, a trunk-maker took the whole lot off my hands at ten cents the pound. So, when you buy a new trunk again, just peep at the lining and perhaps you may be rewarded by some glorious stanza staring you in the face and claiming admiration. If you were not such a devil of a ways off, I would send you a trunk, by way of presentation-copy.
>
> I can't help thinking what a luckless chap you were that voyage you had a poetaster with you. You remember the romantic moonlight night, when the conceited donkey repeated to you about three cables' length of his verses. But you bore it like a hero. I can't in fact recall one single *wince*. To be sure, you went to bed immediately upon the conclusion of this entertainment; but this much I am sure of, whatever were your sufferings, you never gave them utterance . . . .

Melville's next poetical venture achieved publication. In 1866 his first volume of verse, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War,* was published by Harper's, in an edition of 1200 copies. The book was not a failure, but neither was it a financial or a literary success. By February 1868 only 486 copies had been sold.

Since, however, Melville had long ago given up the idea of supporting himself by his pen, he already had (1865) grimly taken up his duties as Custom Inspector No. 75 for the Port of New York, a task scarcely congenial, as his friend Hawthorne had found out in the Salem Customs, to strenuous and effective artistic creation. Somehow, however, through nerve-shredding labor by lamplight and with the selfless devotion of Lizzie to sustain his spirits, Melville was able to give shape to a two-volume narrative poem, *Clarel,* an account of a trip through the Holy Land and through the mind and spirit of man. The volumes were printed at Uncle Peter Gansevoort's expense on June 3, 1876. Public neglect of *Clarel* was complete. Only after sixty years of disregard have we begun to explore the profundities of Melville's mind as revealed in *Clarel.*

In 1885 his retirement from his inspectorship finally released Melville for literary activity. Although he was an aged man in broken health, Melville in six years time was able to produce two volumes of poetry and to complete the writing of *Billy Budd.* In none of this writing is there any sign of age save in the poised wisdom irradiating the words, save in the wise acceptance of life ("Healed of my hurt, I laud the inhuman Sea"). The writing of these closing years refers to the two most profound experiences of Melville's manhood: his sea-journeyings, which merge in the pages of *John Marr and Other Sailors* (1888), and his travels to the Mediterranean countries, which inspired the serene pages

of *Timoleon* (1891). Both these books of verse were published in editions of twenty five copies, designed solely for distribution by the author among his friends. They are, consequently, bibliographical rarities. It is hoped that the evaluation of Melville as a poet will follow the publication and wider distribution of his poetry to the public.

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BATTLE-PIECES

THE PORTENT
(1859)

Hanging from the beam,
  Slowly swaying (such the law),
Gaunt the shadow on your green,
  Shenandoah!
The cut is on the crown
  (Lo, John Brown),
And the stabs shall heal no more.

Hidden in the cap
  Is the anguish none can draw;
So your future veils its face,
  Shenandoah!
But the streaming beard is shown
  (Weird John Brown),
The meteor of the war.

MISGIVINGS
(1860)

When ocean-clouds over inland hills
  Sweep storming in late autumn brown,
And horror the sodden valley fills,
  And the spire falls crashing in the town,
I muse upon my country's ills—
The tempest bursting from the waste of Time
On the world's fairest hope linked with man's foulest crime.

Nature's dark side is heeded now—
(Ah! optimist-cheer disheartened flown)—
A child may read the moody brow
Of yon black mountain lone.
With shouts the torrents down the gorges go,
And storms are formed behind the storm we feel:
The hemlock shakes in the rafter, the oak in the driving keel.

THE CONFLICT OF CONVICTIONS
(1860-1)

On starry heights
A bugle wails the long recall;
Derision stirs the deep abyss,
Heaven's ominous silence over all.
Return, return, O eager Hope,
And face man's latter fall.
Events, they make the dreamers quail;
Satan's old age is strong and hale,
A disciplined captain, gray in skill,
And Raphael a white enthusiast still;
Dashed aims, whereat Christ's martyrs pale,
Shall Mammon's slaves fulfill?

(Dismantle the fort,
Cut down the fleet—
Battle no more shall be!
While the fields for fight in æons to come
Congeal beneath the sea.)

The terrors of truth and dart of death
To faith alike are vain;
Though comets, gone a thousand years,
Return again,
Patient she stands—she can no more—
And waits, nor heeds she waxes hoar.

(*At a stony gate,*
A statue of stone,
Weed overgrown—
Long 'twill wait!)

But God His former mind retains,
Confirms his old decree;
The generations are inured to pains,
And strong Necessity
Surges, and heaps Time's strand with wrecks.
The People spread like a weedy grass,
The thing they will they bring to pass,
And prosper to the apoplex.
The rout it herds around the heart,
The ghost is yielded in the gloom;
Kings wag their heads—Now save thyself
Who wouldst rebuild the world in bloom.

(*Tide-mark*
And top of the ages' strife,
Verge where they called the world to come,
The last advance of life—
Ha ha, the rust on the Iron Dome!)

Nay, but revere the hid event;
In the cloud a sword is girded on,
I mark a twinkling in the tent
Of Michael the warrior one.
Senior wisdom suits not now,
The light is on the youthful brow.

(Ay, in caves the miner see:
His forehead bears, a taper dim;
Darkness so he feebly braves
Which foldeth him!)

But He who rules is old—is old;
Ah! faith is warm, but heaven with age is cold.

(Ho ho, ho ho,
The cloistered doubt
Of olden times
Is blurted out!)

The Ancient of Days forever is young,
Forever the scheme of Nature thrives;
I know a wind in purpose strong—
It spins *against* the way it drives.
What if the gulfs their slimed foundations bare?
So deep must the stones be hurled
Whereon the throes of ages rear
The final empire and the happier world.

(The poor old Past,
The Future's slave,
She dredged through pain and crime
To bring about the blissful Prime,
Then—perished. There's *a grave!)*

Power unanointed may come—
Dominion (unsought by the free)
And the Iron Dome,
Stronger for stress and strain,
Fling her huge shadow athwart the main;
But the Founders' dream shall flee.
Age after age shall be
As age after age has been,
(From man's changeless heart their way they win);
And death be busy with all who strive—
Death, with silent negative.

YEA AND NAY—
EACH HATH HIS SAY;
BUT GOD HE KEEPS THE MIDDLE WAY.
NONE WAS BY
WHEN HE SPREAD THE SKY;
WISDOM IS VAIN, AND PROPHESY.

APATHY AND ENTHUSIASM
(1860-1)

I

O the clammy cold November,
  And the winter white and dead,
And the terror dumb with stupor,
  And the sky a sheet of lead;
And events that came resounding
  With the cry that *All was lost,*
Like the thunder-cracks of massy ice
  In intensity of frost—
Bursting one upon another
  Through the horror of the calm.
  The paralysis of arm
In the anguish of the heart;
And the hollowness and dearth.
  The appealings of the mother
  To brother and to brother
Not in hatred so to part—
And the fissure in the hearth
  Growing momently more wide.
Then the glances 'tween the Fates,
  And the doubt on every side,
And the patience under gloom
In the stoniness that waits
The finality of doom.

II

So the winter died despairing,
  And the weary weeks of Lent;
And the ice-bound rivers melted,
  And the tomb of Faith was rent.
O, the rising of the People
  Came with springing of the grass,
They rebounded from dejection
  After Easter came to pass.
And the young were all elation
  Hearing Sumter's cannon roar.
And they thought how tame the Nation
  In the age that went before.
And Michael seemed gigantical,
  The Arch-fiend but a dwarf;
And at the towers of Erebus
  Our striplings flung the scoff.
But the elders with foreboding
  Mourned the days forever o'er,
And recalled the forest proverb,
  The Iroquois' old saw:
Grief to every graybeard
  When young Indians lead the war.

THE MARCH INTO VIRGINIA

ENDING IN THE FIRST MANASSAS

(July, 1861)

Did all the lets and bars appear
  To every just or larger end,
Whence should come the trust and cheer?
  Youth must its ignorant impulse lend—
Age finds place in the rear.
  All wars are boyish, and are fought by boys,
The champions and enthusiasts of the state:
  Turbid ardors and vain joys
    Not barrenly abate—
Stimulants to the power mature,
  Preparatives of fate.

Who here forecasteth the event?
What heart but spurns at precedent
And warnings of the wise,
Contemned foreclosures of surprise?
The banners play, the bugles call,
The air is blue and prodigal.
  No berrying party, pleasure-wooed,
No picnic party in the May,
Ever went less loth than they
  Into that leafy neighborhood.
In Bacchic glee they file toward Fate,
Moloch's uninitiate;
Expectancy, and glad surmise
Of battle's unknown mysteries.

All they feel is this: 'tis glory,
A rapture sharp, though transitory,
Yet lasting in belaureled story.
So they gayly go to fight,
Chatting left and laughing right.

But some who this blithe mood present,
As on in lightsome files they fare,
Shall die experienced ere three days be spent-
Perish, enlightened by the vollied glare;
Or shame survive, and, like to adamant,
Thy after shock, Manassas, share.

LYON

BATTLE OF SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI
(August, 1861)

Some hearts there are of deeper sort,
Prophetic, sad,
Which yet for cause are trebly clad;
Known death they fly on:
This wizard-heart and heart-of-oak had Lyon.

"They are more than twenty thousand strong,
We less than five,
Too few with such a host to strive."
"Such counsel, fie on!
'Tis battle, or 'tis shame;" and firm stood Lyon.

"For help at need in vain we wait—
Retreat or fight:
Retreat the foe would take for flight,
And each proud scion
Feel more elate; the end must come," said Lyon.

By candlelight he wrote the will,
And left his all
To Her for whom 'twas not enough to fall;
Loud neighed Orion
Without the tent; drums beat; we marched with Lyon.

The night-tramp done, we spied the Vale
With guard-fires lit;
Day broke, but trooping clouds made gloom of it:
"A field to die on,"
Presaged, in his unfaltering heart, brave Lyon.

We fought on the grass, we bled in the corn—
Fate seemed malign;
His horse the Leader led along the line—
Star-browed Orion;
Bitterly fearless, he rallied us there, brave Lyon.

There came a sound like the slitting of air
By a swift sharp sword—
A rush of the sound; and the sleek chest broad
Of black Orion
Heaved, and was fixed; the dead mane waved toward Lyon.

"General, you're hurt—this sleet of balls!"
He seemed half spent;
With moody and bloody brow, he lowly bent:
"The field to die on;
But not—not yet; the day is long," breathed Lyon.

For a time becharmed there fell a lull
In the heart of the fight;
The tree-tops nod, the slain sleep light;
Warm noon-winds sigh on,
And thoughts which he never spake had Lyon.

Texans and Indians trim for a charge:
"Stand ready, men!
Let them come close, right up, and then
After the lead, the iron;
Fire, and charge back!" So strength returned to Lyon.

The Iowa men who held the van,
Half drilled, were new
To battle: "Some one lead us, then we'll do,"
Said Corporal Tryon:
"Men! *I* will lead," and a light glared in Lyon.

On they came: they yelped, and fired;
His spirit sped;
We levelled right in, and the half-breeds fled,
Nor stayed the iron,
Nor captured the crimson corse of Lyon.

This seer foresaw his soldier-doom,
    Yet willed the fight.
He never turned; his only flight
    Was up to Zion,
Where prophets now and armies greet pale Lyon.

BALL'S BLUFF

A REVERIE

(October, 1861)

One noonday, at my window in the town,
  I saw a sight—saddest that eyes can see—
  Young soldiers marching lustily
      Unto the wars,
With fifes, and flags in mottoed pageantry;
  While all the porches, walks, and doors
Were rich with ladies cheering royally.

They moved like Juny morning on the wave,
  Their hearts were fresh as clover in its prime
  (It was the breezy summer time),
      Life throbbed so strong,
How should they dream that Death in a rosy clime
  Would come to thin their shining throng?
Youth feels immortal, like the gods sublime.

Weeks passed; and at my window, leaving bed,
By night I mused, of easeful sleep bereft,
On those brave boys (Ah War! thy theft);
Some marching feet
Found pause at last by cliffs Potomac cleft;
Wakeful I mused, while in the street
Far footfalls died away till none were left.

DUPONT'S ROUND FIGHT
(November, 1861)

In time and measure perfect moves
All Art whose aim is sure;
Evolving rhyme and stars divine
Have rules, and they endure.

Nor less the Fleet that warred for Right,
And, warring so, prevailed,
In geometric beauty curved,
And in an orbit sailed.

The rebel at Port Royal felt
The Unity overawe,
And rued the spell. A type was here,
And victory of LAW.

THE STONE FLEET

AN OLD SAILOR'S LAMENT

(December, 1861)

I have a feeling for those ships,
  Each worn and ancient one,
With great bluff bows, and broad in the beam:
  Ay, it was unkindly done.
    But so they serve the Obsolete—
    Even so, Stone Fleet!

You'll say I'm doting; do but think
  I scudded round the Horn in one—
The Tenedos, a glorious
  Good old craft as ever run—
    Sunk (how all unmeet!)
    With the Old Stone Fleet.

An India ship of fame was she,
  Spices and shawls and fans she bore;
A whaler when her wrinkles came—
  Turned off! till, spent and poor,
    Her bones were sold (escheat)!
    Ah! Stone Fleet.

Four were erst patrician keels
  (Names attest what families be),
The Kensington, and Richmond too,
  Leonidas, and Lee:
    But now they have their seat
    With the Old Stone Fleet.

To scuttle them—a pirate deed—
  Sack them, and dismast;
They sunk so slow, they died so hard,
  But gurgling dropped at last.
    Their ghosts in gales repeat
    Woe's us, Stone Fleet!

And all for naught. The waters pass—
  Currents will have their way;
Nature is nobody's ally; 'tis well;
  The harbor is bettered—will stay.
    A failure, and complete,
    Was your Old Stone Fleet.

DONELSON
(February, 1862)

The bitter cup
  Of that hard countermand
Which gave the Envoys up,
Still was wormwood in the mouth,
  And clouds involved the land,
When, pelted by sleet in the icy street,
  About the bulletin-board a band
Of eager, anxious people met,
And every wakeful heart was set
On latest news from West or South.
"No seeing here," cries one—"don't crowd"—
"You tall man, pray you, read aloud."

We learn that General Grant,
Marching from Henry overland,
And joined by a force up the Cumberland sent
(Some thirty thousand the command),
On Wednesday a good position won—
Began the siege of Donelson.

This stronghold crowns a river-bluff,
A good broad mile of leveled top;
Inland the ground rolls off
Deep-gorged, and rocky, and broken up—
A wilderness of trees and brush.
The spaded summit shows the roods
Of fixed entrenchments in their hush;
Breast-works and rifle-pits in woods
Perplex the base.—
The welcome weather
Is clear and mild; 'tis much like May.
The ancient boughs that lace together
Along the stream, and hang far forth,
Strange with green mistletoe, betray
A dreamy contrast to the North.

Our troops are full of spirits—say
The siege won't prove a creeping one.
They purpose not the lingering stay
Of old beleaguerers; not that way;
But, full of vim *from Western prairies won,*
They'll make, ere long, a dash at Donelson.

Washed by the storm till the paper grew
Every shade of a streaky blue,
That bulletin stood. The next day brought
A second.

LATER FROM THE FORT.

Grant's investment is complete—
A semicircular one.
Both wings the Cumberland's margin meet,
Then, backward curving, clasp the rebel seat.
On Wednesday this good work was done;
But of the doers some lie prone.
Each wood, each hill, each glen was fought for;
The bold inclosing line we wrought for
Flamed with sharpshooters. Each cliff cost
A limb or life. But back we forced
Reserves and all; made good our hold;
And so we rest.

Events unfold.
On Thursday added ground was won,
A long bold steep: we near the Den.
Later the foe came shouting down
In sortie, which was quelled; and then
We stormed them on their left.
A chilly change in the afternoon;
The sky, late clear, is now bereft
Of sun. Last night the ground froze hard---

Rings to the enemy as they run
Within their works. A ramrod bites
The lip it meets. The cold incites
To swinging of arms with brisk rebound.
Smart blows 'gainst lusty chests resound.

Along the outer line we ward
A crackle of skirmishing goes on.
Our lads creep round on hand and knee,
They fight from behind each trunk and stone;
And sometimes, flying for refuge, one
Finds 'tis an enemy shares the tree.
Some scores are maimed by boughs shot off
In the glades by the Fort's big gun.
We mourn the loss of Colonel Morrison,
Killed while cheering his regiment on.
Their far sharpshooters try our stuff;
And ours return them puff for puff:
'Tis diamond-cutting-diamond work.
Woe on the rebel cannoneer
Who shows his head. Our fellows lurk
Like Indians that waylay the deer
By the wild salt-spring.—The sky is dun,
Foredooming the fall of Donelson.
Stern weather is all unwonted here.
The people of the country own
We brought it. Yea, the earnest North
Has elementally issued forth
To storm this Donelson.

A yelling rout
Of ragamuffins broke profuse
To-day from out the Fort.
Sole uniform they wore, a sort
Of patch, or white badge (as you choose)
Upon the arm. But leading these,
Or mingling, were men of face
And bearing of patrician race,
Splendid in courage and gold lace—
The officers. Before the breeze
Made by their charge, down went our line;
But, rallying, charged back in force,
And broke the sally; yet with loss.
This on the left; upon the right
Meanwhile there was an answering fight;
Assailants and assailed reversed.
The charge too upward, and not down—
Up a steep ridge-side, toward its crown,
A strong redoubt. But they who first
Gained the fort's base, and marked the trees
Felled, heaped in horned perplexities,
And shagged with brush; and swarming there
Fierce wasps whose sting was present death—
They faltered, drawing bated breath,
And felt it was in vain to dare;
Yet still, perforce, returned the ball,
Firing into the tangled wall
Till ordered to come down. They came;
But left some comrades in their fame,

Red on the ridge in icy wreath
And hanging gardens of cold Death.
But not quite unavenged these fell;
Our ranks once out of range, a blast
Of shrapnel and quick shell
Burst on the rebel horde, still massed,
Scattering them pell-mell.
(This fighting—judging what we read—
Both charge and countercharge,
Would seem but Thursday's told at large,
Before in brief reported.—Ed.)
Night closed in about the Den
Murky and lowering. Ere long, chill rains.
A night not soon to be forgot,
Reviving old rheumatic pains
And longings for a cot.
No blankets, overcoats, or tents.
Coats thrown aside on the warm march here—
We looked not then for changeful cheer;
Tents, coats, and blankets too much care.
No fires; a fire a mark presents;
Near by, the trees show bullet-dents.
Rations were eaten cold and raw.
The men well soaked, came snow; and more—
A midnight sally. Small sleeping done—
But such is war;
No matter, we'll have Fort Donelson.

"Ugh! ugh!
'Twill drag along—drag along,"
Growled a cross patriot in the throng,

His battered umbrella like an ambulance-cover
Riddled with bullet-holes, spattered all over.
"Hurrah for Grant!" cried a stripling shrill;
Three urchins joined him with a will,
And some of taller stature cheered.
Meantime a Copperhead passed; he sneered.
"Win or lose," he pausing said,
"Caps fly the same; all boys, mere boys;
Any thing to make a noise.
Like to see the list of the dead;
These *'craven Southerners'* hold out;
Ay, ay, they'll give you many a bout."
"We'll beat in the end, sir,"
Firmly said one in staid rebuke,
A solid merchant, square and stout.
"And do you think it? that way tend, sir?"
Asked the lean Copperhead, with a look
Of splenetic pity. "Yes, I do."
His yellow death's head the croaker shook:
"The country's ruined, that I know."
A shower of broken ice and snow,
In lieu of words, confuted him;
They saw him hustled round the corner go,
And each by-stander said—Well suited him.

Next day another crowd was seen
In the dark weather's sleety spleen.
Bald-headed to the storm came out
A man, who, 'mid a joyous shout,
Silently posted this brief sheet:

GLORIOUS VICTORY OF THE FLEET!

FRIDAY'S GREAT EVENT!

THE ENEMY'S WATER-BATTERIES BEAT!

WE SILENCED EVERY GUN!

THE OLD COMMODORE'S COMPLIMENTS SENT PLUMP INTO DONELSON!

"Well, well, go on!" exclaimed the crowd
To him who thus much read aloud.
"That's all," he said. "What! nothing more?"
"Enough for a cheer, though—hip, hurrah!
"But here's old Baldy come again—
"More news!"—And now a different strain.

(Our own reporter a dispatch compiles,
As best he may, from varied sources.)

Large re-enforcements have arrived—
Munitions, men, and horses—
For Grant, and all debarked, with stores.

The enemy's field-works extend six miles—
The gate still hid; so well contrived.

Yesterday stung us; frozen shores
Snow-clad, and through the drear defiles
And over the desolate ridges blew
A Lapland wind.
The main affair
Was a good two hours' steady fight
Between our gun-boats and the Fort.
The Louisville's wheel was smashed outright.
A hundred-and-twenty-eight-pound ball
Came planet-like through a starboard port,
Killing three men, and wounding all
The rest of that gun's crew,
(The captain of the gun was cut in two);
Then splintering and ripping went—
Nothing could be its continent.
In the narrow stream the Louisville,
Unhelmed, grew lawless; swung around,
And would have thumped and drifted, till
All the fleet was driven aground,
But for the timely order to retire.

Some damage from our fire, 'tis thought,
Was done the water-batteries of the Fort.

Little else took place that day,
Except the field artillery in line
Would now and then—for love, they say—
Exchange a valentine.
The old sharpshooting going on.
Some plan afoot as yet unknown;
So Friday closed round Donelson.

Great suffering through the night—
A stinging one. Our heedless boys
Were nipped like blossoms. Some dozen
Hapless wounded men were frozen.
During day being struck down out of sight,
And help-cries drowned in roaring noise,
They were left just where the skirmish shifted—
Left in dense underbrush snow-drifted.
Some, seeking to crawl in crippled plight,
So stiffened—perished.
Yet in spite
Of pangs for these, no heart is lost.
Hungry, and clothing stiff with frost,
Our men declare a nearing sun
Shall see the fall of Donelson.
And this they say, yet not disown
The dark redoubts round Donelson,
And ice-glazed corpses, each a stone—
A sacrifice to Donelson;
They swear it, and swerve not, gazing on
A flag, deemed black, flying from Donelson.

Some of the wounded in the wood
Were cared for by the foe last night,
Though he could do them little needed good,
Himself being all in shivering plight.
The rebel is wrong, but human yet;
He's got a heart, and thrusts a bayonet.
He gives us battle with wondrous will—
This bluff's a perverted Bunker Hill.

The stillness stealing through the throng
The silent thought and dismal fear revealed;
They turned and went,
Musing on right and wrong
And mysteries dimly sealed—
Breasting the storm in daring discontent;
The storm, whose black flag showed in heaven,
As if to say no quarter there was given
To wounded men in wood,
Or true hearts yearning for the good—
All fatherless seemed the human soul.
But next day brought a bitterer bowl—
On the bulletin-board this stood:

Saturday morning at 3 A.M.
A stir within the Fort betrayed
That the rebels were getting under arms;
Some plot these early birds had laid.
But a lancing sleet cut him who stared
Into the storm. After some vague alarms,
Which left our lads unscared,
Out sallied the enemy at dim of dawn,
With cavalry and artillery, and went
In fury at our environment.
Under cover of shot and shell
Three columns of infantry rolled on,
Vomited out of Donelson—
Rolled down the slopes like rivers of hell,
Surged at our line, and swelled and poured
Life breaking surf. But unsubmerged
Our men stood up, except where roared
The enemy through one gap. We urged

Our all of manhood to the stress,
But still showed shattered in our desperateness.
Back set the tide,
But soon afresh rolled in;
And so it swayed from side to side—
Far batteries joining in the din,
Though sharing in another fray—
Till all became an Indian fight,
Intricate, dusky, stretching far away,
Yet not without spontaneous plan
However tangled showed the plight:
Duels all over 'tween man and man,
Duels on cliff-side, and down in ravine,
Duels at long range, and bone to bone;
Duels every where flitting and half unseen.
Only by courage good as their own,
And strength outlasting theirs,
Did our boys at last drive the rebels off.
Yet they went not back to their distant lairs
In strong-hold, but loud in scoff
Maintained themselves on conquered ground—
Uplands; built works, or stalked around.
Our right wing bore this onset. Noon
Brought calm to Donelson.

The reader ceased; the storm beat hard;
'Twas day, but the office-gas was lit;
Nature retained her sulking-fit,
In her hand the shard.

Flitting faces took the hue
Of that washed bulletin-board in view,
And seemed to bear the public grief
As private, and uncertain of relief;
Yea, many an earnest heart was won,
  As broodingly he plodded on,
To find in himself some bitter thing,
Some hardness in his lot as harrowing
      As Donelson.
That night the board stood barren there,
  Oft eyed by wistful people passing,
  Who nothing saw but the rain-beads chasing
Each other down the wafered square,
As down some storm-beat graveyard stone.
But next day showed—

MORE NEWS LAST NIGHT.

STORY OF SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

VICISSITUDES OF THE WAR.

The damaged gun-boats can't wage fight
For days; so says the Commodore.
Thus no diversion can be had.
Under a sunless sky of lead
  Our grim-faced boys in blackened plight
Gaze toward the ground they held before,
And then on Grant. He marks their mood,
And hails it, and will turn the same to good.

Spite all that they have undergone,
Their desperate hearts are set upon
This winter fort, this stubborn fort,
This castle of the last resort,
This Donelson.

1 P.M.

An order given
Requires withdrawal from the front
Of regiments that bore the brunt
Of morning's fray. Their ranks all riven
Are being replaced by fresh, strong men.
Great vigilance in the foeman's Den;
He snuffs the stormers. Need it is
That for that fell assault of his,
That rout inflicted, and self-scorn—
Immoderate in noble natures, torn
By sense of being through slackness overborne—
The rebel be given a quick return:
The kindest face looks now half stern.
Balked of their prey in airs that freeze,
Some fierce ones glare like savages.
And yet, and yet, strange moments are—
Well—blood, and tears, and anguished War!
The morning's battle-ground is seen
In lifted glades, like meadows rare;
The blood-drops on the snow-crust there
Like clover in the white-weed show—
Flushed fields of death, that call again—
Call to our men, and not in vain,
For that way must the stormers go.

3 P.M.

The work begins.
Light drifts of men thrown forward, fade
In skirmish-line along the slope,
Where some dislodgments must be made
Ere the stormer with the strong-hold cope.

Lew Wallace, moving to retake
The heights late lost—
(Herewith a break.
Storms at the West derange the wires.
Doubtless, ere morning, we shall hear
The end; we look for news to cheer—
Let Hope fan all her fires.)

Next day in large bold hand was seen
The closing bulletin:

VICTORY!

Our troops have retrieved the day
By one grand surge along the line;
The spirit that urged them was divine.
The first works flooded, naught could stay
The stormers: on! still on!
Bayonets for Donelson!
Over the ground that morning lost
Rolled the blue billows, tempest-tossed,
Following a hat on the point of a sword.
Spite shell and round-shot, grape and canister,
Up they climbed without rail or banister—
Up the steep hill-sides long and broad,

Driving the rebel deep within his works.
'Tis nightfall; not an enemy lurks
In sight. The chafing men
Fret for more fight:
"To-night, to-night let us take the Den!"
But night is treacherous, Grant is wary;
Of brave blood be a little chary.
Patience! The Fort is good as won;
To-morrow, and into Donelson.

LATER AND LAST.

THE FORT IS OURS.

A flag came out at early morn
Bringing surrender. From their towers
Floats out the banner late their scorn.
In Dover, hut and house are full
Of rebels dead or dying.
The National flag is flying
From the crammed court-house pinnacle.
Great boat-loads of our wounded go
To-day to Nashville. The sleet-winds blow;
But all is right: the fight is won,
The winter-fight for Donelson.
Hurrah!
The spell of old defeat is broke,
The habit of victory begun;
Grant strikes the war's first sounding stroke
At Donelson.

For lists of killed and wounded, see
The morrow's dispatch: to-day 'tis victory.

The man who read this to the crowd
  Shouted as the end he gained;
  And though the unflagging tempest rained,
    They answered him aloud.
And hand grasped hand, and glances met
In happy triumph; eyes grew wet.
O, to the punches brewed that night
Went little water. Windows bright
Beamed rosy on the sleet without,
And from the cross street came the frequent shout;
While some in prayer, as these in glee,
Blessed heaven for the winter-victory.
But others were who wakeful laid
  In midnight beds, and early rose,
  And, feverish in the foggy snows,
Snatched the damp paper—wife and maid.
  The death-list like a river flows
    Down the pale sheet,
And there the whelming waters meet.

  Ah God! may Time with happy haste
  Bring wail and triumph to a waste,
    And war be done;
  The battle flag-staff fall athwart
  The curs'd ravine, and wither; naught
    Be left of trench or gun;
  The bastion, let it ebb away,
  Washed with the river bed; and Day
    In vain seek Donelson.

THE CUMBERLAND
(March, 1862)

Some names there are of telling sound,
  Whose voweled syllables free
Are pledge that they shall ever live renowned;
    Such seems to be
A Frigate's name (by present glory spanned)—
    The Cumberland.

      Sounding name as ere was sung,
      Flowing, rolling on the tongue—
      Cumberland! Cumberland!

She warred and sunk. There's no denying
  That she was ended—quelled;
And yet her flag above her fate is flying,
    As when it swelled
Unswallowed by the swallowing sea: so grand—
    The Cumberland.

      Goodly name as ere was sung,
      Roundly rolling on the tongue—
      Cumberland! Cumberland!

What need to tell how she was fought—
  The sinking flaming gun—
The gunner leaping out the port—
    Washed back, undone!
Her dead unconquerably manned
    The Cumberland.

Noble name as ere was sung,
Slowly roll it on the tongue—
Cumberland! Cumberland!

Long as hearts shall share the flame
Which burned in that brave crew,
Her fame shall live—outlive the victor's name;
For this is due.
Your flag and flag-staff shall in story stand—
Cumberland!

Sounding name as ere was sung,
Long they'll roll it on the tongue—
Cumberland! Cumberland!

IN THE TURRET
(March, 1862)

Your honest heart of duty, Worden,
So helped you that in fame you dwell;
You bore the first iron battle's burden
Sealed as in a diving-bell.
Alcides, groping into haunted hell
To bring forth King Admetus' bride,
Braved naught more vaguely direful and untried.
What poet shall uplift his charm,
Bold Sailor, to your height of daring,
And interblend therewith the calm,
And build a goodly style upon your bearing.

Escaped the gale of outer ocean—
  Cribbed in a craft which like a log
Was washed by every billow's motion—
  By night you heard of Og
The huge; nor felt your courage clog
At tokens of his onset grim:
You marked the sunk ship's flag-staff slim,
  Lit by her burning sister's heart;
You marked, and mused: "Day brings the trial:
  Then be it proved if I have part
With men whose manhood never took denial."

A prayer went up—a champion's. Morning
  Beheld you in the Turret walled
By adamant, where a spirit forewarning
  And all-deriding called:
"Man, darest thou—desperate, unappalled—
Be first to lock thee in the armored tower?
I have thee now; and what the battle-hour
  To me shall bring—heed well—thou'lt share;
This plot-work, planned to be the foeman's terror,
  To thee may prove a goblin-snare;
Its very strength and cunning—monstrous error!"

"Stand up, my heart; be strong; what matter
  If here thou seest thy welded tomb?
And let huge Og with thunders batter—
  Duty be still my doom,
Though drowning come in liquid gloom;

First duty, duty next, and duty last;
Ay, Turret, rivet me here to duty fast!"—
So nerved, you fought, wisely and well;
And live, twice live in life and story;
But over your Monitor dirges swell,
In wind and wave that keep the rites of glory.

THE TEMERAIRE

(SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED TO AN ENGLISHMAN OF THE OLD ORDER BY THE FIGHT OF THE MONITOR AND MERRIMAC)

The gloomy hulls, in armor grim,
Like clouds o'er moors have met,
And prove that oak, and iron, and man
Are tough in fibre yet.

But Splendors wane. The sea-fight yields
No front of old display;
The garniture, emblazonment,
And heraldry all decay.

Towering afar in parting light,
The fleets like Albion's forelands shine—
The full-sailed fleets, the shrouded show
Of Ships-of-the-Line.

The fighting Temeraire,
Built of a thousand trees,
Lunging out her lightnings,
And beetling o'er the seas—

O Ship, how brave and rare,
That fought so oft and well,
On open decks you manned the gun
Armorial.
What cheerings did you share,
Impulsive in the van,
When down upon leagued France and
Spain
We English ran—
The freshet at your bowsprit
Like the foam upon the can.
Bickering, your colors
Licked up the Spanish air,
You flapped with flames of battle-flags—
Your challenge, Temeraire!
The rear ones of our fleet
They yearned to share your place,
Still vying with the Victory
Throughout that earnest race—
The Victory, whose Admiral,
With orders nobly won,
Shone in the globe of the battle glow—
The angel in that sun.
Parallel in story,
Lo, the stately pair,
As late in grapple ranging,
The foe between them there—
When four great hulls lay tiered,
And the fiery tempest cleared,
And your prizes twain appeared,
Temeraire!

But Trafalgar' is over now,
  The quarter-deck undone;
The carved and castled navies fire
  Their evening-gun.
O, Titan Temeraire,
  Your stern-lights fade away;
Your bulwarks to the years must yield,
  And heart-of-oak decay.
A pigmy steam-tug tows you,
  Gigantic, to the shore—
Dismantled of your guns and spars,
  And sweeping wings of war.
The rivets clinch the iron-clads,
  Men learn a deadlier lore;
But Fame has nailed your battle-flags—
  Your ghost it sails before:
O, the navies old and oaken,
  O, the Temeraire no more!

A UTILITARIAN VIEW OF THE MONITOR'S FIGHT

Plain be the phrase, yet apt the verse,
  More ponderous than nimble;
For since grimed War here laid aside
His painted pomp, 'twould ill befit
    Overmuch to ply
  The rhyme's barbaric cymbal.

Hail to victory without the gaud
  Of glory; zeal that needs no fans
Of banners; plain mechanic power
Plied cogently in War now placed—
      Where War belongs—
  Among the trades and artisans.

Yet this was battle, and intense—
  Beyond the strife of fleets heroic;
Deadlier, closer, calm 'mid storm;
No passion; all went on by crank,
      Pivot, and screw,
  And calculations of caloric.

Needless to dwell; the story's known.
  The ringing of those plates on plates
Still ringeth round the world—
The clangor of that blacksmiths' fray.
      The anvil-din
  Resounds this message from the Fates:

War yet shall be, and to the end;
  But war-paint shows the streaks of weather;
War yet shall be, but warriors
Are now but operatives; War's made
      Less grand than Peace,
  And a singe runs through lace and feather.

SHILOH

A REQUIEM

(April, 1862)

Skimming lightly, wheeling still,
  The swallows fly low
Over the field in clouded days,
  The forest-field of Shiloh—
Over the field where April rain
Solaced the parched ones stretched in pain
Through the pause of night
That followed the Sunday fight
  Around the church of Shiloh—
The church so lone, the log-built one,
That echoed to many a parting groan
    And natural prayer
  Of dying foemen mingled there—
Foemen at morn, but friends at eve—
  Fame or country least their care:
(What like a bullet can undeceive!)
  But now they lie low,
While over them the swallows skim,
  And all is hushed at Shiloh.

THE BATTLE FOR THE MISSISSIPPI
(April, 1862)

When Israel camped by Migdol hoar,
  Down at her feet her shawm she threw,
But Moses sung and timbrels rung
  For Pharaoh's stranded crew.
So God appears in apt events—
  The Lord is a man of war!
So the strong wing to the muse is given
    In victory's roar.

Deep be the ode that hymns the fleet—
  The fight by night—the fray
Which bore our Flag against the powerful stream,
  And led it up to day.
Dully through din of larger strife
  Shall bay that warring gun;
But none the less to us who live
  It peals—an echoing one.

The shock of ships, the jar of walls,
  The rush through thick and thin—
The flaring fire-rafts, glare and gloom—
  Eddies, and shells that spin—
The boom-chain burst, the hulks dislodged,
  The jam of gun-boats driven,
Or fired, or sunk—made up a war
  Like Michael's waged with leven.

The manned Varuna stemmed and quelled
  The odds which hard beset;
The oaken flag-ship, half ablaze,
  Passed on and thundered yet;
While foundering, gloomed in grimy flame,
  The Ram Manassas—hark the yell!—
Plunged, and was gone; in joy or fright,
  The River gave a startled swell.

They fought through lurid dark till dawn;
  The war-smoke rolled away
With clouds of night, and showed the fleet
  In scarred yet firm array,
Above the forts, above the drift
  Of wrecks which strife had made;
And Farragut sailed up to the town
  An anchored—sheathed the blade.

The moody broadsides, brooding deep,
  Hold the lewd mob at bay,
While o'er the armed decks' solemn aisles
  The meek church-pennons play;
By shotted guns the sailors stand,
  With foreheads bound or bare;
The captains and the conquering crews
  Humble their pride in prayer.

They pray; and after victory, prayer
  Is meet for men who mourn their slain;
The living shall unmoor and sail,
  But Death's dark anchor secret deeps detain.

Yet Glory slants her shaft of rays
  Far through the undisturbed abyss;
There must be other, nobler worlds for them
  Who nobly yield their lives in this.

MALVERN HILL
(July, 1862)

Ye elms that wave on Malvern Hill
  In prime of morn and May,
Recall ye how McClellan's men
    Here stood at bay?
While deep within yon forest dim
  Our rigid comrades lay—
Some with the cartridge in their mouth,
Others with fixed arms lifted South—
    Invoking so
The cypress glades? Ah wilds of woe!

The spires of Richmond, late beheld
  Through rifts in musket-haze,
Were closed from view in clouds of dust
    On leaf-walled ways,
Where streamed our wagons in caravan;
  And the Seven Nights and Days
Of march and fast, retreat and fight,
Pinched our grimed faces to ghastly plight—
    Does the elm wood
Recall the haggard beards of blood?

The battle-smoked flag, with stars eclipsed,
We followed (it never fell!)—
In silence husbanded our strength—
Received their yell;
Till on this slope we patient turned
With cannon ordered well;
Reverse we proved was not defeat;
But ah, the sod what thousands meet!—
Does Malvern Wood
Bethink itself, and muse and brood?

We elms of Malvern Hill
Remember every thing;
But sap the twig will fill:
Wag the world how it will,
Leaves must be green in Spring.

THE VICTOR OF ANTIETAM
(1862)

When tempest winnowed grain from bran,
And men were looking for a man,
Authority called you to the van,
McClellan:
Along the line the plaudit ran,
As later when Antietam's cheers began.

Through storm-cloud and eclipse must move
Each Cause and Man, dear to the stars and Jove;
Nor always can the wisest tell
Deferred fulfillment from the hopeless knell—
The struggler from the floundering ner'er-do-well.

A pall-cloth on the Seven Days fell,
McClellan—
Unprosperously heroical!
Who could Antietam's wreath foretell?

Authority called you; then, in mist
And loom of jeopardy—dismissed.
But staring peril soon appalled;
You, the Discarded, she recalled—
Recalled you, nor endured delay;
And forth you rode upon a blasted way,
Arrayed Pope's rout, and routed Lee's array,
McClellan:
Your tent was choked with captured flags that day,
McClellan.
Antietam was a telling fray.

Recalled you; and she heard your drum
Advancing through the ghastly gloom.
You manned the wall, you propped the Dome,
You stormed the powerful stormer home,
McClellan:
Antietam's cannon long shall boom.

At Alexandria, left alone,
McClellan—
Your veterans sent from you, and thrown
To fields and fortunes all unknown—
What thoughts were yours, revealed to none,
While faithful still you labored on—
Hearing the far Manassas gun!
McClellan,
Only Antietam could atone.

You fought in the front (an evil day,
McClellan)—
The fore-front of the first assay;
The Cause went sounding, groped its way;
The leadsmen quarrelled in the bay;
Quills thwarted swords; divided sway;
The rebel flushed in his lusty May:
You did your best, as in you lay,
McClellan.
Antietam's sun-burst sheds a ray.

Your medalled soldiers love you well,
McClellan:
Name your name, their true hearts swell;
With you they shook dread Stonewall's spell,
With you they braved the blended yell
Of rebel and maligner fell;
With you in shame or fame they dwell,
McClellan:
Antietam-braves a brave can tell.

And when your comrades (now so few,
McClellan—
Such ravage in deep files they rue)
Meet round the board, and sadly view
The empty places; tribute due
They render to the dead—and you!
Absent and silent o'er the blue;
The one-armed lift the wine to *you,*
McClellan,
And great Antietam's cheers renew.

BATTLE OF STONE RIVER, TENNESSEE
A VIEW FROM OXFORD CLOISTERS
(January, 1863)

With Tewksbury and Barnet heath
  In days to come the field shall blend,
The story dim and date obscure;
  In legend all shall end.
Even now, involved in forest shade
  A Druid-dream the strife appears,
The fray of yesterday assumes
  The haziness of years.
    In North and South still beats the vein
    Of Yorkist and Lancastrian.

Our rival Roses warred for Sway—
  For Sway, but named the name of Right;
And Passion, scorning pain and death,
  Lent sacred fervor to the fight.
Each lifted up a broidered cross,
  While crossing blades profaned the sign;
Monks blessed the fratricidal lance,
  And sisters scarfs could twine.
    Do North and South the sin retain
    Of Yorkist and Lancastrian?

But Rosecrans in the cedarn glade,
  And, deep in denser cypress gloom,
Dark Breckinridge, shall fade away
    Or thinly loom.

The pale throngs who in forest cowed
  Before the spell of battle's pause,
Forefelt the stillness that shall dwell
  On them and on their wars.
    North and South shall join the train
    Of Yorkist and Lancastrian.

But where the sword has plunged so deep,
  And then been turned within the wound
By deadly Hate; where Climes contend
    On vasty ground—
No warning Alps or seas between,
  And small the curb of creed or law,
And blood is quick, and quick the brain;
  Shall North and South their rage deplore,
    And reunited thrive amain
    Like Yorkist and Lancastrian?

RUNNING THE BATTERIES

AS OBSERVED FROM THE ANCHORAGE ABOVE VICKSBURGH

(April, 1863)

A moonless night—a friendly one;
  A haze dimmed the shadowy shore
As the first lampless boat slid silent on;
  Hist! and we spake no more;
We but pointed, and stilly, to what we saw.

We felt the dew, and seemed to feel
  The secret like a burden laid.
The first boat melts; and a second keel
  Is blent with the foliaged shade—
Their midnight rounds have the rebel officers made?

Unspied as yet. A third—a fourth—
  Gunboat and transport in Indian file
Upon the war-path, smooth from the North;
  But the watch may they hope to beguile?
The manned river-batteries stretch for mile on mile.

A flame leaps out; they are seen;
  Another and another gun roars;
We tell the course of the boats through the screen
  By each further fort that pours,
And we guess how they jump from their beds on those
      shrouded shores.

Converging fires. We speak, though low:
  "That blastful furnace can they thread?"
"Why, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego
  Came out all right, we read;
The Lord, be sure, he helps his people, Ned."

How we strain our gaze. On bluffs they shun
  A golden growing flames appears—
Confirms to a silvery steadfast one:
  "The town is afire!" crows Hugh: "three cheers!"
Lot stops his mouth: "Nay, lad, better three tears."

A purposed light; it shows our fleet;
  Yet a little late in its searching ray,
So far and strong, that in phantom cheat
  Lank on the deck our shadows lay;
The shining flag-ship stings their guns to furious play.

How dread to mark her near the glare
  And glade of death the beacon throws
Athwart the racing waters there;
  One by one each plainer grows,
Then speeds a blazoned target to our gladdened foes.

The impartial cresset lights as well
  The fixed forts to the boats that run;
And, plunged from their ports, their answers swell
  Back to each fortress dun:
Ponderous words speaks every monster gun.

Fearless they flash through gates of flame,
  The salamanders hard to hit,
Though vivid shows each bulky frame;
  And never the batteries intermit,
Nor the boats huge guns; they fire and flit.

Anon a lull. The beacon dies:
  "Are they out of that strait accurst?"
But other flames now dawning rise,
  Not mellowly brilliant like the first,
But rolled in smoke, whose whitish volumes burst.

A baleful brand, a hurrying torch
  Whereby anew the boats are seen—
A burning transport all alurch!
  Breathless we gaze; yet still we glean
Glimpses of beauty as we eager lean.

The effulgence takes an amber glow
  Which bathes the hill-side villas far;
Affrighted ladies mark the show
  Painting the pale magnolia—
The fair, false, Circe light of cruel War.

The barge drifts doomed, a plague-struck one.
  Shoreward in yawls the sailors fly.
But the gauntlet now is nearly run,
  The spleenful forts by fits reply,
And the burning boat dies down in morning's sky.

All out of range. Adieu, Messieurs!
  Jeers, as it speeds, our parting gun.
So burst we through their barriers
  And menaces every one:
So Porter proves himself a brave man's son.

STONEWALL JACKSON

MORTALLY WOUNDED AT CHANCELLORSVILLE

(May, 1863)

The Man who fiercest charged in fight,
  Whose sword and prayer were long—
    Stonewall!
  Even him who stoutly stood for Wrong,
How can we praise? Yet coming days
  Shall not forget him with this song.

Dead is the Man whose Cause is dead,
Vainly he died and set his seal—
Stonewall!
Earnest in error, as we feel;
True to the thing he deemed was due,
True as John Brown or steel.

Relentlessly he routed us;
But *we* relent, for he is low—
Stonewall!
Justly his fame we outlaw; so
We drop a tear on the bold Virginian's bier,
Because no wreath we owe.

STONEWALL JACKSON
(ASCRIBED TO A VIRGINIAN)

One man we claim of wrought renown
Which not the North shall care to slur;
A Modern lived who sleeps in death,
Calm as the marble Ancients are:
'Tis he whose life, though a vapor's wreath,
Was charged with the lightning's burning breath—
Stonewall, stormer of the war.

But who shall hymn the Roman heart?
A stoic he, but even more:
The iron will and lion thew
Were strong to inflict as to endure:

Who like him could stand, or pursue?
His fate the fatalist followed through;
In all his great soul found to do
Stonewall followed his star.

He followed his star on the Romney march
Through the sleet to the wintry war;
And he followed it on when he bowed the grain—
The Wind of the Shenandoah;
At Gaines's Mill in the giants' strain—
On the fierce forced stride to Manassas-plain,
Where his sword with thunder was clothed again,
Stonewall followed his star.

His star he followed athwart the flood
To Potomac's Northern shore,
When midway wading, his host of braves
"My Maryland!" loud did roar—
To red Antietam's field of graves,
Through mountain-passes, woods and waves,
They followed their pagod with hymns and glaives,
For Stonewall followed a star.

Back it led him to Marye's slope,
Where the shock and the fame he bore;
And to green Moss-Neck it guided him—
Brief respite from throes of war:
To the laurel glade by the Wilderness grim,
Through climaxed victory naught shall dim,
Even unto death it piloted him—
Stonewall followed his star.

Its lead he followed in gentle ways
  Which never the valiant mar;
A cap we sent him, bestarred, to replace
  The sun-scorched helm of war:
    A fillet he made of the shining lace
    Childhood's laughing brow to grace—
      Not his was a goldsmith's star.

O, much of doubt in after days
  Shall cling, as now, to the war;
Of the right and the wrong they'll still debate,
  Puzzled by Stonewall's star:
    "Fortune went with the North elate,"
    "Ay, but the South had Stonewall's weight,
      And he fell in the South's great war."

GETTYSBURG

THE CHECK

(July, 1863)

O pride of the days in prime of the months
  Now trebled in great renown,
When before the ark of our holy cause
    Fell Dagon down—
Dagon foredoomed, who, armed and targed,
Never his impious heart enlarged
Beyond that hour; God walled his power,
And there the last invader charged.

He charged, and in that charge condensed
His all of hate and all of fire;
He sought to blast us in his scorn,
And wither us in his ire.
Before him went the shriek of shells—
Aerial screamings, taunts and yells;
Then the three waves in flashed advance
Surged, but were met, and back they set:
Pride was repelled by sterner pride,
And Right is a strong-hold yet.

Before our lines it seemed a beach
Which wild September gales have strown
With havoc on wreck, and dashed therewith
Pale crews unknown—
Men, arms, and steeds. The evening sun
Died on the face of each lifeless one,
And died along the winding marge of fight
And searching-parties lone.

Sloped on the hill the mounds were green,
Our centre held that place of graves,
And some still hold it in their swoon,
And over these a glory waves.
The warrior-monument, crashed in fight,
Shall soar transfigured in loftier light,
A meaning ampler bear;
Soldier and priest with hymn and prayer
Have laid the stone, and every bone
Shall rest in honor there.

THE HOUSE-TOP

A NIGHT PIECE

(July, 1863)

No sleep. The sultriness pervades the air
And binds the brain—a dense oppression, such
As tawny tigers feel in matted shades,
Vexing their blood and making apt for ravage.
Beneath the stars the roofy desert spreads
Vacant as Libya. All is hushed near by.
Yet fitfully from far breaks a mixed surf
Of muffled sound, the Atheist roar of riot.
Yonder, where parching Sirius set in drought,
Balefully glares red Arson—there—and there.
The Town is taken by its rats—ship-rats
And rats of the wharves. All civil charms
And priestly spells which late held hearts in awe—
Fear-bound, subjected to a better sway
Than sway of self; these like a dream dissolve,
And man rebounds whole æons back in nature.
Hail to the low dull rumble, dull and dead,
And ponderous drag that jars the wall.
Wise Draco comes, deep in the midnight roll
Of black artillery; he comes, though late;
In code corroborating Calvin's creed
And cynic tyrannies of honest kings;
He comes, nor parlies; and the Town, redeemed,
Gives thanks devout; nor, being thankful, heeds
The grimy slur on the Republic's faith implied,
Which holds that Man is naturally good,
And—more—is Nature's Roman, never to be scourged.

LOOK-OUT MOUNTAIN

THE NIGHT FIGHT

(November, 1863)

Who inhabiteth the Mountain
  That it shines in lurid light,
And is rolled about with thunders,
  And terrors, and a blight,
Like Kaf the peak of Eblis—
  Kaf, the evil height?
Who has gone up with a shouting
  And a trumpet in the night?

There is battle in the Mountain—
  Might assaulteth Might;
'Tis the fastness of the Anarch,
  Torrent-torn, an ancient height;
The crags resound the clangor
  Of the war of Wrong and Right;
And the armies in the valley
  Watch and pray for dawning light.

Joy, joy, the day is breaking,
  And the cloud is rolled from sight;
There is triumph in the Morning
For the Anarch's plunging flight;
God has glorified the Mountain
  Where a Banner burneth bright,
And the armies in the valley
  They are fortified in right.

CHATTANOOGA
(November, 1863)

A kindling impulse seized the host
  Inspired by heaven's elastic air;
Their hearts outran their General's plan,
  Though Grant commanded there—
  Grant, who without reserve can dare;
And, "Well, go on and do your will,"
  He said, and measured the mountain then:
So master-riders fling the rein—
  But you must know your men.

On yester-morn in grayish mist,
  Armies like ghosts on hills had fought,
And rolled from the cloud their thunders loud
  The Cumberlands far had caught:
  To-day the sunlit steeps are sought.
Grant stood on cliffs whence all was plain,
  And smoked as one who feels no cares;
But mastered nervousness intense
  Alone such calmness wears.

The summit-cannon plunge their flame
  Sheer down the primal wall,
But up and up each linking troop
  In stretching festoons crawl—
  Nor fire a shot. Such men appall
The foe, though brave. He, from the brink,
  Looks far along the breadth of slope,
And sees two miles of dark dots creep,
  And knows they mean the cope.

He sees them creep. Yet here and there
Half hid 'mid leafless groves they go;
As men who ply through traceries high
Of turreted marbles show—
So dwindle these to eyes below.
But fronting shot and flanking shell
Sliver and rive the inwoven ways;
High tops of oaks and high hearts fall,
But never the climbing stays.

From right to left, from left to right
They roll the rallying cheer—
Vie with each other, brother with brother,
Who shall the first appear—
What color-bearer with colors clear
In sharp relief, like sky-drawn Grant,
Whose cigar must now be near the stump—
While in solicitude his back
Heaps slowly to a hump.

Near and more near; till now the flags
Run like a catching flame;
And one flares highest, to peril nighest—
He means to make a name:
Salvos! they give him his fame.
The staff is caught, and next the rush,
And then the leap where death has led;
Flag answered flag along the crest,
And swarms of foemen fled.

But some who gained the envied Alp,
  And—eager, ardent, earnest there—
Dropped into Death's wide-open arms,
  Quelled on the wing like eagles struck in air—
  Forever they slumber young and fair,
The smile upon them as they died;
  Their end attained, that end a height:
Life was to these a dream fulfilled,
  And death a starry night.

THE ARMIES OF THE WILDERNESS
(1863-4)

I

Like snows the camps on Southern hills
  Lay all the winter long,
Our levies there in patience stood—
  They stood in patience strong.
On fronting slopes gleamed other camps
  Where faith as firmly clung:
Ah, froward kin! so brave amiss—
  The bravos of the Wrong.

In this strife of brothers
  (God, hear their country call),
However it be, whatever betide,
  Let not the just one fall.

Through the pointed glass our soldiers saw
  The foot-ball bounding sent;
They could have joined them in their sport
  But for the vale's deep rent.

And others turned the reddish soil,
  Like diggers of graves they bent;
The reddish soil and trenching toil
  Begat presentiment.

Did the Fathers feel mistrust?
  Can no final good be wrought?
Over and over, again and again
  Must the fight for the Right be fought?

They lead a Gray-back to the crag:
  "Your earth-works yonder—tell us, man!"
"A prisoner—no deserter, I,
  Nor one of the tell-tale clan."
His rags they mark: "True-blue like you
  Should wear the color—your Country's, man!"
He grinds his teeth: "However that be,
  Yon earth-works have their plan."

Such brave ones, foully snared
  By Belial's wily plea,
Were faithful unto the evil end—
  Feudal fidelity.

"Well, then, your camps—come, tell the names!"
  Freely he leveled his finger then:
"Yonder—see—are our Georgians; on the crest,
  The Carolinians; lower, past the glen,
Virginians—Alabamians—Mississippians—Kentuckians
  (Follow my finger)—Tennesseans; and the ten

Camps *there*—ask your grave-pits; they'll tell.
Halloa! I see the picket-hut, the den
Where I last night lay." "Where's Lee?"
"In the hearts and bayonets of all yon men!"

The tribes swarm up to war
As in ages long ago,
Ere the palm of promise leaved
And the lily of Christ did blow.

Their mounted pickets for miles are spied
Dotting the lowland plain,
The nearer ones in their veteran-rags—
Loutish they loll in lazy disdain.
But ours in perilous places bide
With rifles ready and eyes that strain
Deep through the dim suspected wood
Where the Rapidan rolls amain.

The Indian has passed away,
But creeping comes another—
Deadlier far. Picket,
Take heed—take heed of thy brother!

From a wood-hung height, an outpost lone,
Crowned with a woodman's fort,
The sentinel looks on a land of dole,
Like Paran, all amort.
Black chimneys, gigantic in moor-like wastes,
The scowl of the clouded sky retort;
The hearth is a houseless stone again—
Ah! where shall the people be sought?

Since the venom such blastment deals,
The South should have paused, and thrice,
Ere with heat of her hate she hatched
The egg with the cockatrice.

A path down the mountain winds to the glade
Where the dead of the Moonlight Fight lie low;
A hand reaches out of the thin-laid mould
As begging help which none can bestow.
But the field-mouse small and busy ant
Heap their hillocks, to hide if they may the woe:
By the bubbling spring lies the rusted canteen,
And the drum which the drummer-boy dying let go.

Dust to dust, and blood for blood—
Passion and pangs! Has Time
Gone back? or is this the Age
Of the world's great Prime?

The wagon mired and cannon dragged
Have trenched their scar; the plain
Tramped like the cindery beach of the damned—
A site for the city of Cain.
And stumps of forests for dreary leagues
Like a massacre show. The armies have lain
By fires where gums and balms did burn,
And the seeds of Summer's reign.

Where are the birds and boys?
Who shall go chestnutting when
October returns? The nuts—
O, long ere they grow again.

They snug their huts with the chapel-pews,
In court-houses stable their steeds—
Kindle their fires with indentures and bonds,
And old Lord Halifax's parchment deeds;
And Virginian gentlemen's libraries old—
Books which only the scholar heeds—
Are flung to his kennel. It is ravage and range,
And gardens are left to weeds.

Turned adrift into war
Man runs wild on the plain,
Like the jennets let loose
On the Pampas—zebras again.

Like the Pleiads dim, see the tents through the storm—
Aloft by the hill-side hamlet's graves,
On a head-stone used for a hearth-stone there
The water is bubbling for punch for our braves.
What if the night be drear, and the blast
Ghostly shrieks? their rollicking staves
Make frolic the heart; beating time with their swords,
What care they if Winter raves?

Is life but a dream? and so,
In the dream do men laugh aloud?
So strange seems mirth in a camp,
So like a white tent to a shroud.

The May-weed springs; and comes a Man
And mounts our Signal Hill;
A quiet Man, and plain in garb—
Briefly he looks his fill,

Then drops his gray eye on the ground,
  Like a loaded mortar he is still:
Meekness and grimness meet in him—
  The silent General.

Were men but strong and wise,
  Honest as Grant, and calm,
War would be left to the red and black ants,
  And the happy world disarm.

That eve a stir was in the camps,
  Forerunning quiet soon to come
Among the streets of beechen huts
  No more to know the drum.
The weed shall choke the lowly door,
  And foxes peer within the gloom,
Till scared perchance by Mosby's prowling men,
  Who ride in the rear of doom.

Far West, and farther South,
  Wherever the sword has been,
Deserted camps are met,
  And desert graves are seen.

The livelong night they ford the flood;
  With guns held high they silent press,
Till shimmers the grass in their bayonets' sheen—
  On Morning's banks their ranks they dress;
Then by the forests lightly wind,
  Whose waving boughs the pennons seem to bless,
Borne by the cavalry scouting on—
  Sounding the Wilderness.

Like shoals of fish in spring
That visit Crusoe's isle,
The host in the lonesome place—
The hundred thousand file.

The foe that held his guarded hills
Must speed to woods afar;
For the scheme that was nursed by the Culpepper hearth
With the slowly-smoked cigar—
The scheme that smouldered through winter long
Now bursts into act—into war—
The resolute scheme of a heart as calm
As the Cyclone's core.

The fight for the city is fought
In Nature's old domain;
Man goes out to the wilds,
And Orpheus' charm is vain.

In glades they meet skull after skull
Where pine-cones lay—the rusted gun,
Green shoes full of bones, the mouldering coat
And cuddled-up skeleton;
And scores of such. Some start as in dreams,
And comrades lost bemoan:
By the edge of those wilds Stonewall had charged—
But the Year and the Man were gone.

At the height of their madness
The night winds pause,
Recollecting themselves;
But no lull in these wars.

A gleam!—a volley! And who shall go
  Storming the swarmers in jungles dread?
No cannon-ball answers, no proxies are sent—
  They rush in the shrapnel's stead.
Plume and sash are vanities now—
  Let them deck the pall of the dead;
They go where the shade is, perhaps into Hades,
  Where the brave of all times have led.

There's a dust of hurrying feet,
  Bitten lips and bated breath,
And drums that challenge to the grave,
  And faces fixed, forefeeling death.

What husky huzzahs in the hazy groves—
  What flying encounters fell;
Pursuer and pursued like ghosts disappear
  In gloomed shade—their end who shall tell?
The crippled, a ragged-barked stick for a crutch,
  Limp to some elfin dell—
Hobble from the sight of dead faces—white
  As pebbles in a well.

Few burial rites shall be;
  No priest with book and band
Shall come to the secret place
  Of the corpse in the foeman's land.

Watch and fast, march and fight—clutch your gun!
  Day-fights and night-fights; sore is the stress;
Look, through the pines what line comes on?
  Longstreet slants through the hauntedness!

'Tis charge for charge, and shout for yell:
  Such battles on battles oppress—
But Heaven lent strength, the Right strove well,
  And emerged from the Wilderness.

Emerged, for the way was won;
  But the Pillar of Smoke that led
Was brand-like with ghosts that went up
    Ashy and red.

None can narrate that strife in the pines,
  A seal is on it—Sabæan lore!
Obscure as the wood, the entangled rhyme
  But hints at the maze of war—
Vivid glimpses or livid through peopled gloom,
  And fires which creep and char—
A riddle of death, of which the slain
    Sole solvers are.

Long they withhold the roll
  Of the shroudless dead. It is right;
Not yet can we bear the flare
    Of the funeral light.

ON THE PHOTOGRAPH OF A CORPS COMMANDER

Ay, man is manly. Here you see
  The warrior-carriage of the head,
And brave dilation of the frame;
  And lighting all, the soul that led
In Spottsylvania's charge to victory,
  Which justifies his fame.

A cheering picture. It is good
To look upon a Chief like this,
In whom the spirit moulds the form.
Here favoring Nature, oft remiss,
With eagle mien expressive has endued
A man to kindle strains that warm.

Trace back his lineage, and his sires,
Yeoman or noble, you shall find
Enrolled with men of Agincourt,
Heroes who shared great Harry's mind.
Down to us come the knightly Norman fires,
And front the Templars bore.

Nothing can lift the heart of man
Like manhood in a fellow-man.
The thought of heaven's great King afar
But humbles us—too weak to scan;
But manly greatness men can span,
And feel the bonds that draw.

THE SWAMP ANGEL

There is a coal-black Angel
With a thick Afric lip,
And he dwells (like the hunted and harried)
In a swamp where the green frogs dip.
But his face is against a City
Which is over a bay of the sea,
And he breathes with a breath that is blastment,
And dooms by a far decree.

By night there is fear in the City,
  Through the darkness a star soareth on;
There's a scream that screams up to the zenith,
  Then the poise of a meteor lone—
Lighting far the pale fright of the faces,
  And downward the coming is seen;
Then the rush, and the burst, and the havoc,
  And wails and shrieks between.

It comes like the thief in the gloaming;
  It comes, and none may foretell
The place of the coming—the glaring;
  They live in a sleepless spell
That wizens, and withers, and whitens;
  It ages the young, and the bloom
Of the maiden is ashes of roses—
  The Swamp Angel broods in his gloom.

Swift is his messengers' going,
  But slowly he saps their halls,
As if by delay deluding.
  They move from their crumbling walls
Farther and farther away;
  But the Angel sends after and after,
By night with the flame of his ray—
  By night with the voice of his screaming—
Sends after them, stone by stone,
  And farther walls fall, farther portals,
And weed follows weed through the Town.

Is this the proud City? the scorner
  Which never would yield the ground?
Which mocked at the coal-black Angel?
  The cup of despair goes round.

Vainly she calls upon Michael
  (The white man's seraph was he),
For Michael has fled from his tower
  To the Angel over the sea.

Who weeps for the woeful City
  Let him weep for our guilty kind;
Who joys at her wild despairing—
  Christ, the Forgiver, convert his mind.

THE BATTLE FOR THE BAY
(August, 1864)

O mystery of noble hearts,
  To whom mysterious seas have been
In midnight watches, lonely calm and storm,
    A stern, sad discipline,
And rooted out the false and vain,
  And chastened them to aptness for
  Devotion and the deeds of war,
And death which smiles and cheers in spite of pain.

Beyond the bar the land-wind dies,
  The prow becharmed at anchor swim:
A summer night; the stars withdrawn look down—
    Fair eve of battle grim.

The sentries pace, bonetas glide;
  Below, the sleeping sailors swing,
  And in their dreams to quarters spring,
Or cheer their flag, or breast a stormy tide.

But drums are beat: *Up anchor all!*
  The triple lines steam slowly on;
Day breaks; along the sweep of decks each man
      Stands coldly by his gun—
As cold as it. But he shall warm—
  Warm with the solemn metal there,
  And all its ordered fury share,
In attitude a gladiatorial form.

The Admiral—yielding to the love
  Which held his life and ship so dear—
Sailed second in the long fleet's midmost line;
      Yet thwarted all their care:
He lashed himself aloft, and shone
  Star of the fight, with influence sent
  Throughout the dusk embattlement;
And so they neared the strait and walls of stone.

No sprightly fife as in the field,
  The decks were hushed like fanes in prayer;
Behind each man a holy angel stood—
      He stood, though none was 'ware.
Out spake the forts on either hand,
  Back speak the ships when spoken to,
  And set their flags in concert true,
And *On and in!* is Farragut's command.

But what delays? 'mid wounds above
Dim buoys give hint of death below—
Sea-ambuscades, where evil art had aped
Hecla that hides in snow.
The centre-van, entangled, trips;
The starboard leader holds straight on:
A cheer for the Tecumseh!—nay,
Before their eyes the turreted ship goes down!

The fire redoubles. While the fleet
Hangs dubious—ere the horror ran—
The Admiral rushes to his rightful place—
Well met! apt hour and man!—
Closes with peril, takes the lead,
His action is a stirring call;
He strikes his great heart through them all,
And is the genius of their daring deed.

The forts are daunted, slack their fire,
Confounded by the deadlier aim
And rapid broadsides of the speeding fleet,
And fierce denouncing flame.
Yet shots from four dark hulls embayed
Come raking through the loyal crews,
Whom now each dying mate endues
With his last look, anguished yet undismayed.

A flowering time to guilt is given,
And traitors have their glorying hour;
A late, but sure, the righteous Paramount comes—
Palsy is on their power!

So proved it with the rebel keels,
  The strong-holds past: assailed, they run;
  The Selma strikes, and the work is done:
The dropping anchor the achievement seals.

But no, she turns—the Tennessee!
  The solid Ram of iron and oak,
Strong as Evil, and bold as Wrong, though lone—
    A pestilence in her smoke.
The flagship is her singled mark,
  The wooden Hartford. Let her come;
  She challenges the planet of Doom,
And naught shall save her—not her iron bark.

Slip anchor, all! and at her, all!
  Bear down with rushing beaks—and now!
First the Monongahela struck—and reeled;
    The Lackawana's prow
Next crashed—crashed, but not crashing; then
  The Admiral rammed, and rasping nigh
  Sloped in a broadside, which glanced by:
The Monitors battered at her adamant den.

The Chickasaw plunged beneath the stern
  And pounded there; a huge wrought orb
From the Manhattan pierced one wall, but dropped;
    Others the seas absorb.
Yet stormed on all sides, narrowed in,
  Hampered and cramped, the bad one fought—
  Spat ribald curses from the port
Whose shutters, jammed, locked up this Man-of-Sin.

No pause or stay. They made a din
Like hammers round a boiler forged;
Now straining strength tangled itself with strength,
Till Hate her will disgorged.
The white flag showed, the fight was won—
Mad shouts went up that shook the Bay;
But pale on the scarred fleet's decks there lay
A silent man for ever silenced gun.

And quiet far below the wave,
Where never cheers shall move their sleep,
Some who did boldly, nobly earn them, lie—
Charmed children of the deep.
But decks that now are in the seed,
And cannon yet within the mine,
Shall thrill the deeper, gun and pine,
Because of the Tecumseh's glorious deed.

SHERIDAN AT CEDAR CREEK
(October, 1864)

Shoe the steed with silver
That bore him to the fray,
When he heard the guns at dawning—
Miles away;
When he heard them calling, calling—
Mount! nor stay:
Quick, or all is lost;
They've surprised and stormed the post,
They push your routed host—
Gallop! retrieve the day.

House the horse in ermine—
  For the foam-flake blew
White through the red October;
  He thundered into view;
They cheered him in the looming,
  Horseman and horse they knew.
    The turn of the tide began,
    The rally of bugles ran,
    He swung his hat in the van;
The electric hoof-spark flew.

Wreathe the steed and lead him—
  For the charge he led
Touched and turned the cypress
  Into amaranths for the head
Of Philip, king of riders,
  Who raised them from the dead.
    The camp (at dawning lost),
    By eve, recovered—forced,
    Rang with laughter of the host
At belated Early fled.

Shroud the horse in sable—
  For the mounds they heap!
There is firing in the Valley,
  And yet no strife they keep;
It is the parting volley,
  It is the pathos deep.
    There is glory for the brave
    Who lead, and nobly save,
    But no knowledge in the grave
Where the nameless followers sleep.

IN THE PRISON PEN
(1864)

Listless he eyes the palisades
And sentries in the glare;
'Tis barren as a pelican-beach—
But his world is ended there.

Nothing to do; and vacant hands
Bring on the idiot-pain;
He tries to think—to recollect,
But the blur is on his brain.

Around him swarm the plaining ghosts
Like those on Virgil's shore—
A wilderness of faces dim,
And pale ones gashed and hoar.

A smiting sun. No shed, no tree;
He totters to his lair—
A den that sick hands dug in earth
Ere famine wasted there,

Or, dropping in his place, he swoons,
Walled in by throngs that press,
Till forth from the throngs they bear him dead—
Dead in his meagreness.

He rides at their head;
  A crutch by his saddle just slants in view,
One slung arm is in splints, you see,
  Yet he guides his strong steed—how coldly too.

He brings his regiment home—
  Not as they filed two years before,
But a remnant half-tattered, and battered, and worn,
Like castaway sailors, who—stunned
    By the surf's loud roar,
  Their mates dragged back and seen no more—
Again and again breast the surge,
  And at last crawl, spent, to shore.

A still rigidity and pale—
  An Indian aloofness lones his brow;
He has lived a thousand years
Compressed in battle's pains and prayers,
  Marches and watches slow.
There are welcoming shouts, and flags;
  Old men off hat to the Boy,
Wreaths from gay balconies fall at his feet,
  But to *him*—there comes alloy.

It is not that a leg is lost,
  It is not that an arm is maimed,
It is not that the fever has racked—
  Self he has long disclaimed.

But all through the Seven Days' Fight,
And deep in the Wilderness grim,
And in the field-hospital tent,
And Petersburg crater, and dim
Lean brooding in Libby, there came—
Ah heaven!—what *truth* to him.

THE EAGLE OF THE BLUE

Aloft he guards the starry folds
Who is the brother of the star;
The bird whose joy is in the wind
Exulteth in the war.

No painted plume—a sober hue,
His beauty is his power;
That eager calm of gaze intent
Foresees the Sibyl's hour.

Austere, he crowns the swaying perch,
Flapped by the angry flag;
The hurricane from the battery sings,
But his claw has known the crag.

Amid the scream of shells, his scream
Runs shrilling; and the glare
Of eyes that brave the blinding sun
The volleyed flame can bear.

The pride of quenchless strength is his—
  Strength which, though chained, avails;
The very rebel looks and thrills—
  The anchored Emblem hails.

Though scarred in many a furious fray,
  No deadly hurt he knew;
Well may we think his years are charmed—
  The Eagle of the Blue.

A DIRGE FOR McPHERSON
KILLED IN FRONT OF ATLANTA
(July, 1864)

Arms reversed and banners craped—
    Muffled drums;
Snowy horses sable-draped—
    McPherson comes.

But, tell us, shall we know him more,
Lost-Mountain and lone Kenesaw?

Brave the sword upon the pall—
    A gleam in gloom;
So a bright name lighteth all
    McPherson's doom.

Bear him through the chapel-door—
    Let priest in stole
Pace before the warrior
    Who led. Bell—toll!

Lay him down within the nave,
The Lesson read—
Man is noble, man is brave,
But man's—a weed.

Take him up again and wend
Graveward, nor weep:
There's a trumpet that shall rend
This Soldier's sleep.

Pass the ropes the coffin round,
And let descend;
Prayer and volley—let it sound
McPherson's end.

True fame is his, for life is o'er—
Sarpedon of the mighty war.

AT THE CANNON'S MOUTH

DESTRUCTION OF THE RAM ALBEMARLE BY THE TORPEDO-LAUNCH

(October, 1864)

Palely intent, he urged his keel
Full on the guns, and touched the spring;
Himself involved in the bolt he drove
Timed with the armed hull's shot that stove
His shallop—die or do!
Into the flood his life he threw,
Yet lives—unscathed—a breathing thing
To marvel at.

He has his fame;
But that mad dash at death, how name?

Had Earth no charm to stay in the Boy
The martyr-passion? Could he dare
Disdain the paradise of opening joy
Which beckons the fresh heart every where?
Life has more lures than any girl
For youth and strength; puts forth a share
Of beauty, hinting of yet rarer store;
And ever with unfathomable eyes,
Which baffingly entice,
Still strangely does Adonis draw.
And life once over, who shall tell the rest?
Life is, of all we know, God's best.
What imps these eagles then, that they
Fling disrespect on life by that proud way
In which they soar above our lower clay.

Pretence of wonderment and doubt unblest:
In Cushing's eager deed was shown
A spirit which brave poets own—
That scorn of life which earns life's crown;
Earns, but not always wins; but *he*—
The star ascended in his nativity.

THE MARCH TO THE SEA
(December, 1864)

Not Kenesaw high-arching,
  Nor Allatoona's glen—
Though there the graves lie parching—
  Stayed Sherman's miles of men;
From charred Atlanta marching
  They launched the sword again.
    The columns streamed like rivers
      Which in their course agree,
    And they streamed until their flashing
      Met the flashing of the sea:
        It was glorious glad marching,
        That marching to the sea.

They brushed the foe before them
  (Shall gnats impede the bull?);
Their own good bridges bore them
  Over swamps or torrents full,
And the grand pines waving o'er them
  Bowed to axes keen and cool.
    The columns grooved their channels,
      Enforced their own decree,
    And their power met nothing larger
      Until it met the sea:
        It was glorious glad marching,
        A marching glad and free.

Kilpatrick's snare of riders
  In zigzags mazed the land,
Perplexed the pale Southsiders
  With feints on every hand;

Vague menace awed the hiders
In fort beyond command.
To Sherman's shifting problem
No foeman knew the key;
But onward went the marching
Unpausing to the sea:
It was glorious glad marching,
The swinging step was free.

The flankers ranged like pigeons
In clouds through field or wood;
The flocks of all those regions,
The herds and horses good,
Poured in and swelled the legions,
For they caught the marching mood.
A volley ahead! They hear it;
And they hear the repartee:
Fighting was but frolic
In that marching to the sea:
It was glorious glad marching,
A marching bold and free.

All nature felt their coming,
The birds like couriers flew,
And the banners brightly blooming
The slaves by thousands drew,
And they marched beside the drumming,
And they joined the armies blue.

The cocks crowed from the cannon
(Pets named from Grant and Lee),
Plumed fighters and campaigners
In that marching to the sea:
It was glorious glad marching,
For every man was free.

The foragers through calm lands
Swept in tempest gay,
And they breathed the air of balm-lands
Where rolled savannas lay,
And they helped themselves from farm-lands—
As who should say them nay?
The regiments uproarious
Laughed in Plenty's glee;
And they marched till their broad laughter
Met the laughter of the sea:
It was glorious glad marching,
That marching to the sea.

The grain of endless acres
Was threshed (as in the East)
By the trampling of the Takers,
Strong march of man and beast;
The flails of those earth-shakers
Left a famine where they ceased.
The arsenals were yielded;
The sword (that was to be),
Arrested in the forging,
Rued that marching to the sea:
It was glorious glad marching,
But ah, the stern decree!

For behind they left a wailing,
  A terror and a ban,
And blazing cinders sailing,
  And houseless households wan,
Wide zones of counties paling,
  And towns where maniacs ran,
    Was the havoc, retribution?
      But howsoe'er it be,
    They will long remember Sherman
      And his streaming columns free—
        They will long remember Sherman
        Marching to the sea.

THE FRENZY IN THE WAKE

SHERMAN'S ADVANCE THROUGH THE CAROLINAS

(February, 1865)

So strong to suffer, shall we be
  Weak to contend, and break
The sinews of the Oppressor's knee
  That grinds upon the neck?
    O, the garments rolled in blood
      Scorch in cities wrapped in flame,
    And the African—the imp!
      He gibbers, imputing shame.

Shall Time, avenging every woe,
  To us that joy allot
Which Israel thrilled when Sisera's brow
  Showed gaunt and showed the clot?

Curse on their foreheads, cheeks, and eyes—
The Northern faces—true
To the flag we hate, the flag whose stars
Like planets strike us through.

From frozen Maine they come,
Far Minnesota too;
They come to a sun whose rays disown—
May it wither them as the dew!
The ghosts of our slain appeal:
"Vain shall our victories be?"
But back from its ebb the flood recoils—
Back in a whelming sea.

With burning woods our skies are brass,
The pillars of dust are seen;
The live-long day their cavalry pass—
No crossing the road between.
We were sore deceived—an awful host!
They move like a roaring wind,
Have we gamed and lost? but even despair
Shall never our hate rescind.

THE FALL OF RICHMOND

THE TIDINGS RECEIVED IN THE NORTHERN METROPOLIS

(April, 1865)

What mean these peals from every tower,
And crowds like seas that sway?
The cannon reply; they speak the heart
Of the People impassioned, and say—

A city in flags for a city in flames,
  Richmond goes Babylon's way—
    Sing and pray.

O weary years and woeful wars,
  And armies in the grave;
But hearts unquelled at last deter
The helmed dilated Lucifer—
  Honor to Grant the brave,
Whose three stars now like Orion's rise
  When wreck is on the wave—
    Bless his glaive.

Well that the faith we firmly kept,
  And never our aim forswore
For the Terrors that trooped from each recess
When fainting we fought in the Wilderness,
  And Hell made loud hurrah;
But God is in Heaven, and Grant in the Town,
  And Right through might is Law—
    God's way adore.

THE SURRENDER AT APPOMATTOX
(April, 1865)

As billows upon billows roll,
  On victory victory breaks;
Ere yet seven days from Richmond's fall
  And crowning triumph wakes

The loud joy-gun, whose thunders run
  By sea-shore, streams, and lakes.
    The hope and great event agree
    In the sword that Grant received from Lee.

The warring eagles fold the wing,
  But not in Caesar's sway;
Not Rome o'ercome by Roman arms we sing
  As on Pharsalia's day,
But Treason thrown, though a giant grown,
  And Freedom's larger play.
    All human tribes glad token see
    In the close of the wars of Grant and Lee.

A CANTICLE:

SIGNIFICANT OF THE NATIONAL EXALTATION OF ENTHUSIASM AT THE CLOSE OF THE WAR

O the precipice Titanic
  Of the congregated Fall,
And the angle oceanic
  Where the deepening thunders call—
    And the Gorge so grim,
    And the firmamental rim!
Multitudinously thronging
  The waters all converge,
Then they sweep adown in sloping
  Solidity of surge.

The Nation, in her impulse
  Mysterious as the Tide,
In emotion like an ocean
  Moves in power, not in pride;
And is deep in her devotion
  As Humanity is wide.

Thou Lord of hosts victorious,
  The confluence Thou hast twined;
By a wondrous way and glorious
  A passage Thou dost find—
  A passage Thou dost find:
Hosanna to the Lord of hosts,
  The hosts of human kind.

Stable in its baselessness
  When calm is in the air,
The Iris half in tracelessness
  Hovers faintly fair.
Fitfully assailing it
  A wind from heaven blows,
Shivering and paling it
  To blankness of the snows;
While, incessant in renewal,
  The Arch rekindled grows,
Till again the gem and jewel
  Whirl in blinding overthrows—
Till, prevailing and transcending,
  Lo, the Glory perfect there,
And the contest finds an ending,
  For repose is in the air.

But the foamy Deep unsounded,
And the dim and dizzy ledge,
And the booming roar rebounded,
And the gull that skims the edge!
The Giant of the Pool
Heaves his forehead white as wool—
Toward the Iris ever climbing
From the Cataracts that call—
Irremovable vast arras
Draping all the Wall.

The Generations pouring
From times of endless date,
In their going, in their flowing
Ever form the steadfast State;
And Humanity is growing
Toward the fullness of her fate.

Thou Lord of hosts victorious,
Fulfill the end designed;
By a wondrous way and glorious
A passage Thou dost find—
A passage Thou dost find:
Hosanna to the Lord of Hosts,
The hosts of human kind.

THE MARTYR

INDICATIVE OF THE PASSION OF THE PEOPLE ON THE 15TH DAY OF APRIL, 1865

Good Friday was the day
  Of the prodigy and crime,
When they killed him in his pity,
  When they killed him in his prime
Of clemency and calm—
    When with yearning he was filled
    To redeem the evil-willed,
And, though conqueror, be kind;
  But they killed him in his kindness,
  In their madness and their blindness,
And they killed him from behind.

    There is sobbing of the strong,
      And a pall upon the land;
    But the people in their weeping
        Bare the iron hand;
    Beware the People weeping
      When they bare the iron hand.

He lieth in his blood—
  The father in his face;
They have killed him, the Forgiver—
  The Avenger takes his place,
The Avenger wisely stern,
    Who in righteousness shall do
    What the heavens call him to,
And the parricides remand;
  For they killed him in his kindness,
  In their madness and their blindness,
And his blood is on their hand.

There is sobbing of the strong,
And a pall upon the land;
But the People in their weeping
Bare the iron hand:
Beware the People weeping
When they bare the iron hand.

"THE COMING STORM"

A PICTURE BY S. R. GIFFORD, AND OWNED BY E. B. INCLUDED IN THE N.A. EXHIBITION, APRIL, 1865

All feeling hearts must feel for him
Who felt this picture. Presage dim—
Dim inklings from the shadowy sphere
Fixed him and fascinated here.

A demon-cloud like the mountain one
Burst on a spirit as mild
As this urned lake, the home of shades,
But Shakespeare's pensive child.

Never the lines had lightly scanned,
Steeped in fable, steeped in fate;
The Hamlet in his heart was 'ware,
Such hearts can antedate.

No utter surprise can come to him
Who reaches Shakespeare's core;
That which we seek and shun is there—
Man's final lore.

REBEL COLOR-BEARERS AT SHILOH

A PLEA AGAINST THE VINDICTIVE CRY RAISED BY CIVILIANS SHORTLY AFTER THE SURRENDER AT APPOMATTOX

The color-bearers facing death
White in the whirling sulphurous wreath,
  Stand boldly out before the line;
Right and left their glances go,
Proud of each other, glorying in their show;
Their battle-flags about them blow,
  And fold them as in flame divine:
Such living robes are only seen
Round martyrs burning on the green—
And martyrs for the Wrong have been.

Perish their Cause! but mark the men—
Mark the planted statues, then
Draw trigger on them if you can.

The leader of a patriot-band
Even so could view rebels who so could stand;
  And this when peril pressed him sore,
Left aidless in the shivered front of war—
  Skulkers behind, defiant foes before,
And fighting with a broken brand.
The challenge in that courage rare—
Courage defenseless, proudly bare—
Never could tempt him; he could dare
Strike up the leveled rifle there.

Sunday at Shiloh, and the day
When Stonewall charged—McClellan's crimson May,
And Chickamauga's wave of death,
And of the Wilderness the cypress wreath—
  All these have passed away.
The life in the veins of Treason lags,
Her daring color-bearers drop their flags,
  And yield. *Now* shall we fire?
    Can poor spite be?
Shall nobleness in victory less aspire
Than in reverse? Spare Spleen her ire,
  And think how Grant met Lee.

THE MUSTER

SUGGESTED BY TWO DAYS' REVIEW AT WASHINGTON
(May, 1865)

The Abrahamic river—
  Patriarch of floods,
Calls the roll of all his streams
  And watery multitudes:
    Torrent cries to torrent,
      The rapids hail the fall;
    With shouts the inland freshets
      Gather to the call.

The quotas of the Nation,
  Like the water-shed of waves,
Muster into union—
  Eastern warriors, Western braves.

Martial strains are mingling,
Though distant far the bands,
And the wheeling of the squadrons
Is like surf upon the sands.

The bladed guns are gleaming—
Drift in lengthened trim,
Files on files for hazy miles—
Nebulously dim.

O Milky Way of armies—
Star rising after star,
New banners of the Commonwealths,
And eagles of the War.

The Abrahamic river
To sea-wide fullness fed,
Pouring from the thaw-lands
By the God of floods is led:
His deep enforcing current
The streams of ocean own,
And Europe's marge is evened
By rills from Kansas lone.

AURORA-BOREALIS

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE DISSOLUTION OF ARMIES AT THE PEACE

(May, 1865)

What power disbands the Northern Lights
  After their steely play?
The watcher feels a creeping awe
  Of Nature's sway,
    As when appearing,
    He marked their flashed uprearing
  In the cold gloom—
  Retreatings and advancings,
(Like dallyings of doom),
  Transitions and enhancings,
      And bloody ray.

The phantom-host has failed quite,
  Splendor and Terror gone—
Portent or promise—and gives way
  To pale, meek Dawn;
    The coming, going,
    Alike in wonder showing—
Alike the God,
  Decreeing and commanding
The million blades that glowed,
  The muster and disbanding—
      Midnight and Morn.

THE RELEASED REBEL PRISONER
(June, 1865)

Armies he's seen—the herds of war,
  But never such swarms of men
As now in the Nineveh of the North—
  How mad the Rebellion then!

And yet but dimly he divines
  The depth of that deceit,
And superstitution of vast pride
  Humbled to such defeat.

Seductive shone the Chiefs in arms—
  His steel the nearest magnet drew;
Wreathed with its kind, the Gulf-weed drives—
  'Tis Nature's wrong they rue.

His face is hidden in his beard,
  But his heart peers out at eye—
And such a heart! like a mountain-pool
  Where no man passes by.

He thinks of Hill—a brave soul gone;
  And Ashby dead in pale disdain;
And Stuart with the Rupert-plume,
  Whose blue eye never shall laugh again.

He hears the drum; he sees our boys
  From his wasted fields return;
Ladies feast them on strawberries,
  And even to kiss them yearn.

He marks them bronzed, in soldier-trim,
  The rifle proudly borne;
They bear it for an heir-loom home,
  And he—disarmed—jail-worn.

Home, home—his heart is full of it;
  But home he never shall see,
Even should he stand upon the spot:
  'Tis gone!—where his brothers be.

The cypress-moss from tree to tree
  Hangs in his Southern land;
As drear, from thought to thought of his
  Run memories hand in hand.

And so he lingers—lingers on
  In the City of the Foe—
His cousins and his countrymen
  Who see him listless go.

A GRAVE NEAR PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA

Head-board and foot-board duly placed—
  Grassed is the mound between;
Daniel Drouth is the slumberer's name—
  Long may his grave be green!

Quick was his way—a flash and a blow,
  Full of his fire was he—
A fire of hell—'tis burnt out now—
  Green may his grave long be!

May his grave be green, though he
  Was a rebel of iron mould;
Many a true heart—true to the Cause,
  Through the blaze of his wrath lies cold.

May his grave be green—still green
  While happy years shall run;
May none come nigh to disinter
  The—*Buried Gun.*

"FORMERLY A SLAVE"

AN IDEALIZED PORTRAIT, BY E. VEDDER, IN THE SPRING EXHIBITION OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY, 1865

The sufferance of her race is shown,
  And retrospect of life,
Which now too late deliverance dawns upon;
  Yet is she not at strife.

Her children's children they shall know
  The good withheld from her;
And so her reverie takes prophetic cheer—
  In spirit she sees the stir

Far down the depth of thousand years,
  And marks the revel shine;
Her dusky face is lit with sober light,
  Sibylline, yet benign.

THE APPARITION

A RETROSPECT

Convulsions came; and, where the field
  Long slept in pastoral green,
A goblin-mountain was upheaved
(Sure the scared sense was all deceived),
  Marl-glen and slag-ravine.

The unreserve of Ill was there,
  The clinkers in her last retreat;
But, ere the eye could take it in,
Or mind could comprehension win,
  It sunk!—and at our feet.

So, then, Solidity's a crust—
  The core of fire below;
All may go well for many a year,
But who can think without a fear
  Of horrors that happen so?

MAGNANIMITY BAFFLED

"Sharp words we had before the fight;
  But—now the fight is done—
Look, here's my hand," said the Victor bold,
  "Take it—an honest one!
What, holding back? I mean you well;
  Though worsted, you strove stoutly, man;
The odds were great; I honor you;
  Man honors man.

"Still silent, friend? can grudges be?
Yet am I held a foe?—
Turned to the wall, on his cot he lies—
Never I'll leave him so!
Brave one! I here implore your hand;
Dumb still? all fellowship fled?
Nay, then, I'll have this stubborn hand!"
He snatched it—it was dead.

ON THE SLAIN COLLEGIANS

Youth is the time when hearts are large,
And stirring wars
Appeal to the spirit which appeals in turn
To the blade it draws.
If woman incite, and duty show
(Though made the mask of Cain),
Or whether it be Truth's sacred cause,
Who can aloof remain
That shares youth's ardor, uncooled by the snow
Of wisdom or sordid gain?

The liberal arts and nurture sweet
Which give his gentleness to man—
Train him to honor, lend him grace
Through bright examples meet—
That culture which makes never wan
With underminings deep, but holds
The surface still, its fitting place,
And so gives sunniness to the face

And bravery to the heart; what troops
    Of generous boys in happiness thus bred—
    Saturnians through life's Tempe led,
Went from the North and came from the South,
With golden mottoes in the mouth,
    To lie down midway on a bloody bed.
Woe for the homes of the North,

And woe for the seats of the South:
All who felt life's spring in prime,
And were swept by the wind of their place and time—
    All lavish hearts, on whichever side,
Of birth urbane or courage high,
Armed them for the stirring wars—
    Armed them—some to die.
        Apollo-like in pride,
Each would slay his Python—caught
The maxims in his temple taught—
    Aflame with sympathies whose blaze
Perforce enwrapped him—social laws,
    Friendship and kin, and by-gone days—
Vows, kisses—every heart unmoors,
And launches into the seas of wars.
What could they else—North or South?
Each went forth with blessings given
By priests and mothers in the name of Heaven;
    And honor in all was chief.
Warred one for Right, and one for Wrong?
So put it; but they both were young—
Each grape to his cluster clung,
All their elegies are sung.

The anguish of maternal hearts
  Must search for balm divine;
But well the striplings bore their fated parts
  (The heavens all parts assign)—
Never felt life's care or cloy.
Each bloomed and died an unabated Boy;
Nor dreamed what death was—thought it mere
Sliding into some vernal sphere.
They knew the joy, but leaped the grief,
Like plants that flower ere comes the leaf—
Which storms lay low in kindly doom,
And kill them in their flush of bloom.

AMERICA

I

Where the wings of a sunny Dome expand
I saw a Banner in gladsome air—
Starry, like Berenice's Hair—
Afloat in broadened bravery there;
With undulating long-drawn flow,
As rolled Brazilian billows go
Voluminously o'er the Line.
The Land reposed in peace below;
  The children in their glee
Were folded to the exulting heart
  Of young Maternity.

II

Later, and it streamed in fight
  When tempest mingled with the fray,
And over the spear-point of the shaft
  I saw the ambiguous lightning play.
Valor with Valor strove, and died:
Fierce was Despair, and cruel was Pride;
And the lorn Mother speechless stood,
Pale at the fury of her brood.

III

Yet later, and the silk did wind
  Her fair cold form;
Little availed the shining shroud,
  Though ruddy in hue, to cheer or warm,
A watcher looked upon her low, and said—
She sleeps, but sleeps, she is not dead.
  But in that sleeps contortion showed
The terror of the vision there—
  A silent vision unavowed,
Revealing earth's foundation bare,
  And Gorgon in her hidden place.
It was a thing of fear to see
  So foul a dream upon so fair a face,
And the dreamer lying in that starry shroud.

IV

But from the trance she sudden broke—
  The trance, or death into promoted life;
At her feet a shivered yoke,
And in her aspect turned to heaven
  No trace of passion or of strife—
A clear calm look. It spake of pain,
But such as purifies from stain—
Sharp pangs that never come again—
  And triumph repressed by knowledge meet,
Power dedicate, and hope grown wise,
  And youth matured for age's seat—
Law on her brow and empire in her eyes.
  So she, with graver air and lifted flag;
While the shadow, chased by light,
Fled along the far-drawn height,
  And left her on the crag.

VERSES INSCRIPTIVE AND MEMORIAL

ON THE HOME GUARDS

WHO PERISHED IN THE DEFENSE OF LEXINGTON, MISSOURI

The men who here in harness died
  Fell not in vain, though in defeat.
They by their end well fortified
  The Cause, and built retreat
(With memory of their valor tried)
For emulous hearts in many an after fray—
Hearts sore beset, which died at bay.

INSCRIPTION

FOR THE GRAVES AT PEA RIDGE, ARKANSAS

Let none misgive we died amiss
  When here we strove in furious fight:
Furious it was; nathless was this
  Better than tranquil plight,
And tame surrender of the Cause
Hallowed by hearts and by the laws.
  We here who warred for Man and Right,
The choice of warring never laid with us.
  There we were ruled by the traitor's choice,
  Nor long we stood to trim and poise,
But marched, and fell—victorious!

THE FORTITUDE OF THE NORTH

UNDER THE DISASTER OF THE SECOND MANASSAS

No shame they take for dark defeat
  While prizing yet each victory won,
Who fight for the Right through all retreat,
  Nor pause until their work is done.
The Cape-of-Storms is proof to every throe;
  Vainly against that foreland beat
Wild winds aloft and wilder waves below:
The black cliffs gleam through rents in sleet
When the livid Antarctic storm-clouds glow.

ON THE MEN OF MAINE

KILLED IN THE VICTORY OF BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

Afar they fell. It was the zone
  Of fig and orange, cane and lime
(A land how all unlike their own,
With the cold pine-grove overgrown),
  But still their Country's clime.
And there in youth they died for her—
    The Volunteers,
For her went up their dying prayers:
  So vast the Nation, yet so strong the tie.
What doubt shall come, then, to deter
  The Republic's earnest faith and courage high.

AN EPITAPH

When Sunday tidings from the front
  Made pale the priest and people,
And heavily the blessing went,
  And bells were dumb in the steeple;
The Soldier's widow (summering sweetly here,
  In shade by waving beeches lent)
  Felt deep at heart her faith content,
And priest and people borrowed of her cheer.

INSCRIPTION
FOR MARYE'S HEIGHTS, FREDERICKSBURG

To them who crossed the flood
And climbed the hill, with eyes
  Upon the heavenly flag intent,
  And through the deathful tumult went
Even unto death: to them this Stone—
Erect, where they were overthrown—
  Of more than victory the monument.

THE MOUND BY THE LAKE

The grass shall never forget this grave.
When homeward footing it in the sun
  After the weary ride by rail,
The stripling soldiers passed her door,
  Wounded perchance, or wan and pale,
She left her household work undone—
Duly the wayside table spread,
  With evergreens shaded, to regale
Each travel-spent and grateful one.
So warm her heart—childless—unwed,
Who like a mother comforted.

ON THE SLAIN AT CHICKAMAUGA

Happy are they and charmed in life
  Who through long wars arrive unscarred
At peace. To such the wreath be given,
If they unfalteringly have striven—
  In honor, as in limb, unmarred.

Let cheerful praise be rife,
  And let them live their years at ease,
Musing on brothers who victorious died—
  Loved mates whose memory shall ever please.

And yet mischance is honorable too—
  Seeming defeat in conflict justified
Whose end to closing eyes is hid from view.
The will, that never can relent—
The aim, survivor of the bafflement,
  Make this memorial due.

AN UNINSCRIBED MONUMENT
ON ONE OF THE BATTLE-FIELDS OF THE WILDERNESS

  Silence and Solitude may hint
    (Whose home is in yon piny wood)
  What I, though tableted, could never tell—
  The din which here befell,
    And striving of the multitude.
  The iron cones and spheres of death
    Set round me in their rust,
      These, too, if just,
  Shall speak with more than animated breath.
    Thou who beholdest, if thy thought,
  Not narrowed down to personal cheer,
  Take in the import of the quiet here—
    The after-quiet—the calm full fraught;
  Thou too wilt silent stand—
  Silent as I, and lonesome as the land.

ON SHERMAN'S MEN
WHO FELL IN THE ASSAULT OF KENESAW MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA

They said that Fame her clarion dropped
  Because great deeds were done no more—
That even Duty knew no shining ends,
And Glory—'twas a fallen star!
  But battle can heroes and bards restore.
    Nay, look at Kenesaw:
Perils the mailed ones never knew
Are lightly braved by the ragged coats of blue,
And gentler hearts are bared to deadlier war.

ON THE GRAVE OF A YOUNG CAVALRY OFFICER
KILLED IN THE VALLEY OF VIRGINIA

Beauty and youth, with manners sweet, and friends—
  Gold, yet a mind not unenriched had he
Whom here low violets veil from eyes.
  But all these gifts transcended be:
His happier fortune in this mound you see.

A REQUIEM
FOR SOLDIERS LOST IN OCEAN TRANSPORTS

When, after storms that woodlands rue,
  To valleys comes atoning dawn,
The robins blithe their orchard-sports renew;
  And meadow-larks, no more withdrawn,
Caroling fly in the languid blue;

The while, from many a hid recess,
Alert to partake the blessedness,
The pouring mites their airy dance pursue.
So, after ocean's ghastly gales,
When laughing light of hoyden morning breaks,
Every finny hider wakes—
From vaults profound swims up with glittering scales;
Through the delightsome sea he sails,
With shoals of shining tiny things
Frolic on every wave that flings
Against the prow its showery spray;
All creatures joying in the morn,
Save them forever from joyance torn,
Whose bark was lost where now the dolphins play;
Save them that by the fabled shore,
Down the pale stream are washed away,
Far to the reef of bones are borne;
And never revisits them the light,
Nor sight of long-sought land and pilot more;
Nor heed they now the lone bird's flight
Round the lone spar where mid-sea surges pour.

ON A NATURAL MONUMENT
IN A FIELD OF GEORGIA

No trophy this—a Stone unhewn,
And stands where here the field immures
The nameless brave whose palms are won.
Outcast they sleep; yet fame is nigh—
Pure fame of deeds, not doers;

Nor deeds of men who bleeding die
  In cheer of hymns that round them float:
In happy dreams such close the eye.
But withering famine slowly wore,
  And slowly fell disease did gloat.
Even Nature's self did aid deny;
In horror they choked the pensive sigh.
  Yea, off from home sad Memory bore
(Though anguished Yearning heaved that way),
Lest wreck of reason might befall.
  As men in gales shun the lee shore,
Though there the homestead be, and call,
And thitherward winds and waters sway—
As such lorn mariners, so fared they.
But naught shall now their peace molest.
  Their fame is this: they did endure—
Endure, when fortitude was vain
To kindle any approving strain
Which they might hear. To these who rest,
  This healing sleep alone was sure.

COMMEMORATIVE OF A NAVAL VICTORY

Sailors there are of gentlest breed,
  Yet strong, like every goodly thing;
The discipline of arms refines,
  And the wave gives tempering.
  The damasked blade its beam can fling;
It lends the last grave grace:

The hawk, the hound, and sworded nobleman
In Titian's picture for a king,
Are of hunter or warrior race.

In social halls a favored guest
In years that follow victory won,
How sweet to feel your festal fame
In woman's glance instinctive thrown:
Repose is yours—your deed is known,
It musks the amber wine;
It lives, and sheds a light from storied days
Rich as October sunsets brown,
Which make the barren place to shine.

But seldom the laurel wreath is seen
Unmixed with pensive pansies dark;
There's a light and a shadow on every man
Who at last attains his lifted mark—
Nursing through night the ethereal spark.
Elate he never can be;
He feels that spirit which glad had hailed his worth,
Sleep in oblivion.—The shark
Glides white through the phosphorus sea.

PRESENTATION TO THE AUTHORITIES
BY PRIVATES, OF COLORS CAPTURED IN BATTLES ENDING IN THE SURRENDER OF LEE

These flags of armies overthrown—
Flags fallen beneath the sovereign one
In end foredoomed which closes war;

We here, the captors, lay before
  The altar which of right claims all—
Our Country. And as freely we,
  Revering ever her sacred call,
Could lay our lives down—though life be
Thrice loved and precious to the sense
Of such as reap the recompense
  Of life imperiled for just cause—
Imperiled, and yet preserved;
While comrades, whom Duty as strongly nerved,
Whose wives were all as dear, lie low.
But these flags given, glad we go
  To waiting homes with vindicated laws.

THE RETURNED VOLUNTEER TO HIS RIFLE

Over this hearth—my father's seat—
  Repose, to patriot-memory dear,
Thou tried companion, whom at last I greet
  By steepy banks of Hudson here.
How oft I told thee of this scene—
The Highlands blue—the river's narrowing sheen.
Little at Gettysburg we thought
To find such haven; but God kept it green.
Long rest! with belt, and bayonet, and canteen.

THE SCOUT TOWARD ALDIE

The cavalry-camp lies on the slope
  Of what was late a vernal hill,
But now like a pavement bare—
An outpost in the perilous wilds
  Which ever are lone and still;
    But Mosby's men are there—
    Of Mosby best beware.

Great trees the troopers felled, and leaned
  In antlered walls about their tents;
Strict watch they kept; 'twas *Hark!* and *Mark!*
Unarmed none cared to stir abroad
  For berries beyond their forest-fence:
    As glides in seas the shark,
    Rides Mosby through green dark.

All spake of him, but few had seen
  Except the maimed ones or the low;
Yet rumor made him every thing—
A farmer—woodman—refugee—
  The man who crossed the field but now;
    A spell about his life did cling—
    Who to the ground shall Mosby bring?

The morning-bugles lonely play,
  Lonely the evening-bugle calls—
Unanswered voices in the wild;
The settled hush of birds in nest
  Becharms, and all the wood enthralls:
    Memory's self is so beguiled
    That Mosby seems a satyr's child.

They lived as in the Eerie Land—
  The fire-flies showed with fairy gleam;
And yet from pine-tops one might ken
The Capitol Dome—hazy—sublime—
  A vision breaking on a dream:
    So strange it was that Mosby's men
    Should dare to prowl where the Dome was seen.

A ride toward Aldie broke the spell.—
  The Leader lies before his tent
Gazing at heaven's all-cheering lamp
Through blandness of a morning rare;
  His thoughts on bitter-sweets are bent:
    His sunny bride is in the camp—
    But Mosby—graves are beds of damp!

The trumpet calls; he goes within;
  But none the prayer and sob may know:
Her hero he, but bridegroom too.
Ah, love in a tent is a queenly thing,
  And fame, be sure, refines the vow;
    But fame fond wives have lived to rue,
    And Mosby's men fell deeds can do.

Tan-tara! tan-tara! tan-tara!
  Mounted and armed he sits a king;
For pride she smiles if now she peep—
Elate he rides at the head of his men;
  He is young, and command is a boyish thing:
    They file out into the forest deep—
    Do Mosby and his rangers sleep?

The sun is gold, and the world is green,
  Opal the vapors of morning roll;
The champing horses lightly prance—
Full of caprice, and the riders too
  Curving in many a caricole.
    But marshaled soon, by fours advance—
    Mosby had checked that airy dance.

By the hospital-tent the cripples stand—
  Bandage, and crutch, and cane, and sling,
And palely eye the brave array;
The froth of the cup is gone for them
  (Caw! caw! the crows through the blueness wing):
    Yet these were late as bold, as gay;
    But Mosby—a clip, and grass is hay.

How strong they feel on their horses free,
  Tingles the tendoned thigh with life;
Their cavalry jackets make boys of all—
With golden breasts like the oriole;
  The chat, the jest, and laugh are rife.
    But word is passed from the front—a call
    For order; the wood is Mosby's hall.

To which behest one rider sly
  (Spurred, but unarmed) gave little heed—
Of dexterous fun not slow or spare,
He teased his neighbors of touchy mood,
  Into plungings he pricked his steed:
    A black-eyed man on a coal-black mare,
    Alive as Mosby in mountain air.

His limbs were long, and large, and round;
  He whispered, winked—did all but shout:
A healthy man for the sick to view;
The taste in his mouth was sweet at morn;
  Little of care he cared about.
    And yet of pains and pangs he knew—
    In others, maimed by Mosby's crew.

The Hospital Steward—even he
  (Sacred in person as a priest),
And on his coat-sleeve broidered nice
Wore the caduceus, black and green.
  No wonder he sat so light on his beast;
    This cheery man in suit of price
    Not even Mosby dared to slice.

They pass the picket by the pine
  And hollow log—a dreary place;
His horse adroop, and pistol clean;
'Tis cocked—kept leveled toward the wood;
  Strained vigilance ages his childish face.
    Since midnight has that stripling been
    Peering for Mosby through the green.

Splashing they cross the freshet-flood,
  And up the muddy bank they strain;
A horse at a spectral white-ash shies—
One of the span of the ambulance,
  Black as a hearse. They give the rein:
    Silent speed on a scout were wise,
    Could cunning baffle Mosby's spies.

Rumor had come that a band was lodged
  In green retreats of hills that peer
By Aldie (famed for the swordless charge).
Much store they'd heaped of captured arms
  And, peradventure, pilfered cheer;
    For Mosby's lads oft hearts enlarge
    In revelry by some gorge's marge.

"Don't let your sabres rattle and ring;
  To his oat-bag let each man give heed—
There now, that fellow's bag's untied,
Sowing the road with the precious grain.
  Your carbines swing at hand—you need!
    Look to yourselves, and your nags beside,
    Men who after Mosby ride."

Picked lads and keen went sharp before—
  A guard, though scarce against surprise;
And rearmost rode an answering troop,
But flankers none to right or left.
  No bugle peals, no pennon flies:
    Silent they sweep, and fain would swoop
    On Mosby with an Indian whoop.

On, right on through the forest land,
  Nor man, nor maid, nor child was seen—
Not even a dog. The air was still;
The blackened hut they turned to see,
  And spied charred benches on the green;
    A squirrel sprang from the rotting mill
    Whence Mosby sallied late, brave blood to spill.

By worn-out fields they cantered on—
  Drear fields amid the woodlands wide;
By cross-roads of some olden time,
In which grew groves; by gate-stones down—
  Grassed ruins of secluded pride:
    A spell-bound land, long past the prime,
    Fit land for Mosby or for crime.

The brook in the dell they pass. One peers
  Between the leaves: "Ay, there's the place—
There, on the oozy ledge—'twas there
We found the body (Blake's, you know);
  Such whirlings, gurglings round the face—
    Shot drinking! Well, in war all's fair—
    So Mosby says. The bough—take care!"

Hard by, a chapel. Flower-pot mould
  Danked and decayed the shaded roof;
The porch was punk; the clapboards spanned
With ruffled lichens gray or green;
  Red coral-moss was not aloof;
    And mid dry leaves green dead-man's-hand
    Groped toward that chapel in Mosby-land.

The road they leave and take the wood,
  And mark the trace of ridges there—
A wood where once had slept the farm—
A wood where once tobacco grew
  Drowsily in the hazy air,
    And wrought in all kind things a calm—
    Such influence, Mosby! bids disarm.

To ease even yet the place did woo—
  To ease which pines unstirring share,
For ease the weary horses sighed:
Halting, and slackening girths, they feed,
  Their pipes they light, they loiter there;
    Then up, and urging still the Guide,
    On, and after Mosby ride.

This Guide in frowzy coat of brown,
  And beard of ancient growth and mould,
Bestrode a bony steed and strong,
As suited well with bulk he bore—
  A wheezy man with depth of hold
    Who jouncing went. A staff he swung—
    A wight whom Mosby's wasp had stung.

Burnt out and homeless—hunted long!
  That wheeze he caught in autumn-wood
Crouching (a fat man) for his life,
And spied his lean son 'mong the crew
  That probed the covert. Ah! black blood
    Was his 'gainst even child and wife—
    Fast friends to Mosby. Such the strife.

A lad, unhorsed by sliding girths,
  Strains hard to readjust his seat
Ere the main body show the gap
'Twixt them and the rear-guard; scrub-oaks near
  He sidelong eyes, while hands move fleet;
    Then mounts and spurs. One drops his cap—
    "Let Mosby find!" nor heeds mishap.

A gable time-stained peeps through trees:
"You mind the fight in the haunted house?
That's it; we clenched them in the room—
An ambuscade of ghosts, we deemed,
But proved sly rebels on a bouse!
Luke lies in the yard." The chimneys loom:
Some muse on Mosby—some on doom.

Less nimbly now through brakes they wind,
And ford wild creeks where men have drowned;
The pool they skirt, avoid the fen,
And so till night, when down they lie,
Their steeds still saddled, in wooded ground:
Rein in hand they slumber then,
Dreaming of Mosby's cedarn den.

But Colonel and Major friendly sat
Where boughs deformed low made a seat.
The Young Man talked (all sworded and spurred)
Of the partisan's blade he longed to win,
And frays in which he meant to beat.
The grizzled Major smoked, and heard:
"But what's what—Mosby?" "No, a bird."

A contrast here like sire and son,
Hope and Experience sage did meet;
The Youth was brave, the Senior too;
But through the Seven Days one had served,
And gasped with the rear-guard in retreat:
So he smoked and smoked, and the wreath he blew-
"Any *sure* news of Mosby's crew?"

He smoked and smoked, eyeing the while
  A huge tree hydra-like in growth—
Moon-tinged—with crook'd boughs rent or lopped—
Itself a haggard forest. "Come!"
  The Colonel cried, "to talk you're loath;
    D'ye hear? I say he must be stopped,
    This Mosby—caged, and hair close cropped."

"Of course; but what's that dangling there?"
  "Where?" "From the tree—that gallows-bough;"
"A bit of frayed bark, is it not?"
"Ay—or a rope; did *we* hang last?—
  Don't like my neckerchief any how;"
    He loosened it: "O ay, we'll stop
    This Mosby—but that vile jerk and drop!"

By peep of light they feed and ride,
  Gaining a grove's green edge at morn,
And mark the Aldie hills uprear
And five gigantic horsemen carved
  Clear-cut against the sky withdrawn;
    Are more behind? an open snare?
    Or Mosby's men but watchmen there?

The ravaged land was miles behind,
  And Loudon spread her landscape rare;
Orchards in pleasant lowlands stood,
Cows were feeding, a cock loud crew,
  But not a friend at need was there;
    The valley-folk were only good
    To Mosby and his wandering brood.

What best to do? what mean yon men?
  Colonel and Guide their minds compare;
Be sure some looked their Leader through;
Dismounted, on his sword he leaned
  As one who feigns an easy air;
    And yet perplexed he was they knew—
    Perplexed by Mosby's mountain-crew.

The Major hemmed as he would speak,
  But checked himself, and left the ring
Of cavalrymen about their Chief—
Young courtiers mute who paid their court
  By looking with confidence on their king;
    They knew him brave, foresaw no grief—
    But Mosby—the time for thought is brief.

The Surgeon (sashed in sacred green)
  Was glad 'twas not for *him* to say
What next should be; if a trooper bleeds,
Why he will do his best, as wont,
  And his partner in black will aid and pray;
    But judgment bides with him who leads,
    And Mosby many a problem breeds.

This Surgeon was the kindliest man
  That ever a callous trade professed;
He felt for him, that Leader young,
And offered medicine from his flask:
  The Colonel took it with marvelous zest.
    For such fine medicine good and strong,
    Oft Mosby and his foresters long.

A charm of proof. "Ho, Major, come—
  Pounce on yon men! Take half your troop,
Through the thickets wind—pray speedy be—
And gain their rear. And, Captain Morn,
  Picket these roads—all travelers stop;
    The rest to the edge of this crest with me,
    That Mosby and his scouts may see."

Commanded and done. Ere the sun stood steep,
  Back came the Blues, with a troop of Grays,
Ten riding double—luckless ten!—
Five horses gone, and looped hats lost,
  And love-locks dancing in a maze—
    Certes, but sophomores from the glen
    Of Mosby—not his veteran men.

"Colonel," said the Major, touching his cap,
  "We've had our ride, and here they are."
"Well done! how many found you there?"
"As many as I bring you here."
  "And no one hurt?" "There'll be no scar—
    One fool was battered." "Find their lair?"
    "Why, Mosby's brood camp every where."

He sighed, and slid down from his horse,
  And limping went to a spring-head nigh.
"Why, bless me, Major, not hurt, I hope?"
"Battered my knee against a bar
  When the rush was made; all right by-and-by.—
    Halloa! they gave you too much rope—
    Go back to Mosby, eh? elope?"

Just by the low-hanging skirt of wood
The guard, remiss, had given a chance
For a sudden sally into the cover—
But foiled the intent, nor fired a shot,
Though the issue was a deadly trance;
For, hurled 'gainst an oak that humped low over,
Mosby's men fell, pale as a lover.

They pulled some grass his head to ease
(Lined with blue shreds a ground-nest stirred).
The Surgeon came—"Here's a to-do!"
"Ah!" cried the Major, darting a glance,
"This fellow's the one that fired and spurred
Down hill, but met reserves below—
My boys, not Mosby's—so we go!"

The Surgeon—bluff, red, goodly man—
Kneeled by the hurt one; like a bee
He toiled. The pale young Chaplain too—
(Who went to the wars for cure of souls,
And his own student-ailments)—he
Bent over likewise; spite the two
Mosby's poor man more pallid grew.

Meanwhile the mounted captives near
Jested; and yet they anxious showed;
Virginians; some of family-pride,
And young, and full of fire, and fine
In open feature and cheek that glowed;
And here thralled vagabonds now they ride—
But list! one speaks for Mosby's side.

"Why, three to one—your horses strong—
  Revolvers, rifles, and a surprise—
Surrender we account no shame!
We live, are gay, and life is hope;
  We'll fight again when fight is wise.
    There are plenty more from where we came;
    But go find Mosby—start the game!"

Yet one there was who looked but glum;
  In middle-age, a father he,
And this his first experience too:
"They shot at my heart when my hands were up—
  This fighting's crazy work, I see!"
    But noon is high; what next to do?
    The woods are mute, and Mosby is the foe.

"Save what we've got," the Major said;
  "Bad plan to make a scout too long;
The tide may turn, and drag them back,
And more beside. These rides I've been,
  And every time a mine was sprung.
    To rescue, mind, they won't be slack—
    Look out for Mosby's rifle-crack."

"We welcome it! give crack for crack!
  Peril, old lad, is what I seek."
"O then, there's plenty to be had—
By all means on, and have our fill!"
  With that, grotesque, he writhed his neck,
    Showing a scar by buck-shot made—
    Kind Mosby's Christmas gift, he said.

"But, Colonel, my prisoners—let a guard
  Make sure of them, and lead to camp.
That done, we're free for a dark-room fight
If so you say." The other laughed;
  "Trust me, Major, nor throw a damp.
    But first to try a little sleight—
    Sure news of Mosby would suit me quite."

Herewith he turned—"Reb, have a dram?"
  Holding the Surgeon's flask with a smile
To a young scapegrace from the glen.
"Oh yes!" he eagerly replied,
  "And thank you, Colonel, but—any guile?
    For if you think we'll blab—why, then
    You don't know Mosby or his men."

The Leader's genial air relaxed.
  "Best give it up," a whisperer said.
"By heaven, I'll range their rebel den!"
"They'll treat you well," the captive cried;
  "They're all like us—handsome—well-bred;
    In wood or town, with sword or pen,
    Polite is Mosby, bland his men."

"Where were you, lads, last night?—come, tell!"
  "We?—at a wedding in the Vale—
The bridegroom our comrade; by his side
Belisent, my cousin—O, so proud
  Of her young love with old wounds pale—
    A Virginian girl! God bless her pride—
    Of a crippled Mosby-man the bride!"

"Four walls shall mend that saucy mood,
  And moping prisons tame him down,"
Said Captain Cloud. "God help that day,"
Cried Captain Morn, "and he so young.
  But hark, he sings—a madcap one!"
    "O, we multiply merrily in the May,
    The birds and Mosby's men, they say!"

While echoes ran, a wagon old,
  Under stout guard of Corporal Chew
Came up; a lame horse, dingy white,
With clouted harness; ropes in hand,
  Cringed the humped driver, black in hue;
    By him (for Mosby's band a sight)
    A sister-rebel sat, her veil held tight.

"I picked them up," the Corporal said,
  "Crunching their way over stick and root,
Through yonder wood. The man here—Cuff—
Says they are going to Leesburg town."
  The Colonel's eye took in the group;
    The veiled one's hand he spied—enough!
    Not Mosby's. Spite the gown's poor stuff,

Off went his hat: "Lady, fear not;
  We soldiers do what we deplore—
I must detain you till we march."
The stranger nodded. Nettled now,
  He grew politer than before:—
    "'Tis Mosby's fault, this halt and search:"
    The lady stiffened in her starch.

"My duty, madam, bids me now
  Ask what may seem a little rude.
Pardon—that veil—withdraw it, please
(Corporal! make every man fall back);
  Pray, now, I do but what I should;
    Bethink you, 'tis in masks like these
    That Mosby haunts the villages."

Slowly the stranger drew her veil,
  And looked the Soldier in the eye—
A glance of mingled foul and fair;
Sad patience in a proud disdain,
  And more than quietude. A sigh
    She heaved, as if all unaware,
    And far seemed Mosby from her care.

She came from Yewton Place, her home,
  So ravaged by the war's wild play—
Campings, and foragings, and fires—
That now she sought an aunt's abode.
  Her kinsmen? In Lee's army, they.
    The black? A servant, late her sire's.
    And Mosby? Vainly he inquires.

He gazed, and sad she met his eye;
  "In the wood yonder were you lost?"
No; at the forks they left the road
Because of hoof-prints (thick they were—
  Thick as the words in notes thrice crossed),
    And fearful, made that episode.
    In fear of Mosby? None she showed.

Her poor attire again he scanned:
"Lady, once more; I grieve to jar
On all sweet usage, but must plead
To have what peeps there from your dress;
That letter—'tis justly prize of war."
She started—gave it—she must need.
"'Tis not from Mosby? May I read?"

And straight such matter he perused
That with the Guide he went apart.
The Hospital Steward's turn began:
"Must squeeze this darkey; every tap
Of knowledge we are bound to start."
"Garry," she said, "tell all you can
Of Colonel Mosby—that brave man."

"Dun know much, sare; and missis here
Know less dan me. But dis I know—"
"Well, what?" "I dun know what I know."
"A knowing answer!" The hump-back coughed,
Rubbing his yellowish wool like tow.
"Come—Mosby—tell!" "O dun look so!
My gal nursed missis—let we go."

"Go where?" demanded Captain Cloud;
"Back into bondage? Man, you're free!"
"Well, *let* we free!" The Captain's brow
Lowered; the Colonel came—had heard:
"Pooh! pooh! his simple heart I see—
A faithful servant.—Lady" (a bow),
"Mosby's abroad—with us you'll go.

"Guard! look to your prisoners; back to camp!
The man in the grass—can he mount and away?
Why, how he groans!" "Bad inward bruise—
Might lug him along in the ambulance."
"Coals to Newcastle! let him stay.
Boots and saddles!—our pains we lose,
Nor care I if Mosby hear the news!"

But word was sent to a house at hand,
And a flask was left by the hurt one's side.
They seized in that same house a man,
Neutral by day, by night a foe—
So charged his neighbor late, the Guide.
A grudge? Hate will do what it can;
Along he went for a Mosby-man.

No secrets now; the bugle calls;
The open road they take, nor shun
The hill; retrace the weary way.
But one there was who whispered low,
"This is a feint—we'll back anon;
Young Hair-Brains don't retreat, they say;
A brush with Mosby is the play!"

They rode till eve. Then on a farm
That lay along a hill-side green,
Bivouacked. Fires were made, and then
Coffee was boiled; a cow was coaxed
And killed, and savory roasts were seen;
And under the lee of a cattle-pen
The guard supped freely with Mosby's men.

The ball was bandied to and fro;
  Hits were given and hits were met:
"Chickamauga, Feds—take off your hat!"
"But the Fight in the Clouds repaid you, Rebs!"
  "Forgotten about Manassas yet?"
    Chatting and chaffing, and tit for tat,
    Mosby's clan with the troopers sat.

"Here comes the moon!" a captive cried;
  "A song." what say? Archy, my lad!"
Hailing the still one of the clan
(A boyish face with girlish hair),
  "Give us that thing poor Pansy made
    Last year." He brightened, and began;
    And this was the song of Mosby's man:

Spring is come; she shows her pass—
  Wild violets cool!
South of woods a small close grass—
  A vernal wool!
Leaves are a'bud on the sassafras—
  They'll soon be full:
Blessings on the friendly screen—
I'm for the South! says the leafage green.

Robins! fly, and take your fill
  Of out-of-doors—
Garden, orchard, meadow, hill,
  Barns and bowers;
Take your fill, and have your will—
  Virginia's yours!
But, bluebirds! keep away, and fear
The ambuscade in bushes here.

"A green song that," a sergeant said;
"But where's poor Pansy? gone, I fear."
"Ay, mustered out at Ashby's Gap."
"I see; now for a live man's song;
Ditty for ditty—prepare to cheer.
Comrades, you can fling a cap!
You barehead Mosby-boys—why—clap!"

Nine Blue-coats went a-nutting
Slyly in Tennessee—
Not for chestnuts—better than that—
Hush, you bumble-bee!
Nutting, nutting—
All through the year there's nutting!

A tree they spied so yellow,
Rustling in motion queer;
In they fired, and down they dropped—
Butternuts, my dear!
Nutting, nutting—
Who'll 'list to go a-nutting?

Ah! why should good fellows foemen be?
And who would dream that foes they were—
Larking and singing so friendly then—
A family likeness in every face.
But Captain Cloud made sour demur:
"Guard! keep your prisoners *in* the pen,
And let none talk with Mosby's men."

That captain was a valorous one
(No irony, but honest truth),
Yet down from his brain cold drops distilled,
Making stalactites in his heart—
A conscientious soul, forsooth;
And with a formal hate was filled
Of Mosby's band; and some he'd killed.

Meantime the lady rueful sat,
Watching the flicker of a fire
Where the Colonel played the outdoor host
In brave old hall of ancient Night.
But ever the dame grew shyer and shyer,
Seeming with private grief engrossed—
Grief far from Mosby, housed or lost.

The ruddy embers showed her pale.
The Soldier did his best devoir:
"Some coffee?—no?—a cracker?—one?"
Cared for her servant—sought to cheer:
"I know, I know—a cruel war!
But wait—even Mosby'll eat his bun;
The Old Hearth—back to it anon!"

But cordial words no balm could bring;
She sighed, and kept her inward chafe,
And seemed to hate the voice of glee—
Joyless and tearless. Soon he called
An escort: "See this lady safe
In yonder house.—Madam, you're free.
And now for Mosby.—Guide! with me."

("A night-ride, eh") "Tighten your girths!
  But, buglers! not a note from you.
Fling more rails on the fires—a blaze!"
("Sergeant, a feint—I told you so—
  Toward Aldie again. Bivouac, adieu!)
    After the cheery flames they gaze,
    Then back for Mosby through the maze.

The moon looked through the trees, and tipped
  The scabbards with her elfin beam;
The Leader backward cast his glance,
Proud of the cavalcade that came—
  A hundred horses, bay and cream:
    "Major! look how the lads advance—
    Mosby we'll have in the ambulance!"

"No doubt, no doubt:—was that a hare?—
  First catch, then cook; and cook him brown."
"Trust me to catch," the other cried—
"The lady's letter!—a dance, man, dance
  This night is given in Leesburg town!"
    "He'll be there, too!" wheezed out the Guide;
    "That Mosby loves a dance and ride!"

"The lady, ah!—the lady's letter—
  A *lady,* then, is in the case,"
Muttered the Major. "Ay, her aunt
  Writes her to come by Friday eve
  (To-night), for people of the place,
    At Mosby's last fight jubilant,
    A party give, though table-cheer be scant."

The Major hemmed. "Then this night-ride
We owe to her?—One lighted house
In a town else dark.—The moths, begar!
Are not quite yet all dead!" "How? how?"
"A mute, meek, mournful little mouse!—
Mosby has wiles which subtle are—
But woman's wiles in wiles of war!"

"Tut, Major! by what craft or guile—"
"Can't tell! but he'll be found in wait.
Softly we enter, say, the town—
Good! pickets post, and all so sure—
When—crack! the rifles from every gate,
The Grey-backs fire—dash up and down—
Each alley unto Mosby's known!"

"Now, Major, now—you take dark views
Of a moonlight night." "Well, well, we'll see,"
And smoked as if each whiff were gain.
The other mused; then sudden asked,
"What would you do in grand decree?"
"I'd beat, if I could, Lee's armies—then
Send constables after Mosby's men."

"Ay, ay!—you're odd." The moon sailed up;
On through the shadowy land they went.
"Names must be made and printed be!"
Hummed the blithe Colonel. "Doc, your flask!
Major, I drink to your good content.
My pipe is out—enough for me!
This gold-lace gleams—does Mosby see?

"But what comes here?" A man from the front
  Reported a tree athwart the road.
"Go round it, then; no time to bide;
All right—go on! Were one to stay
  For each distrust of a nervous mood,
    Long miles we'd make in this our ride
    Through Mosby-land.—On! with the Guide!"

Then sportful to the Surgeon turned:
  "Green sashes hardly serve by night!"
"Nor bullets nor bottles," the Major sighed,
"Against these moccasin-snakes—such foes
  As seldom come to solid fight:
    They kill and vanish; through grass they glide;
    Devil take Mosby!"—his horse here shied.

"Hold! look—the tree, like a dragged balloon;
  A globe of leaves—some trickery here;
My nag is right—best now be shy."
A movement was made, a hubbub and snarl;
  Little was plain—they blindly steer.
    The Pleiads, as from ambush sly,
    Peep out—Mosby's men in the sky!

As restive they turn, how sore they feel,
  And cross, and sleepy, and full of spleen,
And curse the war. "Fools, North and South!"
Said one right out. "O for a bed!
  O now to drop in this woodland green!"
    He drops as the syllables leave his mouth
    Mosby speaks from the undergrowth—

Speaks in a volley! out jets the flame!
  Men fall from their saddles like plums from trees;
Horses take fright, reins tangle and bind;
"Steady—dismount—form—and into the wood!"
  They go, but find what scarce can please;
    Their steeds have been tied in the field behind,
    And Mosby's men are off like the wind.

Sound the recall! vain to pursue—
  The enemy scatters in wilds he knows,
To reunite in his own good time;
And, to follow, they need divide—
  To come astray on crouching foes:
    Maple and hemlock, beech and lime,
    Are Mosby's confederates, share the crime.

"Major," burst in a bugler small,
  "The fellow we left in Loudon grass—
Sir Slyboots with the inward bruise,
His voice I heard—the very same—
  Some watchword in the ambush pass;
    Ay, sir, we had him in his shoes—
    We caught him—Mosby—but to lose!"

"Go, go!—these saddle-dreamers! Well,
  And here's another.—Cool, sir, cool!"
"Major, I saw them mount and sweep,
And one was bumped, or I mistake,
  And in the skurry dropped his wool."
    "A wig! go fetch it:—the lads need sleep;
    They'll next see Mosby in a sheep!

"Come, come, fall back! reform your ranks—
  All's jackstraws here! Where's Captain Morn?—
We've parted like boats in a raging tide!
But stay—the Colonel—did he charge?
  And comes he there? 'Tis streak of dawn;
    Mosby is off, the woods are wide—
    Hist! there's a groan—this crazy ride!"

As they searched for the fallen, the dawn grew chill;
  They lay in the dew: "Ah, hurt much, Mink?
And—yes—the Colonel!" Dead! but so calm
That death seemed nothing—even death,
  The thing we deem every thing heart can think;
    Amid wilding roses that shed their balm,
    Careless of Mosby he lay—in a charm!

The Major took him by the hand—
  Into the friendly clasp it bled
(A ball through heart and hand he rued):
"Good-bye!" and gazed with humid glance;
  Then in a hollow revery said,
    "The weakest thing is lustihood;
    But Mosby"—and he checked his mood.

"Where the advance?—cut off, by heaven!
  Come, Surgeon, how with your wounded there?"
"The ambulance will carry all."
"Well, get them in; we go to camp.
  Seven prisoners gone? for the rest have care."
    Then to himself, "This grief is gall;
    That Mosby!—I'll cast a silver ball!"

"Ho!" turning—"Captain Cloud, you mind
The place where the escort went—so shady?
Go, search every closet low and high,
And barn, and bin, and hidden bower—
Every covert—find that lady!
And yet I may misjudge her—ay,
Women (like Mosby) mystify.

"We'll see. Ay, Captain, go—with speed!
Surround and search; each living thing
Secure; that done, await us where
We last turned off. Stay! fire the cage
If the birds be flown." By the cross-road spring
The bands rejoined; no word; the glare
Told all. Had Mosby plotted there?

The weary troop that wended now—
Hardly it seemed the same that pricked
Forth to the forest from the camp:
Foot-sore horses, jaded men;
Every backbone felt as nicked,
Each eye dim as a sick-room lamp,
All faces stamped with Mosby's stamp.

In order due the Major rode—
Chaplain and Surgeon on either hand;
A riderless horse a negro led;
In a wagon the blanketed sleeper went;
Then the ambulance with the bleeding band;
And, an emptied oat-bag on each head,
Went Mosby's men, and marked the dead.

What gloomed them? what so cast them down,
  And changed the cheer that late they took,
As double-guarded now they rode
Between the files of moody men?
  Some sudden consciousness they brook,
    Or dread the sequel. That night's blood
    Disturbed even Mosby's brotherhood.

The flagging horses stumbled at roots,
  Floundered in mires, or clinked the stones;
No ride spake except aside;
But the wounded cramped in the ambulance,
  It was horror to hear their groans—
    Jerked along in the woodland ride,
    While Mosby's clan their revery hide.

The Hospital Steward—even he—
  Who on the sleeper kept his glance,
Was changed; late bright-black beard and eye
Looked now hearse-black; his heavy heart,
  Like his fagged mare, no more could dance;
    His grape was now a raisin dry:
    'Tis Mosby's homily—*Man must die.*

The amber sunset flushed the camp
  As on the hill their eyes they fed;
The pickets dumb looks at the wagon dart;
A handkerchief waves from the bannered tent—
  As white, alas! the face of the dead:
    Who shall the withering news impart?
    The bullet of Mosby goes through heart to heart!

They buried him where the lone ones lie
(Lone sentries shot on midnight post)—
A green-wood grave-yard hid from ken,
Where sweet-fern flings an odor nigh—
Yet held in fear for the gleaming ghost!
Though the bride should see threescore and ten,
She will dream of Mosby and his men.

How halt the verse, and turn aside—
The cypress falls athwart the way;
No joy remains for bard to sing;
And heaviest dole of all is this,
That other hearts shall be as gay
As hers that now no more shall spring:
To Mosby-land the dirges cling.

LEE IN THE CAPITOL
(April, 1866)

Hard pressed by numbers in his strait
Rebellion's soldier-chief no more contends—
Feels that the hour is come of Fate,
Lays down one sword, and widened warfare ends.
The captain who fierce armies led
Becomes a quiet seminary's head—
Poor as his privates, earns his bread.
In studious cares and aims engrossed,
Strives to forget Stuart and Stonewall dead—
Comrades and cause, station and riches lost,
And all the ills that flock when fortune's fled.

No word he breathes of vain lament,
  Mute to reproach, nor hears applause—
His doom accepts, perforce content,
  And acquiesces in asserted laws;
Secluded now would pass his life,
And leave to time the sequel of the strife.
  But missives from the Senators ran;
Not that they now would gaze upon a swordless foe,
And power made powerless and brought low:
  Reasons of state, 'tis claimed, require the man.
Demurring not, promptly he comes
By ways which show the blackened homes,
  And—last—the seat no more his own,
But Honor's; patriot grave-yards fill
The forfeit slopes of that patrician hill,
  And fling a shroud on Arlington.
The oaks ancestral all are low;
No more from the porch his glance shall go
Ranging the varied landscape o'er,
Far as the looming Dome—no more.
One look he gives, then turns aside,
Solace he summons from his pride:
"So be it! They await me now
Who wrought this stinging overthrow;
They wait me; not as on the day
Of Pope's impelled retreat in disarray—
By me impelled—when toward yon Dome
The clouds of war came rolling home."
The burst, the bitterness was spent,
The heart-burst bitterly turbulent,
And on he fared.

In nearness now
He marks the Capitol—a show
Lifted in amplitude, and set
With standards flushed with the glow of Richmond yet;
  Trees and green terraces sleep below.
Through the clear air, in sunny light,
The marble dazes—a temple white.

Intrepid soldier! had his blade been drawn
For yon starred flag, never as now
Bid to the Senate-house had he gone,
But freely, and in pageant borne,
As when brave numbers without number, massed,
Plumed the broad way, and pouring passed—
Bannered, beflowered—between the shores
Of faces, and the dinn'd huzzas,
And balconies kindling at the sabre-flash,
'Mid roar of drums and guns, and cymbal-crash,
While Grant and Sherman shone in blue—
Close of the war and victory's long review.

Yet pride at hand still aidful swelled,
And up the hard ascent he held.
The meeting follows. In his mien
The victor and the vanquished both are seen—
All that he is, and what he late had been.
Awhile, with curious eyes they scan
The Chief who led invasion's van—

Allied by family to one,
Founder of the Arch the Invader warred upon:
Who looks at Lee must think of Washington;
In pain must think, and hide the thought,
So deep with grievous meaning it is fraught.

Secession in her soldier shows
Silent and patient; and they feel
(Developed even in just success)
Dim inklings of a hazy future steal;
Their thoughts their questions well express:
"Does the sad South still cherish hate?
Freely will Southern men with Northern mate?
The blacks—should we our arm withdraw,
Would that betray them? some distrust your law.
And how if foreign fleets should come—
Would the South then drive her wedges home?"
And more hereof. The Virginian sees—
Replies to such anxieties.
Discreet his answers run—appear
Briefly straightforward, coldly clear.

"If now," the Senators, closing, say,
"Aught else remain, speak out, we pray."
Hereat he paused; his better heart
Strove strongly then; prompted a worthier part
Than coldly to endure his doom.
Speak out? Ay, speak, and for the brave,
Who else no voice or proxy have;
Frankly their spokesman here become,
And the flushed North from her own victory save.

That inspiration overrode—
Hardly it quelled the galling load
Of personal ill. The inner feud
He, self-contained, a while withstood;
They waiting. In his troubled eye
Shadows from clouds unseen they spy;
They could not mark within his breast
The pang which pleading thought oppressed:
He spoke, nor felt the bitterness die.

"My word is given—it ties my sword;
Even were banners still abroad,
Never could I strive in arms again
While you, as fit, that pledge retain.
Our cause I followed, stood in field and gate—
All's over now, and now I follow Fate.
But this is naught. A People call—
A desolated land, and all
The brood of ills that press so sore,
The natural offspring of this civil war,
Which ending not in fame, such as might rear
Fitly its sculptured trophy here,
Yields harvest large of doubt and dread
To all who have the heart and head
To feel and know. How shall I speak?
Thoughts knot with thoughts, and utterance check.
Before my eyes there swims a haze,
Through mists departed comrades gaze—
First to encourage, last that shall upbraid!
How shall I speak? The South would fain
Feel peace, have quiet law again—
Replant the trees for homestead-shade.

You ask if she recants: she yields.
Nay, and would more; would blend anew,
As the bones of the slain in her forests do,
Bewailed alike by us and you.
A voice comes out from those charnel-fields,
A plaintive yet unheeded one:
'Died all in vain? both sides undone?'
Push not your triumph; do not urge
Submissiveness beyond the verge.
Intestine rancor would you bide,
Nursing eleven sliding daggers in your side?
Far from my thought to school or threat;
I speak the things which hard beset.
Where various hazards meet the eyes,
To elect in magnanimity is wise.
Reap victory's fruit while sound the core;
What sounder fruit than re-established law?
I know your partial thoughts do press
Solely on us for war's unhappy stress;
But weigh—consider—look at all,
And broad anathema you'll recall.
The censor's charge I'll not repeat,
That meddlers kindled the war's white heat—
Vain intermeddlers or malign,
Both of the palm and of the pine;
I waive the thought—which never can be rife—
Common's the crime in every civil strife:
But this I feel, that North and South were driven
By Fate to arms. For *our* unshriven,

What thousands, truest souls, were tried—
  As never may any be again—
All those who stemmed Secession's pride,
But at last were swept by the urgent tide
  Into the chasm. I know their pain.
A story here may be applied:
"In Moorish lands there lived a maid
  Brought to confess by vow the creed
  Of Christians. Fain would priests persuade
That now she must approve by deed
  The faith she kept. "What deed?" she asked.
"Your old sire leave, nor deem it sin,
  And come with us." Still more they tasked
The sad one: "If heaven you'd win—
Far from the burning pit withdraw,
Then must you learn to hate your kin,
  Yea, side against them—such the law,
For Moor and Christian are at war."
"Then will I never quit my sire,
But here with him through every trial go,
Nor leave him though in flames below—
God help me in his fire!"
So in the South; vain every plea
'Gainst Nature's strong fidelity;
  True to the home and to the heart,
Throngs cast their lot with kith and kin,
  Foreboding, cleaved to the natural part—
Was this the unforgivable sin?
These noble spirits are yet yours to win.
Shall the great North go Sylla's way?
Proscribe? prolong the evil day?

Confirm the curse? infix the hate?
In Union's name forever alienate?
From reason who can urge the plea—
Freemen conquerors of the free?
When blood returns to the shrunken vein,
Shall the wound of the Nation bleed again?
Well may the wars wan thought supply,
And kill the kindling of the hopeful eye,
Unless you do what even kings have done
In leniency—unless you shun
To copy Europe in her worst estate—
Forbear to wreak the ill you reprobate."

He ceased. His earnestness unforeseen
Moved, but not swayed their former mien;
  And they dismissed him. Forth he went
Through vaulted walks in lengthened line
Like porches erst upon the Palatine:
  Historic reveries their lesson lent,
  The Past her shadow through the Future sent.

But no. Brave though the Soldier, grave his plea—
  Catching the light in the future's skies,
Instinct disowns each darkening prophecy:
  Faith in America never dies;
Heaven shall the end ordained fulfill.
We march with Providence cheery still.

A MEDITATION

ATTRIBUTED TO A NORTHERNER AFTER ATTENDING THE LAST OF TWO FUNERALS FROM THE SAME HOMESTEAD—THOSE OF A NATIONAL AND A CONFEDERATE OFFICER (BROTHERS), HIS KINSMEN, WHO HAD DIED FROM THE EFFECTS OF WOUNDS RECEIVED IN THE CLOSING BATTLES

How often in the years that close,
  When truce had stilled the sieging gun,
The soldiers, mounting on their works,
  With mutual curious glance have run
From face to face along the fronting show,
And kinsman spied, or friend—even in a foe.

What thoughts conflicting then were shared,
  While sacred tenderness perforce
Welled from the heart and wet the eye;
  And something of a strange remorse
Rebelled against the sanctioned sin of blood,
And Christian wars of natural brotherhood.

Then stirred the god within the breast—
  The witness that is man's at birth;
A deep misgiving undermined
  Each plea and subterfuge of earth;
They felt in that rapt pause, with warning rife,
Horror and anguish for the civil strife.

Of North or South they recked not then,
  Warm passion cursed the cause of war:
Can Africa pay back this blood
  Spilt on Potomac's shore?
Yet doubts, as pangs, were vain the strife to stay,
And hands that fain had clasped again could slay.

How frequent in the camp was seen
  The herald from the hostile one,
A guest and frank companion there
  When the proud formal talk was done;
The pipe of peace was smoked even 'mid the war,
And fields in Mexico again fought o'er.

In Western battle long they lay
  So near opposed in trench or pit,
That foeman unto foeman called
  As men who screened in tavern sit:
"You bravely fight" each to the other said—
"Toss us a biscuit!" o'er the wall it sped.

And pale on those same slopes, a boy—
  A stormer, bled in noon-day glare;
No aid the Blue-coats then could bring,
  He cried to them who nearest were,
And out there came 'mid howling shot and shell
A daring foe who him befriended well.

Mark the great Captains on both sides,
  The soldiers with the broad renown—
They all were messmates on the Hudson's marge,
  Beneath one roof they laid them down;
And, free from hate in many an after pass,
Strove as in school-boy rivalry of the class.

A darker side there is; but doubt
  In Nature's charity hovers there:
If men for new agreement yearn,
  Then old upbraiding best forbear:
"The South's the sinner!" Well, so let it be;
But shall the North sin worse, and stand the Pharisee?

O, now that brave men yield the sword,
  Mine be the manful soldier-view;
By how much more they boldly warred,
  By so much more is mercy due:
When Vicksburg fell, and the moody files marched out,
Silent the victors stood, scorning to raise a shout.

JOHN MARR
AND OTHER SAILORS

JOHN MARR

John Marr, toward the close of the last century born in America of a mother unknown, and from boyhood up to maturity a sailor under divers flags, disabled at last from further maritime life by a crippling wound received at close quarters with pirates of the Keys, eventually betakes himself for a livelihood to less active employment ashore. There, too, he transfers his rambling disposition acquired as a seafarer.

After a variety of removals, at first as a sail-maker from sea-port to sea-port, then adventurously inland as a rough bench-carpenter, he, finally, in the last-named capacity, settles down about the year 1838 upon what was then a frontier-prairie, sparsely sprinkled with small oak-groves and yet fewer log-houses of a little colony but recently from one of our elder inland States. Here, putting a period to his rovings, he marries.

Ere long a fever, the bane of new settlements on teeming loam, and whose sallow livery was certain to show itself, after an interval, in the complexions of too many of these people, carries off his young wife and infant child. In one coffin, put together by his own hands, they are committed with meager rites to the earth—another mound, though a small one, in the wide prairie, not far from where the mound-builders of a race only conjecturable had left their pottery and bones, one common clay, under a strange terrace serpentine in form.

With an honest stillness in his general mien—swarthy and black-browed, with eyes that could soften or flash, but never harden, yet disclosing at times a melancholy depth—this kinless man had affections which, once placed, not readily

could be dislodged or resigned to a substituted object. Being now arrived at middle-life, he resolves never to quit the soil that holds the only beings ever connected with him by love in the family tie. His log-house he lets to a new-comer, one glad enough to get it, and dwells with the household.

While the acuter sense of his bereavement becomes mollified by time, the void at heart abides. Fain, if possible, would he fill that void by cultivating social relations yet nearer than before with a people whose lot he purposes sharing to the end—relations superadded to that mere work-a-day bond arising from participation in the same outward hardships, making reciprocal helpfulness a matter of course. But here, and nobody to blame, he is obstructed.

More familiarly to consort, men of a practical turn must sympathetically converse, and upon topics of real life. But, whether as to persons or events, one cannot always be talking about the present, much less speculating about the future; one must needs recur to the past, which, with the mass of men, where the past is in any personal way a common inheritance, supplies to most practical natures the basis of sympathetic communion.

But the past of John Marr was not the past of these pioneers. Their hands had rested on the plow-tail, his upon the ship's helm. They knew but their own kind and their own usages; to him had been revealed something of the checkered globe. So limited unavoidably was the mental reach, and by consequence the range of sympathy, in this particular band of domestic emigrants, hereditary tillers of the soil, that the ocean, but a hearsay to their fathers, had now through yet deeper inland removal become to themselves little more than a rumor traditional and vague.

They were a staid people; staid through habituation to

monotonous hardship; ascetics by necessity not less than through moral bias; nearly all of them sincerely, however narrowly, religious. They were kindly at need, after their fashion; but to a man wonted—as John Marr in his previous homeless sojournings could not but have been—to the free-and-easy tavern-clubs affording cheap recreation of an evening in certain old and comfortable sea-port towns of that time, and yet more familiar with the companionship afloat of the sailors of the same period, something was lacking. That something was geniality, the flower of life springing from some sense of joy in it, more or less. This their lot could not give to these hard-working endurers of the dispiriting malaria, —men to whom a holiday never came,—and they had too much of uprightness and no art at all or desire to affect what they did not really feel. At a corn-husking, their least grave of gatherings, did the lone-hearted mariner seek to divert his own thoughts from sadness, and in some degree interest theirs, by adverting to aught removed from the crosses and trials of their personal surroundings, naturally enough he would slide into some marine story or picture, but would soon recoil upon himself and be silent, finding no encouragement to proceed. Upon one such occasion an elderly man—a blacksmith, and at Sunday gatherings an earnest exhorter—honestly said to him, "Friend, we know nothing of that here."

Such unresponsiveness in one's fellow-creatures set apart from factitious life, and by their vocation—in those days little helped by machinery—standing, as it were, next of kin to Nature; this, to John Marr, seemed of a piece with the apathy of Nature herself as envisaged to him here on a prairie where none but the perished mound-builders had as yet left a durable mark.

The remnant of Indians thereabout—all but exterminated in their recent and final war with regular white troops, a war waged by the Red Men for their native soil and natural rights—had been coerced into the occupancy of wilds not very far beyond the Mississippi—wilds *then,* but now the seats of municipalities and States. Prior to that, the bisons, once streaming countless in processional herds, or browsing as in an endless battle-line over these vast aboriginal pastures, had retreated, dwindled in number, before the hunters, in main a race distinct from the agricultural pioneers, though generally their advance-guard. Such a double exodus of man and beast left the plain a desert, green or blossoming indeed, but almost as forsaken as the Siberian Obi. Save the prairie-hen, sometimes startled from its lurking-place in the rank grass; and, in their migratory season, pigeons, high overhead on the wing, in dense multitudes eclipsing the day like a passing storm-cloud; save these—there being no wide woods with their underwood—birds were strangely few.

Blank stillness would for hours reign unbroken on this prairie. "It is the bed of a dried-up sea," said the companionless sailor—no geologist—to himself, musing at twilight upon the fixed undulations of that immense alluvial expanse bounded only by the horizon, and missing there the stir that, to alert eyes and ears, animates at all times the apparent solitudes of the deep.

But a scene quite at variance with one's antecedents may yet prove suggestive of them. Hooped round by a level rim, the prairie was to John Marr a reminder of ocean.

With some of his former shipmates, *chums* on certain cruises, he had contrived, prior to this last and more remote removal, to keep up a little correspondence at odd intervals. But from tidings of anybody or any sort he, in common with

the other settlers, was now cut off; quite cut off, except from such news as might be conveyed over the grassy billows by the last-arrived prairie-schooner—the vernacular term, in those parts and times, for the emigrant-wagon arched high over with sail-cloth, and voyaging across the vast champaign. There was no reachable post-office as yet; not even the rude little receptive box with lid and leather hinges, set up at convenient intervals on a stout stake along some solitary green way, affording a perch for birds, and which, later in the unintermitting advance of the frontier, would perhaps decay into a mossy monument, attesting yet another successive overleaped limit of civilized life; a life which in America can to-day hardly be said to have any western bound but the ocean that washes Asia. Throughout these plains, now in places overpopulous with towns overopulent; sweeping plains, elsewhere fenced off in every direction into flourishing farms—pale townsmen and hale farmers alike, in part, the descendants of the first sallow settlers; a region that half a century ago produced little for the sustenance of man, but to-day launching its superabundant wheat-harvest on the world;—of this prairie, now everywhere intersected with wire and rail, hardly can it be said that at the period here written of there was so much as a traceable road. To the long-distance traveller the oak-groves, wide apart, and varying in compass and form; these, with recent settlements, yet more widely separate, offered some landmarks; but otherwise he steered by the sun. In early midsummer, even going but from one log-encampment to the next, a journey it might be of hours or good part of a day, travel was much like navigation. In some more enriched depressions between the long, green, graduated swells, smooth as those of ocean becalmed receiving and subduing

to its own tranquillity the voluminous surge raised by some far-off hurricane of days previous, here one would catch the first indication of advancing strangers either in the distance, as a far sail at sea, by the glistening white canvas of the wagon, the wagon itself wading through the rank vegetation and hidden by it, or, failing that, when near to, in the ears of the team, peeking, if not above the tall tiger-lilies, yet above the yet taller grass.

Luxuriant, this wilderness; but, to its denizen, a friend left behind anywhere in the world seemed not alone absent to sight, but an absentee from existence.

Though John Marr's shipmates could not all have departed life, yet as subjects of meditation they were like phantoms of the dead. As the growing sense of his environment threw him more and more upon retrospective musings, these phantoms, next to those of his wife and child, became spiritual companions, losing something of their first indistictness and putting on at last a dim semblance of mute life; and they were lit by that aureola circling over any object of the affections in the past for reunion with which an imaginative heart passionately yearns.

He invokes there visionary ones,—striving, as it were, to get into verbal communion with them, or, under yet stronger illusion, reproaching them for their silence:—

> Since as in night's deck-watch ye show,
> Why, lads, so silent here to me,
> Your watchmate of times long ago?

Once, for all the darkling sea,
You your voices raised how clearly,
Striking in when tempest sung;
Hoisting up the storm-sail cheerly,
Life is storm—let storm! you rung.
Taking things as fated merely,
Child-like though the world ye spanned;
Nor holding unto life too dearly,
Ye who hold your lives in hand—
Skimmers, who on oceans four
Petrels were, and larks ashore.

O, not from memory lightly flung,
Forgot, like strains no more availing,
The heart to music haughtier strung;
Nay, frequent near me, never staleing,
Whose good feeling kept ye young.
Like tides that enter creek or stream,
Ye come, ye visit me, or seem
Swimming out from seas of faces,
Alien myriads memory traces,
To enfold me in a dream!

I yearn as ye. But rafts that strain,
Parted, shall they lock again?
Twined we were, entwined, then riven,
Ever to new embracements driven,
Shifting gulf-weed of the main!
And how if one here shift no more,
Lodged by the flinging surge ashore?
Nor less, as now, in eve's decline,
Your shadowy fellowship is mine.

Ye float around me, form and feature:—
Tattooings, ear-rings, love-locks curled;
Barbarians of man's simpler nature,
Unworldly servers of the world.
Yea, present all, and dear to me,
Though shades, or scouring China's sea.

Whither, whither, merchant-sailors,
Whitherward now in roaring gales?
Competing still, ye huntsman-whalers,
In leviathan's wake what boat prevails?
And man-of-war's men, whereaway?
If now no dinned drum beat to quarters
On the wilds of midnight waters—
Foemen looming through the spray;
Do yet your gangway lanterns, streaming,
Vainly strive to pierce below,
When, tilted from the slant plank gleaming,
A brother you see to darkness go?

But, gunmates lashed in shotted canvas,
If where long watch-below ye keep,
Never the shrill *"All hands up hammocks!"*
Breaks the spell that charms your sleep,
And summoning trumps might vainly call,
And booming guns implore—
A beat, a heart-beat musters all,
One heart-beat at heart-core.
It musters. But to clasp, retain;
To see you at the halyards main—
To hear your chorus once again!

BRIDEGROOM DICK
(1876)

Sunning ourselves in October on a day
Balmy as spring, though the year was in decay,
I lading my pipe, she stirring her tea,
My old woman she says to me,
"Feel ye, old man, how the season mellows?"
And why should I not, blessed heart alive,
Here mellowing myself, past sixty-five,
To think o' the May-time o' pennoned young fellows
This stripped old hulk here for years may survive.

Ere yet, long ago, we were spliced, Bonny Blue,
(Silvery it gleams down the moon-glade o' time,
Ah, sugar in the bowl and berries in the prime!)
Coxswain I o' the Commodore's crew,—
Under me the fellows that manned his fine gig,
Spinning him ashore, a king in full fig.
Chirrupy even when crosses rubbed me,
Bridegroom Dick lieutenants dubbed me.
Pleasant at a yarn, Bob O'Linkum in a song,
Diligent in duty and nattily arrayed,
Favored I was, wife, and *fleeted* right along;
And though but a tot for such a tall grade,
A high quartermaster at last I was made.

All this, old lassie, you have heard before,
But you listen again for the sake e'en o' me;
No babble stales o' the good times o' yore
To Joan, if Darby the babbler be.

Babbler?—O' what? Addled brains, they forget!
O—quartermaster I; yes, the signals set,
Hoisted the ensign, mended it when frayed,
Polished up the binnacle, minded the helm,
And prompt every order blithely obeyed.
To me would the officers say a word cheery—
Break through the starch o' the quarter-deck realm;
His coxswain late, so the Commodore's pet.
Ay, and in night-watches long and weary,
Bored nigh to death with the navy etiquette,
Yearning, too, for fun, some younker, a cadet,
Dropping for time each vain bumptious trick,
Boy-like would unbend to Bridegroom Dick.
But a limit there was—a check, d'ye see:
Those fine young aristocrats knew their degree.

Well, stationed aft where their lordships keep,—
Seldom going forward excepting to sleep,—
I, boozing now on by-gone years,
My betters recall along with my peers.
Recall them? Wife, but I see them plain:
Alive, alert, every man stirs again.
Ay, and again on the lee-side pacing,
My spy-glass carrying, a truncheon in show,
Turning at the taffrail, my footsteps retracing,
Proud in my duty, again methinks I go.
And Dave, Dainty Dave, I mark where he stands,
Our trim sailing-master, to time the high-noon,
That thingumbob sextant perplexing eyes and hands,
Squinting at the sun, or twigging o' the moon;
Then, touching his cap to Old Chock-a-Block
Commanding the quarter-deck,—"Sir, twelve o'clock."

Where sails he now, that trim sailing-master,
Slender, yes, as the ship's sky-s'l pole?
Dimly I mind me of some sad disaster—
Dainty Dave was dropped from the navy-roll!
And ah, for old Lieutenant Chock-a-Block—
Fast, wife, chock-fast to death's black dock!
Buffeted about the obstreperous ocean,
Fleeted his life, if lagged his promotion.
Little girl, they are all, all gone, I think,
Leaving Bridegroom Dick here with lids that wink.

Where is Ap Catesby? The fights fought of yore
Famed him, and laced him with epaulets, and more.
But fame is a wake that after-wakes cross,
And the waters wallow all, and laugh *Where's the loss?*
But John Bull's bullet in his shoulder bearing
Ballasted Ap in his long sea-faring.
The middies they ducked to the man who had messed
With Decatur in the gun-room, or forward pressed
Fighting beside Perry, Hull, Porter, and the rest.

Humped veteran o' the Heart-o'-Oak war,
Moored long in haven where the old heroes are,
Never on *you* did the iron-clads jar!
Your open deck when the boarder assailed,
The frank old heroic hand-to-hand then availed.

But where's Guert Gan? Still heads he the van?
As before Vera-Cruz, when he dashed splashing through
The blue rollers sunned, in his brave gold-and-blue,
And, ere his cutter in keel took the strand,
Aloft waved his sword on the hostile land!

Went up the cheering, the quick chanticleering;
All hands vying—all colors flying:
"Cock-a-doodle-doo!" and "Row, boys, row!"
"Hey, Starry Banner!" "Hi, Santa Anna!"—
Old Scott's young dash at Mexico.
Fine forces o' the land, fine forces o' the sea,
Fleet, army, and flotilla—tell, heart o' me,
Tell, if you can, whereaway now they be!

But ah, how to speak of the hurricane unchained—
The Union's strands parted in the hawser over-strained;
Our flag blown to shreds, anchors gone altogether—
The dashed fleet o' States in Secession's foul weather.

Lost in the smother o' that wide public stress,
In hearts, private hearts, what ties there were snapped!
Tell, Hal——vouch, Will, o' the ward-room mess,
On you how the riving thunder-bolt clapped.
With a bead in your eye and beads in your glass,
And a grip o' the flipper, it was part and pass:
"Hal, must it be; Well, if come indeed the shock,
To North or to South, let the victory cleave,
Vaunt it he may on his dung-hill the cock,
But *Uncle Sam's* eagle never crow will, believe."

Sentiment: ay, while suspended hung all,
Ere the guns against Sumter opened there the ball,
And partners were taken, and the red dance began,
War's red dance o' death!—Well, we, to a man,
We sailors o' the North, wife, how could we lag?—
Strike with your kin, and you stick to the flag!

But to sailors o' the South that easy way was barred.
To some, dame, believe (and I speak o' what I know),
Wormwood the trial and the Uzzite's black shard;
And the faithfuller the heart, the crueller the throe.
Duty? It pulled with more than one string,
This way and that, and anyhow a sting.
The flag and you kin, how be true unto both?
If one plight ye keep, then ye break the other troth.
But elect here they must, though the casuists were out;
Decide—hurry up—and throttle every doubt.

Of all these thrills thrilled at keelson, and throes,
Little felt the shoddyites a-toasting o' their toes;
In mart and bazar Lucre chuckled the huzza,
Coining the dollars in the bloody mint of war.
But in men, gray knights o' the Order o' Scars,
And brave boys bound by vows unto Mars,
Nature grappled honor, intertwisting in the strife:—
But some cut the knot with a thoroughgoing knife.
For how when the drums beat? How in the fray
In Hampton Roads on the fine balmy day?

There a lull, wife, befell—drop o' silence in the din.
Let us enter that silence ere the belchings re-begin.—
Through a ragged rift aslant in the cannonade's smoke
An iron-clad reveals her repellent broadside
Bodily intact. But a frigate, all oak,
Shows honeycombed by shot, and her deck crimson-dyed.

And a trumpet from port of the iron-clad hails,
Summoning the other, whose flag never trails:
"Surrender that frigate, Will! Surrender,
Or I will sink her—*ram,* and end her!"

'T was Hal. And Will, from the naked heart-o'-oak,
Will, the old messmate, minus trumpet, spoke,
Informally intrepid,—"Sink her, and be damned!"*
Enough. Gathering way, the iron-clad *rammed.*
The frigate, heeling over, on the wave threw a dusk.
Not sharing in the slant, the clapper of her bell
The fixed metal struck—uninvoked struck the knell
Of the *Cumberland* stilettoed by the *Merrimac's* tusk;
While, broken in the wound underneath the gun-deck,
Like a sword-fish's blade in leviathan waylaid,
The tusk was left infixed in the fast-foundering wreck.
There, dungeoned in the cockpit, the wounded go down,
And the chaplain with them. But the surges uplift
The prone dead from deck, and for moment they drift
Washed with the swimmers, and the spent swimmers drown.
Nine fathom did she sink,—erect, though hid from light
Save her colors unsurrendered and spars that kept the height.

Nay, pardon, old aunty! Wife, never let it fall,
That big started tear that hovers on the brim;
I forgot about your nephew and the *Merrimac's* ball;
No more then of her, since it summons up him.

*Historic [Melville's note]

But talk o' fellows' hearts in the wine's genial cup:—
Trap them in the fate, jamb them in the strait,
Guns speak their hearts then, and speak right up.

The troublous colic o' intestine war
It sets the bowels o' affection ajar.
But, lord, old dame, so spins the whizzing world,
A humming-top, ay, for the little boy-gods
Flogging it well with their smart little rods,
Tittering at time and the coil uncurled.

Now, now, sweetheart, you sidle away,
No, never you like *that* kind o' *gay;*
But sour if I get, giving truth her due,
Honey-sweet forever, wife, will Dick be to *you!*

But avast with the War! Why recall racking days
Since set up anew are the ship's started stays?
Nor less, though the gale we have left behind,
Well may the heave o' the sea remind.
It irks me now, as it troubled me then,
To think o' the fate in the madness o' men.
If Dick was with Farragut on the night-river,
When the boom-chain we burst in the fire-raft's glare,
That blood-dyed the visage as red as the liver;
In the *Battle for the Bay* too if Dick had a share,
And saw one aloft a-piloting the war—
Trumpet in the whirlwind, a Providence in place—
Our Admiral old whom the captains huzza,
Dick joys in the man nor brags about the race.

But better, wife, I like to booze on the days
Ere the Old Order foundered in these very frays,
And tradition was lost and we learned strange ways.
Often I think on the brave cruises then;
Re-sailing them in memory, I hail the press o' men
On the gunned promenade where rolling they go,
Ere the dog-watch expire and break up the show.
The Laced Caps I see between forward guns;
Away from the powder-room they puff the cigar;
"Three days more, hey, the donnas and the dons!"
"Your Xeres widow, will you hunt her up, Starr?"
The Laced Caps laugh, and the bright waves too;
Very jolly, very wicked, both sea and crew,
Nor heaven looks sour on either, I guess,
Nor Pecksniff he bosses the gods' high mess.

Wistful ye peer, wife, concerned for my head,
And how best go get me betimes to my bed.

But king o' the club, the gayest golden spark,
Sailor o' sailors, what sailor do I mark?
Tom Tight, Tom Tight, no fine fellow finer,
A cutwater-nose, ay, a spirited soul;
But, boozing away at the well-brewed bowl,
He never bowled back from the voyage to China.
Tom was lieutenant in the brig-o'-war famed
When an officer was hung for an arch-mutineer,
But a mystery cleaved, and the captain was blamed,
And a rumpus too raised, though his honor it was clear.
And Tom he would say, when the mousers would try him,
And with cup after cup o' Burgundy ply him:

"Gentlemen, in vain with your wassail you beset,
For the more I tipple, the tighter do I get."
No blabber, no, not even with the can—
True to himself and loyal to his clan.

Tom blessed us starboard and d—d us larboard,
Right down from rail to the streak o' the garboard.
Nor less, wife, we liked him.—Tom was a man
In contrast queer with Chaplain Le Fan,
Who blessed us at morn, and at night yet again,
D—ning us only in decorous strain;
Preaching 'tween the guns—each cutlass in its place—
From text that averred old Adam a hard case.
I see him—Tom—on *horse-block* standing,
Trumpet at mouth, thrown up all amain,
An elephant's bugle, vociferous demanding
Of topmen aloft in the hurricane of rain,
"Letting that sail there your faces flog?
Manhandle it, men, and you'll get the good grog."
O Tom, but he knew a blue-jacket's ways,
And how a lieutenant may genially haze;
Only a sailor sailors heartily praise.

Wife, where be all these chaps, I wonder?
Trumpets in the tempest, terrors in the fray,
Boomed their commands along the deck like thunder;
But silent is the sod, and thunder dies away.

But Captain Turret, *"Old Hemlock"* tall,
(A leaning tower when his tank brimmed all,)
Manoeuvre out alive from the war did he?

Or, too old for that, drift under the lee?
Kentuckian colossal, who, touching at Madeira,
The huge puncheon shipped o' prime *Santa-Clara;*
Then rocked along the deck so solemnly!
No whit the less though judicious was enough
In dealing with the Finn who made the great huff;
Our three-decker's giant, a grand boatswain's mate,
Manliest of men in his own natural senses;
But driven stark mad by the devil's drugged stuff,
Storming all aboard from his run-ashore late,
Challenging to battle, vouchsafing no pretenses,
A reeling King Ogg, delirious in power,
The quarter-deck carronades he seemed to make cower.
"Put him in *brig* there!" said Lieutenant Marrot.
"Put him in *brig!*" back he mocked like a parrot;
"Try it, then!" swaying a fist like Thor's sledge,
And making the pigmy constables hedge—
Ship's corporals and the master-at-arms.
"In *brig* there, I say!"—They dally no more;
Like hounds let slip on a desperate boar,
Together they pounce on the formidable Finn,
Pinion and cripple and hustle him in.
Anon, under sentry, between twin guns,
He slides off in drowse, and the long night runs.

Morning brings a summons. Whistling it calls,
Shrilled through the pipes of the boatswain's four aids;
Trilled down the hatchways along the dusk halls:
Muster to the Scourge!—Dawn of doom and its blast!
As from cemeteries raised, sailors swarm before the mast,
Tumbling up the ladders from the ship's nether shades.

Keeping in the background and taking small part,
Lounging at their ease, indifferent in face,
Behold the trim marines uncompromised in heart;
Their Major, buttoned up, near the staff finds room—
The staff o' lieutenants standing grouped in their place.
All the Laced Caps o' the ward-room come,
The Chaplain among them, disciplined and dumb.
The blue-nosed boatswain, complexioned like slag,
Like a blue Monday shows—his implements in bag.
Executioners, his aids, a couple by him stand,
At a nod there the thongs to receive from his hand.
Never venturing a caveat whatever may betide,
Though functionally here on humanity's side,
The grave Surgeon shows, like the formal physician
Attending the rack o'the Spanish Inquisition.

The angel o' the "brig" brings his prisoner up;
Then, steadied by his old *Santa-Clara,* a sup,
Heading all erect, the ranged assizes there,
Lo, Captain Turret, and under starred bunting,
(A florid full face and fine silvered hair,)
Gigantic the yet greater giant confronting.

Now the culprit he liked, as a tall captain can
A Titan subordinate and true *sailor-man;*
And frequent he'd shown it—no worded advance,
But flattering the Finn with a well-timed glance.
But what of that now? In the martinet-mien
Read the *Articles of War,* heed the naval routine;
While, cut to the heart a dishonor there to win,
Restored to his senses, stood the Anak Finn;

In racked self-control the squeezed teers peeping,
Scalding the eye with repressed inkeeping.
Discipline must be; the scourge is deemed due.
But ah for the sickening and strange heart-benumbing,
Compassionate abasement in shipmates that view;
Such a grand champion shamed there succumbing!

"Brown, tie him up."—The cord he brooked:
How else?—his arms spread apart—never threaping;
No, never he flinched, never sideways he looked,
Peeled to the waistband, the marble flesh creeping,
Lashed by the sleet the officious winds urge.
In function his fellows their fellowship merge—
The twain standing high—the two boatswain's mates,
Sailors of his grade, ay, and brothers of his mess.
With sharp thongs adroop the junior one awaits
The word to uplift.
"Untie him—so!
Submission is enough, Man, you may go."
Then, promenading aft, brushing fat Purser Smart,
"Flog? Never meant it—hadn't any heart.
Degrade that tall fellow?"—Such, wife, was he,
Old Captain Turret, who the brave wine could stow.
Magnanimous, you think?—but what does Dick see?
Apron to your eye! Why, never fell a blow,
Cheer up, old wifie, 't was a long time ago.

But where's that sore one, crabbed and severe,
Lieutenant Long Lumbago, an arch scrutineer?
Call the roll to-day, would he answer—*Here!*
When the *Blixum's* fellows to quarters mustered
How he'd lurch along the lane of gun-crews clustered,

Testy as touchwood, to pry and to peer.
Jerking his sword underneath larboard arm,
He ground his worn grinders to keep himself calm.
Composed in his nerves, from the fidgets set free,
Tell, Sweet Wrinkles, alive now is he,
In Paradise a parlor where the even tempers be?

Where's Commander All-a-Tanto?
Where's Orlop Bob singing up from below?
Where's Rhyming Ned? has he spun his last canto?
Where's Jewsharp Jim? Where's Rigadoon Joe?
Ah, for the music over and done,
The band all dismissed save the droned trombone!
Where's Glen o' the gun-room, who loved Hot-Scotch—
Glen, prompt and cool in a perilous watch?
Where's flaxen-haired Phil? a gray lieutenant?
Or rubicund, flying a dignified pennant?
But where sleeps his brother?—the cruise it was o'er,
But ah, for death's grip that welcomed him ashore!
Where's Sid, the cadet, so frank in his brag,
Whose toast was audacious—*"Here's Sid, and Sid's flag!"*
Like holiday-craft that have sunk unknown,
May a lark of a lad go lonely down?
Who takes the census under the sea?
Can others like old ensigns be,
Bunting I hoisted to flutter at the gaff—
Rags in end that once were flags
Gallant streaming from the staff?
Such scurvy doom could the chances deal
To Top-Gallant Harry and Jack Genteel?

Lo, Genteel Jack in hurricane weather,
Shagged like a bear, like a red lion roaring;
But O, so fine in his chapeau and feather,
In port to the ladies never once *jawing;*
All bland *politesse,* how urbane was he—
"Oui, mademoiselle"—"Ma chère amie!"

'T was Jack got up the ball at Naples,
Gay in the old *Ohio* glorious;
His hair was curled by the berth-deck barber,
Never you'd deemed him a cub of rude Boreas;
In tight little pumps, with the grand dames in rout,
A-flinging his shapely foot all about;
His watch-chain with love's jeweled tokens abounding,
Curls ambrosial shaking out odors,
Waltzing along the batteries, astounding
The gunner glum and the grim-visaged loaders.

Wife, where be all these blades, I wonder,
Pennoned fine fellows, so strong, so gay?
Never their colors with a dip dived under;
Have they hauled them down in a lack-lustre day,
Or beached their boats in the Far, Far Away?

Hither and thither, blown wide asunder,
Where's this fleet, I wonder and wonder.
Slipt their cables, rattled their adieu,
(Whereaway pointing? to what rendezvous?)
Out of sight, out of mind, like the crack *Constitution,*
And many a keel time never shall renew—
Bon Homme Dick o'the buff Revolution,
The *Black Cockade* and the staunch *True-Blue.*

Doff hats to Decatur! But where is his blazon?
Must merited fame endure time's wrong—
Glory's ripe grape wizen up to a raisin?
Yes! for Nature teems, and the years are strong,
And who can keep the tally o' the names that fleet along!

But his frigate, wife, his bride? Would blacksmiths brown
Into smithereens smite the solid old renown?

Rivetting the bolts in the iron-clad's shell,
Hark to the hammers with a *rat-tat-tat;*
"Handier a *derby* than a laced cocked hat!
The *Monitor* was ugly, but she served us right well,
Better than the *Cumberland,* a beauty and the belle."

Better than the Cumberland!—Heart alive in me!
That battlemented hull, Tantallon o' the sea,
Kicked in, as at Boston the taxed chests o' tea!
Ay, spurned by the *ram,* once a tall, shapely craft,
But lopped by the *Rebs* to an iron-beaked raft—
A blacksmith's unicorn in armor *cap-a-pie.*

Under the water-line a *ram's* blow is dealt:
And foul fall the knuckles that strike below the belt.
Nor brave the inventions that serve to replace
The openness of valor while dismantling the grace.

Aloof from all this and the never-ending game,
Tantamount to teetering, plot and counterplot;
Impenetrable armor—all-perforating shot;
Aloof, bless God, ride the war-ships of old,
A grand fleet moored in the roadstead of fame;
Not submarine sneaks with *them* are enrolled;
Their long shadows dwarf us, their flags are as flame.

Don't fidget so, wife; an old man's passion
Amounts to no more than this smoke that I puff;
There, there, now, buss me in good old fashion;
A died-down candle will flicker in the snuff.

But one last thing let your old babbler say,
What Decatur's coxswain said who was long ago hearsed,
"Take in your flying-kites, for there comes a lubber's day
When gallant things will go, and the three-deckers first."

My pipe is smoked out, and the grog runs slack;
But bowse away, wife, at your blessed Bohea;
This empty can here must needs solace me—
Nay, sweetheart, nay; I take that back;
Dick drinks from your eyes and he finds no lack!

TOM DEADLIGHT
(1810)

During a tempest encountered homeward-bound from the Mediterranean, a grizzled petty-officer, one of the two captains of the forecastle, dying at night in his hammock, swung in the *sick-bay* under the tiered gun-decks of the British

Dreadnought, 98, wandering in his mind, though with glimpses of sanity, and starting up at whiles, sings by snatches his good-bye and last injunctions to two messmates, his watchers, one of whom fans the feverd tar with the flap of his old sou'-wester. Some names and phrases, with here and there a line, or part of one; these, in his aberration, wrested into incoherency from their original connection and import, he involuntarily derives, as he does the measure, from a famous old sea-ditty, whose cadences, long rife, and now humming in the collapsing brain, attune the last flutterings of distempered thought.

Farewell and adieu to you noble hearties,—
  Farewell and adieu to you ladies of Spain,
For I've received orders for to sail for the Deadman,
  But hope with the grand fleet to see you again.

I have hove my ship to, with main-top-sail aback, boys;
  I have hove my ship to, for to strike soundings clear—
The black scud a'flying; but, by God's blessing, dam' me,
  Right up the Channel for the Deadman I'll steer.

I have worried through the waters that are callèd the
      Doldrums,
  And growled at Sargasso that clogs while ye grope—
Blast my eyes, but the light-ship is hid by the mist, lads:—
  Flying Dutchman—odds bobbs—off the Cape of Good
      Hope!

But what's this I feel that is fanning my cheek, Matt?
  The white goney's wing?—how she rolls!—'t is the Cape!
Give my kit to the mess, Jock, for kin none is mine, none;
  And tell *Holy Joe* to avast with the crape.

Dead reckoning, says *Joe,* it won't do to go by;
But they doused all the glims, Matt, in sky t' other night.
Dead reckoning is good for to sail for the Deadman;
And Tom Deadlight he thinks it may reckon near right.

The signal!—it streams for the grand fleet to anchor.
The captains—the trumpets—the hullabaloo!
Stand by for blue-blazes, and mind your shank-painters,
For the Lord High Admiral, he's squinting at you!

But give me my *tot,* Matt, before I roll over;
Jock, let's have your flipper, it's good for to feel;
And don't sew me up without *baccy* in mouth, boys,
And don't blubber like lubbers when I turn up my keel.

JACK ROY

Kept up by relays of generations young
Never dies at halyards the blithe chorus sung;
While in sands, sounds, and seas where the storm-petrels cry,
Dropped mute around the globe, these halyard singers lie.
Short-lived the clippers for racing-cups that run,
And speeds in life's career many a lavish mother's-son.

But thou, manly king o' the old *Splendid's* crew,
The ribbons o' thy hat still a-fluttering, should fly—
A challenge, and forever, nor the bravery should rue.
Only in a tussle for the starry flag high,
When 't is piety to do, and privilege to die.
Then, only then, would heaven think to lop
Such a cedar as the captain o' the *Splendid's* main-top:

A belted sea-gentleman; a gallant, off-hand
Mercutio indifferent in life's gay command.
Magnanimous in humor; when the splintering shot fell,
"Tooth-picks a-plenty, lads; thank 'em with a shell!"

Sang Larry o' the Cannakin, smuggler o' the wine,
At mess between guns, lad in jovial recline:
"In Limbo our Jack he would chirrup up a cheer,
The martinet there find a chaffing mutineer;
From a thousand fathoms down under hatches o' your Hades,
He'd ascend in love-ditty, kissing fingers to your ladies!"

Never relishing the knave, though allowing for the menial,
Nor overmuch the king, Jack, nor prodigally genial.
Ashore on liberty he flashed in escapade,
Vaulting over life in its levelness of grade,
Like the dolphin off Africa in rainbow a-sweeping—
Arch iridescent shot from seas languid sleeping.

Larking with thy life, if a joy but a toy,
Heroic in thy levity wert thou, Jack Roy.

THE HAGLETS

By chapel bare, with walls sea-beat
The lichened urns in wilds are lost
About a carved memorial stone
That shows, decayed and coral-mossed,
A form recumbent, swords at feet,
Trophies at head, and kelp for a winding-sheet.

I invoke thy ghost, neglected fane,
Washed by the waters' long lament;
I adjure the recumbent effigy
To tell the cenotaph's intent—
Reveal why fagotted swords are at feet,
Why trophies appear and weeds are the winding-sheet

By open ports the Admiral sits,
And shares repose with guns that tell
Of power that smote the arm'd Plate Fleet
Whose sinking flag-ship's colors fell;
But over the Admiral floats in light
His squadron's flag, the red-cross Flag of the White.
The eddying waters whirl astern,
The prow, a seedsman, sows the spray;
With bellying sails and buckling spars
The black hull leaves a Milky Way;
Her timbers thrill, her batteries roll,
She revelling speeds exulting with pennon at pole,
But ah, for standards captive trailed
For all their scutcheoned castles' pride—
Castilian towers that dominate Spain,
Naples, and either Ind beside;
Those haughty towers, armorial ones,
Rue the salute from the Admiral's dens of guns.

Ensigns and arms in trophy brave,
Braver for many a rent and scar,
The captor's naval hall bedeck,
Spoil that insures an earldom's star—
Toledoes great, grand draperies too,

Spain's steel and silk, and splendors from Peru.
But crippled part in splintering fight,
The vanquished flying the victor's flags,
With prize-crews, under convoy-guns,
Heavy the fleet from Opher drags—
The Admiral crowding sail ahead,
Foremost with news who foremost in conflict sped.
But out from cloistral gallery dim,
In early night his glance is thrown;
He marks the vague reserve of heaven,
He feels the touch of ocean lone;
Then turns, in frame part undermined,
Nor notes the shadowing wings that fan behind.

There, peaked and gray, three haglets fly,
And follow, follow fast in wake
Where slides the cabin-lustre shy,
And sharks from man a glamour take,
Seething along the line of light
In lane that endless rules the war-ship's flight.
The sea-fowl here, whose hearts none know,
They followed late the flag-ship quelled,
(As now the victor one) and long
Above her gurgling grave, shrill held
With screams their wheeling rites—then sped
Direct in silence where the victor led.
Now winds less fleet, but fairer, blow,
A ripple laps the coppered side,
While phosphor sparks make ocean gleam,

Like camps lit up in triumph wide;
With lights and tinkling cymbals meet
Acclaiming seas the advancing conqueror greet.

But who a flattering tide may trust,
Or favoring breeze, or aught in end?—
Careening under startling blasts
The sheeted towers of sails impend;
While, gathering bale, behind is bred
A livid storm-bow, like a rainbow dead.
    At trumpet-call the topmen spring;
And, urged by after-call in stress,
Yet other tribes of tars ascend
The rigging's howling wilderness;
But ere yard-ends alert they win,
Hell rules in heaven with hurricane-fire and din.
    The spars, athwart at spiry height,
Like quaking Lima's crosses rock;
Like bees the clustering sailors cling
Against the shrouds, or take the shock
Flat on the swept yard-arms aslant,
Dipped like the wheeling condor's pinions gaunt.

A lull! and tongues of languid flame
Lick every boom, and lambent show
Electric 'gainst each face aloft;
The herds of clouds with bellowings go:
The black ship rears—beset—harassed,
Then plunges far with luminous antlers vast.
    In trim betimes they turn from land,
Some shivered sails and spars they stow;

One watch, dismissed, they troll the can,
While loud the billow thumps the bow—
Vies with the fist that smites the board,
Obstreperous at each reveller's jovial words.
    Of royal oak by storms confirmed,
The tested hull her lineage shows:
Vainly the plungings whelm her prow—
She rallies, rears, she sturdier grows;
Each shot-hole plugged, each storm-sail home,
With batteries housed she rams the watery dome.

Dim seen adrift through driving scud,
The wan moon shows in plight forlorn;
Then, pinched in visage, fades and fades
Like to the faces drowned at morn,
When deeps engulfed the flag-ship's crew,
And, shrilling round, the inscrutable haglets flew.
    And still they fly, nor now they cry,
But constant fan a second wake,
Unflagging pionions ply and ply,
Abreast their course intent they take;
Their silence marks a stable mood,
They patient keep their eager neighborhood.
    Plumed with a smoke, a confluent sea,
Heaved in a combing pyramid full,
Spent at its climax, in collapse
Down headlong thundering stuns the hull:
The trophy drops; but, reared again,
Shows Mars' high-altar and contemns the main.

Rebuilt it stands, the brag of arms,
Transferred in site—no thought of where

The sensitive needle keeps its place,
And starts, disturbed, a quiverer there;
The helmsman rubs the clouded glass—
Peers in, but lets the trembling portent pass.
    Let pass as well his shipmates do
(Whose dream of power no tremors jar)
Fears for the fleet convoyed astern:
"Our flag they fly, they share our star;
Spain's galleons great in hull are stout:
Manned by our men—like us they'll ride it out."
    Tonight's the night that ends the week—
Ends day and week and month and year:
A fourfold imminent flickering time,
For now the midnight draws anear:
Eight bells! and passing-bells they be—
The Old year fades, the Old year dies at sea.

He launched them well. But shall the New
Redeem the pledge the Old Year made,
Or prove a self-asserting heir?
But healthy hearts few qualms invade:
By shot-chests grouped in bays 'tween guns
The gossips chat, the grizzled, sea-beat ones.
    And boyish dreams some graybeards blab:
"To sea, my lads, we go no more
Who share the Acapulco prize;
We'll all night in, and bang the door;
Our ingots red shall yield us bliss:
Lads, golden years begin to-night with this!"
    Released from deck, yet waiting call,

Glazed caps and coats baptized in storm,
A watch of Laced Sleeves round the board
Draw near in heart to keep them warm:
"Sweethearts and wives!" clink, clink, they meet,
And, quaffing, dip in wine their beards of sleet.

"Ay, let the star-light stay withdrawn,
So here her hearth-light memory fling,
So in this wine-light cheer be born,
And honor's fellowship weld our ring—
Honor! our Admiral's aim foretold:
A tomb or a trophy, and lo, 't is a trophy and gold!"
    But he, a unit, sole in rank,
Apart needs keep his lonely state,
The sentry at his guarded door
Mute as by vault the sculptured Fate;
Belted he sits in drowsy light,
And, hatted, nods—the Admiral of the White.
    He dozes, aged with watches passed—
Years, years of pacing to and fro;
He dozes, nor attends the stir
In bullioned standards rustling low,
Nor minds the blades whose secret thrill
Perverts overhead the magnet's Polar will;—

Less heeds the shadowing three that play
And follow, follow fast in wake,
Untiring wing and lidless eye—
Abreast their course intent they take;
Or sigh or sing, they hold for good
The unvarying flight and fixed inveterate mood.

In dream at last his dozings merge,
In dream he reaps his victory's fruit:
The Flags-o'-the-Blue, the Flags-o'-the-Red,
Dipped flags of his country's fleets salute
His Flag-o'-the-White in harbor proud——
But why should it blench? Why turn to a painted shroud?
The hungry seas they hound the hull,
The sharks they dog the haglets' flight;
With one consent the winds, the waves
In hunt with fins and wings unite,
While drear the harps in cordage sound
Remindful wails for old Armadas drowned.

Ha—yonder! are they Northern Lights?
Or signals flashed to warn or ward?
Yea, signals lanced in breakers high;
But doom on warning follows hard:
While yet they veer in hope to shun,
They strike! and thumps of hull and heart are one.
But beating hearts a drum-beat calls
And prompt the men to quarters go;
Discipline, curbing nature, rules—
Heroic makes who duty know:
They execute the trump's command,
Or in peremptory places wait and stand.
Yet cast about in blind amaze—
As through their watery shroud they peer:
"We tacked from land: then how betrayed?
Have currents swerved us—snared us here?"
None heed the blades that clash in place
Under lamps dashed down that lit the magnet's case.

Ah, what may live, who mighty swim,
Or boat-crew reach that shore forbid,
Or cable span? Must victors drown—
Perish, even as the vanquished did?
Man keeps from man the stifled moan;
They shouldering stand, yet each in heart how lone.
    Some heaven invoke; but rings of reefs
Prayer and despair alike deride
In dance of breakers forked or peaked,
Pale maniacs of the maddened tide;
While, strenuous yet some end to earn,
The haglets spin, though now no more astern.
    Like shuttles hurrying in the looms
Aloft through rigging frayed they ply—
Cross and recross—weave and inweave,
Then lock the web with clinching cry
Over the seas on seas that clasp
The weltering wreck where gurgling ends the gasp.

Ah for the Plate-Fleet trophy now,
The victor's voucher, flags and arms;
Never they'll hang in Abbey old
And take Time's dust with holier palms;
Nor less content, in liquid night,
Their captor sleeps—the Admiral of the White.

    Imbedded deep with shells
    And drifted treasure deep,
    Forever he sinks deeper in
    Unfathomable sleep—

His cannon round him thrown,
His sailors at his feet,
The wizard sea enchanting them
Where never haglets beat.

On nights when meteors play
And light the breakers dance,
The Oreads from the caves
With silvery elves advance;
And up from ocean stream,
And down from heaven far,
The rays that blend in dream
The abysm and the star.

THE AEOLIAN HARP
AT THE SURF INN

List the harp in window wailing
  Stirred by fitful gales from sea:
Shrieking up in mad crescendo—
  Dying down in plaintive key!

Listen: less a strain ideal
  Than Ariel's rendering of the Real.
What that Real is, let hint
  A picture stamped in memory's mint.

Braced well up, with beams aslant,
Betwixt the continents sails the *Phocion,*
To Baltimore bound from Alicant.

Blue breezy skies white fleeces fleck
Over the chill blue white-capped ocean:
From yard-arm comes—"Wreck ho, a wreck!"

Dismasted and adrift,
Long time a thing forsaken;
Overwashed by every wave
Like the slumbering kraken;
Heedless if the billow roar,
Oblivious of the lull,
Leagues and leagues from shoal or shore,
It swims—a levelled hull:
Bulwarks gone—a shaven wreck,
Nameless, and a grass-green deck.
A lumberman: perchance, in hold
Prostrate pines with hemlocks rolled.

It has drifted, waterlogged,
Till by trailing weeds beclogged:
  Drifted, drifted, day by day,
  Pilotless on pathless way.
It has drifted till each plank
Is oozy as the oyster-bank:
  Drifted, drifted, night by night,
  Craft that never shows a light;
Nor ever, to prevent worse knell,
Tolls in fog the warning bell.

From collision never shrinking,
Drive what may through darksome smother;
Saturate, but never sinking,

Fatal only to the *other!*
  Deadlier than the sunken reef
Since still the snare it shifteth,
  Torpid in dumb ambuscade
Waylayingly it drifteth.

  O, the sailors—O, the sails!
  O, the lost crews never heard of!
  Well the harp of Ariel wails
  Thoughts that tongue can tell no word of!

MINOR SEA PIECES

TO THE MASTER OF THE "METEOR"

Lonesome on earth's loneliest deep,
Sailor! who dost thy vigil keep—
Off the Cape of Storms dost musing sweep
Over monstrous waves that curl and comb;
Of thee we think when here from brink
We blow the mead in bubbling foam.

Of thee we think, in a ring we link;
To the shearer of ocean's fleece we drink,
And the *Meteor* rolling home.

FAR OFF-SHORE

Look, the raft, a signal flying,
  Thin—a shred;
None upon the lashed spars lying,
  Quick or dead.

Cries the sea-fowl, hovering over,
    "Crew, the crew?"
And the billow, reckless, rover,
  Sweeps anew!

THE MAN-OF-WAR HAWK

Yon black man-of-war-hawk that wheels in the light
O'er the black ship's white sky-s'l, sunned cloud to the sight,
Have we low-flyers wings to ascend to his height?

No arrow can reach him; nor thought can attain
To the placid supreme in the sweep of his reign.

THE FIGURE-HEAD

The *Charles-and-Emma* seaward sped,
(Named from the carven pair at prow,)
He so smart, and a curly head,
She tricked forth as a bride knows how:
  Pretty stem for the port, I trow!

But iron-rust and alum-spray
And chafing gear, and sun and dew
Vexed this lad and lassie gay,
Tears in their eyes, salt tears nor few;
  And the hug relaxed with the failing glue.

But came in end a dismal night,
With creaking beams and ribs that groan,
A black lee-shore and waters white:
Dropped on the reef, the pair lie prone:
  O, the breakers dance, but the winds they moan!

THE GOOD CRAFT "SNOW-BIRD"

Strenuous need that head-wind be
  From purposed voyage that drives at last
The ship, sharp-braced and dogged still,
  Beating up against the blast.

Brigs that figs for market gather,
  Homeward-bound upon the stretch,
Encounter oft this uglier weather,
  Yet in end their port they fetch.

Mark yon craft from sunny Smyrna
  Glazed with ice in Boston Bay;
Out they toss the fig-drums cheerly,
  Livelier for the frosty ray.

What if sleet off-shore assailed her,
  What though ice yet plate her yards;
In wintry port not less she renders
  Summer's gift with warm regards!

And, look, the underwriters' man,
  Timely, when the stevedore's done,
Puts on his *specs* to pry and scan,
  And sets her down—*A, No.* 1.

Bravo, master! Brava, brig!
  For slanting snows out of the West
Never the *Snow-Bird* cares one fig;
  And foul winds steady her, though a pest.

OLD COUNSEL

OF THE YOUNG MASTER OF A WRECKED CALIFORNIA CLIPPER

Come out of the Golden Gate,
Go round the Horn with streamers,
Carry royals early and late;
But, brother, be not over-elate—
All hands save ship! has startled dreamers.

THE TUFT OF KELP

All dripping in tangles green,
  Cast up by a lonely sea
If purer for that, O Weed,
  Bitterer, too, are ye?

THE MALDIVE SHARK

About the Shark, phlegmatical one,
Pale sot of the Maldive sea,
The sleek little pilot-fish, azure and slim,
How alert in attendance be.
From his saw-pit of mouth, from his charnel of maw
They have nothing of harm to dread,
But liquidly glide on his ghastly flank
Or before his Gorgonian head;
Or lurk in the port of serrated teeth
In white triple tiers of glittering gates,
And there find a haven when peril's abroad,
An asylum in jaws of the Fates!
They are friends; and friendly they guide him to prey,
Yet never partake of the treat—
Eyes and brains to the dotard lethargic and dull,
Pale ravener of horrible meat.
Where is the world we roved, Ned Bunn?
  Hollows thereof lay rich in shade
By voyagers old inviolate thrown
  Ere Paul Pry cruised with Pelf and Trade.
To us old lads some thoughts come home
Who roamed a world young lads no more shall roam.

Nor less the satiate year impends
  When, wearying of routine-resorts,
The pleasure-hunter shall break loose,

TO NED

Ned, for our Pantheistic ports:—
Marquesas and glenned isles that be
Authentic Edens in a Pagan sea.

The charm of scenes untried shall lure,
And, Ned, a legend urge the flight—
The Typee-truants under stars
Unknown to Shakespere's *Midsummer-Night;*
And man, if lost to Saturn's Age,
Yet feeling life no Syrian pilgrimage.

But, tell, shall he, the tourist, find
Our isles the same in violet-glow
Enamoring us what years and years—
Ah, Ned, what years and years ago!
Well, Adam advances, smart in pace,
But scarce by violets that advance you trace.

But we, in anchor-watches calm,
The Indian Psyche's languor won,
And, musing, breathed primeval balm
From Edens ere yet overrun;
Marvelling mild if mortal twice,
Here and hereafter, touch a Paradise.

CROSSING THE TROPICS
(FROM *"The Saya-y-Manto."*)

While now the Pole Star sinks from sight
  The Southern Cross it climbs the sky;
But losing thee, my love, my light,
O bride but for one bridal night,
  The loss no rising joys supply.

Love, love, the Trade Winds urge abaft,
And thee, from thee, they steadfast waft.

By day the blue and silver sea
  And chime of waters blandly fanned—
Nor these, nor Gama's stars to me
May yield delight since still for thee
  I long as Gama longed for land.

I yearn, I yearn, reverting turn,
My heart it streams in wake astern.
When, cut by slanting sleet, we swoop
  Where raves the world's inverted year,
If roses all your porch shall loop,
Not less your heart for me will droop
  Doubling the world's last outpost drear.

O love, O love, these oceans vast:
Love, love, it is as death were past!

THE BERG
(A DREAM)

I saw a ship of martial build
(Her standards set, her brave apparel on)
Directed as by madness mere
Against a stolid iceberg steer,
Nor budge it, though the infatuate ship went down.
The impact made huge ice-cubes fall
Sullen, in tons that crashed the deck;
But that one avalanche was all—
No other movement save the foundering wreck.

Along the spurs of ridges pale,
Not any slenderest shaft and frail,
A prism over glass-green gorges lone,
Toppled; or lace of traceries fine,
Nor pendant drops in grot or mine
Were jarred, when the stunned ship went down.
Nor sole the gulls in cloud that wheeled
Circling one snow-flanked peak afar,
But nearer fowl the floes that skimmed
And crystal beaches, felt no jar.
No thrill transmitted stirred the lock
Of jack-straw needle-ice at base;
Towers undermined by waves—the block
Atilt impending—kept their place.
Seals, dozing sleek on sliddery ledges
Slipt never, when by loftier edges
Through very inertia overthrown,
The impetuous ship in bafflement went down.

Hard Berg (methought), so cold, so vast,
With mortal damps self-overcast;
Exhaling still thy dankish breath—
Adrift dissolving, bound for death;
Though lumpish thou, a lumbering one—
A lumbering lubbard loitering slow,
Impingers rue thee and go down,
Sounding thy precipice below,
Nor stir the slimy slug that sprawls
Along thy dead indifference of walls.

THE ENVIABLE ISLES
(FROM *"Rammon."*)

Through storms you reach them and from storms are free.
  Afar descried, the foremost drear in hue,
But, nearer, green; and, on the marge, the sea
  Makes thunder low and mist of rainbowed dew.

But, inland, where the sleep that folds the hills
A dreamier sleep, the trance of God, instills—
  On uplands hazed, in wandering airs aswoon,
Slow-swaying palms salute love's cypress tree
  Adown in vale where pebbly runlets croon
A song to lull all sorrow and all glee.

Sweet-fern and moss in many a glade are here,
  Where, strown in flocks, what cheek-flushed myriads lie
Dimpling in dream—unconscious slumberers mere,
  While billows endless round the beaches die.

PEBBLES

I

Though the Clerk of the Weather insist,
  And lay down the weather-law,
Pintado and gannet they wist
That the winds blow whither they list
  In tempest or flaw.

II

Old are the creeds, but stale the schools,
  Revamped as the mode may veer,
But Orm from the schools to the beaches strays,
And, finding a Conch hoar with time, he delays
  And reverent lifts it to ear.
That Voice, pitched in far monotone,
  Shall it swerve? shall it deviate ever?
The Seas have inspired it, and Truth—
  Truth, varying from sameness never.

III

In hollows of the liquid hills
  Where the long Blue Ridges run,
The flattery of no echo thrills,
  For echo the seas have none;
Nor aught that gives man back man's strain—
The hope of his heart, the dream in his brain.

IV

On ocean where the embattled fleets repair,
Man, suffering inflictor, sails on sufferance there.

V

Implacable I, the old implacable Sea:
  Implacable most when most I smile serene—
Pleased, not appeased, by myriad wrecks in me.

VI

Curled in the comb of yon billow Andean,
  Is it the Dragon's heaven-challenging crest?
Elemental mad ramping of ravening waters—
  Yet Christ on the Mount, and the dove in her nest!

VII

Healed of my hurt, I laud the inhuman Sea—
Yea, bless the Angels Four that there convene;
For healed I am even by their pitiless breath
Distilled in wholesome dew named rosmarine.

TIMOLEON

TIMOLEON
(394 B.C.)

I

If more than once, as annals tell,
  Through blood without compunction spilt,
An egotist arch rule has snatched
And stamped the seizure with his sabre's hilt,
  And, legalized by lawyers, stood;
Shall the good heart whose patriot fire
Leaps to a deed of startling note,
Do it, then flinch? Shall good in weak expire?
  Needs goodness lack the evil grit
That stares down censorship and ban,
And dumfounds saintlier ones with this—
God's will avouched in each successful man?
  Or, put it, where dread stress inspires
A virtue beyond man's standard rate,
Seems virtue there a strain forbid—
Transcendence such as shares transgression's fate?
  If so, and wan eclipse ensue,
Yet glory await emergence won,
Is that high Providence, or Chance?
And proved it which with thee, Timoleon?
  O, crowned with laurel twined with thorn,
Not rash thy life's cross-tide I stem,
But reck the problem rolled in pang
And reach and dare to touch they garment's hem.

II

When Argos and Cleone strove
Against free Corinth's claim or right,
Two brothers battled for her well:
A footman one, and one a mounted knight.
Apart in place, each braved the brunt
Till the rash cavalryman, alone,
Was wrecked against the enemy's files,
His bayard crippled and he maimed and thrown.
Timoleon, at Timophanes' need,
Makes for the rescue through the fray,
Covers him with his shield, and takes
The darts and furious odds and fights at bay;
Till, wrought to palor of passion dumb,
Stark terrors of death around he throws,
Warding his brother from the field
Spite failing friends dispersed and rallying foes.
Here might he rest, in claim rest here,
Rest, and a Phidian form remain;
But life halts never, life must on,
And take with term prolonged some scar or stain.
Yes, life must on. And latent germs
Time's seasons wake in mead and man;
And brothers, playfellows in youth,
Develop into variance wide in span.

III

Timophanes was his mother's pride—
Her pride, her pet, even all to her
Who slackly on Timoleon looked:
Scarce he (she mused) may proud affection stir.
He saved my darling, gossips tell:
If so, 'twas service, yea, and fair;
But instinct ruled and duty bade,
In service such, a henchman e'en might share.
When boys they were I helped the bent;
I made the junior feel his place,
Subserve the senior, love him, too;
And sooth he does, and that's his saving grace.
But me the meek one never can serve,
Not he, he lacks the quality keen
To make the mother through the son
An envied dame of power, a social queen.
But thou, my first-born, thou art I
In sex translated; joyed, I scan
My features, mine, expressed in thee;
Thou art what I would be were I a man.
My brave Timophanes, 'tis thou
Who yet the world's fore-front shalt win,
For thine the urgent resolute way,
Self pushing panoplied self through thick and thin.
Nor here maternal insight erred:
Foresworn, with heart that did not wince
At slaying men who kept their vows,
Her darling strides to power, and reigns—a Prince.

IV

Because of just heart and humane,
Profound the hate Timoleon knew
For crimes of pride and men-of-prey
And impious deeds that perjurous upstarts do;
And Corinth loved he, and in way
Old Scotia's clansman loved his clan,
Devotion one with ties how dear
And passion that late to make the rescue ran.
But crime and kin—the terrorized town,
The silent, acquiescent mother—
Revulsion racks the filial heart,
The loyal son, the patriot true, the brother.
In evil visions of the night
He sees the lictors of the gods,
Giant ministers of righteousness,
Their *fasces* threatened by the Furies' rods.
But undeterred he wills to act,
Resolved thereon though Ate rise;
He heeds the voice whose mandate calls,
Or seems to call, peremptory from the skies.

V

Nor less but by approaches mild,
And trying each prudential art,
The just one first advances him
In parley with a flushed intemperate heart.
The brother first he seeks—alone,
And pleads; but is with laughter met;
Then comes he, in accord with two,
And these adjure the tyrant and beset;

Whose merriment gives place to rage:
"Go," stamping, "what to me is Right?
I am the Wrong, and lo, I reign,
And testily intolerant too in might:"
And glooms on his mute brother pale,
Who goes aside; with muffled face
He sobs the predetermined word,
And Right in Corinth reassumes its place.

VI

But on his robe, ah, whose the blood?
And craven ones their eyes avert,
And heavy is a mother's ban,
And dismal faces of the fools can hurt.
The whispering-gallery of the world,
Where each breathed slur runs wheeling wide
Eddies a false perverted truth,
Inveterate turning still on fratricide.
The time was Plato's. Wandering lights
Confirmed the atheist's standing star;
As now, no sanction Virtue knew
For deeds that on prescriptive morals jar.
Reaction took misgiving's tone,
Infecting conscience, till betrayed
To doubt the irrevocable doom
Herself had authorized when undismayed.
Within perturbed Timoleon here
Such deeps were bared as when the sea
Convulsed, vacates its shoreward bed,
And Nature's last reserves show nakedly.

He falters, and from Hades' glens
By night insidious tones implore —
Why suffer? hither come and be
What Phocion is who feeleth man no more.
But, won from that, his mood elects
To live—to live in wilding place;
For years self-outcast, he but meets
In shades his playfellow's reproachful face.
Estranged through one transcendent deed
From common membership in mart,
In severance he is like a head
Pale after battle trunkless found apart.

VII

But flood-tide comes though long the ebb,
Nor patience bides with passion long;
Like sightless orbs his thoughts are rolled
Arraigning heaven as compromised in wrong:
To second causes why appeal?
Vain parleying here with fellow clods.
To you, Arch Principals, I rear
My quarrel, for this quarrel is with gods.
Shall just men long to quit your world?
It is aspersion of your reign;
Your marbles in the temple stand—
Yourselves as stony and invoked in vain?
Ah, bear with one quite overborne,
Olympians, if he chide ye now;
Magnanimous be even though he rail
And hard against ye set the bleaching brow.

If conscience doubt, she'll next recant.
What basis then? O, tell at last,
Are earnest natures staggering here
But fatherless shadows from no substance cast?
Yea, *are* ye, gods? Then ye, 'tis ye
Should show what touch of tie ye may,
Since ye, too, if not wrung are wronged
By grievous misconceptions of your sway.
But deign, some little sign be given—
Low thunder in your tranquil skies;
Me reassure, nor let me be
Like a lone dog that for a master cries.

VIII

Men's moods, as frames, must yield to years,
And turns the world in fickle ways;
Corinth recalls Timoleon—ay,
And plumes him forth, but yet with schooling phrase.
On Sicily's fields, through arduous wars,
A peace he won whose rainbow spanned
The isle redeemed; and he was hailed
Deliverer of that fair colonial land.
And Corinth clapt: Absolved, and more!
Justice in long arrears is thine:
Not slayer of thy brother, no,
But savior of the state, Jove's soldier, man divine.
Eager for thee thy City waits:
Return! with bays we dress your door.
But he, the Isle's loved guest, reposed,
And never for Corinth left the adopted shore.

AFTER THE PLEASURE PARTY

LINES TRACED UNDER AN IMAGE OF AMOR THREATENING

Fear me, virgin whosoever
Taking pride from love exempt,
Fear me, slighted. Never, never
Brave me, nor my fury tempt:
Downy wings, but wroth they beat
Tempest even in reason's seat.

Behind the house the upland falls
With many an odorous tree—
White marbles gleaming through green halls,
Terrace by terrace, down and down,
And meets the starlit Mediterranean Sea.

'Tis Paradise. In such an hour
Some pangs that rend might take release.
Nor less perturbed who keeps this bower
Of balm, nor finds balsamic peace?
From whom the passionate words in vent
After long revery's discontent?

Tired of the homeless deep,
Look how their flight yon hurrying billows urge,
Hitherward but to reap
Passive repulse from the iron-bound verge!
Insensate, can they never know
'Tis mad to wreck the impulsion so?

An art of memory is, they tell:
But to forget! forget the glade
Wherein Fate sprung Love's ambuscade,
To flout pale years of cloistral life
And flush me in this sensuous strife.
'Tis Vesta struck with Sappho's smart.
No fable her delirious leap:
With more of cause in desperate heart,
Myself could take it—but to sleep!

Now first I feel, what all may ween,
That soon or late, if faded e'en,
One's sex asserts itself. Desire,
The dear desire through love to sway,
Is like the Geysers that aspire—
Through cold obstruction win their fervid way.
But baffled here—to take disdain,
To feel rule's instinct, yet not reign;
To dote, to come to this drear shame—
Hence the winged blaze that sweeps my soul
Like prairie fires that spurn control,
Where withering weeds incense the flame.

And kept I long heaven's watch for this,
Contemning love, for this, even this?
O terrace chill in Northern air,
O reaching ranging tube I placed
Against yon skies, and fable chased
Till, fool, I hailed for sister there
Starred Cassiopea in Golden Chair.
In dream I throned me, nor I saw
In cell the idiot crowned with straw.

And yet, ah yet scarce ill I reigned,
Through self-illusion self- sustained,
When now—enlightened, undeceived—
What gain I barrenly bereaved!
Than this can be yet lower decline—
Envy and spleen, can these be mine?

The pleasant girl demure that trod
Beside our wheels that climbed the way,
And bore along a blossoming rod
That looked the sceptre of May-day—
On her—to fire this petty hell,
His softened glance how moistly fell!
The cheat! on briars her buds were strung;
And wiles peeped forth from mien how meek.
The innocent bare-foot! young, so young!
To girls, strong man's a novice weak.
To tell such beads! And more remain,
Sad rosary of belittling pain.

When after lunch and sallies gay,
Like the Decameron folk we lay
In sylvan groups; and I—let be!
O, dreams he, can he dream that one
Because not roseate feels no sun?
The plain lone bramble thrills with Spring
As much as vines that grapes shall bring.

Me now fair studies charm no more.
Shall great thoughts writ, or high themes sung
Damask wan cheeks—unlock his arm
About some radiant ninny flung?
How glad with all my starry lore,
I'd buy the veriest wanton's rose
Would but my bee therein repose.

Could I remake me! or set free
This sexless bound in sex, then plunge
Deeper than Sappho, in a lunge
Piercing Pan's paramount mystery!
For, Nature, in no shallow surge
Against thee either sex may urge,
Why hast thou made us but in halves—
Co-relatives? This makes us slaves.
If these co-relatives never meet
Self-hood itself seems incomplete.
And such the dicing of blind fate
Few matching halves here meet and mate.
What Cosmic jest or Anarch blunder
The human integral clove asunder
And shied the fractions through life's gate?

Ye stars that long your votary knew
Rapt in her vigil, see me here!
Whither is gone the spell ye threw
When rose before me Cassiopea?
Usurped on by love's stronger reign—
But lo, your very selves do wane:

Light breaks—truth breaks! Silvered no more,
But chilled by dawn that brings the gale
Shivers yon bramble above the vale,
And disillusion opens all the shore.

One knows not if Urania yet
The pleasure-party may forget;
Or whether she lived down the strain
Of turbulent heart and rebel brain;
For Amor so resents a slight,
And her's had been such haught disdain,
He long may wreak his boyish spite,
And boy-like, little reck the pain.

One knows not, no. But late in Rome
(For queens discrowned a congruous home)
Entering Albani's porch she stood
Fixed by an antique pagan stone
Colossal carved. No anchorite seer,
Not Thomas a Kempis, monk austere,
Religious more are in their tone;
Yet far, how far from Christian heart
That form august of heathen Art.
Swayed by its influence, long she stood,
Till surged emotion seething down,
She rallied and this mood she won:

Languid in frame for me,
To-day by Mary's convent shrine,
Touched by her picture's moving plea
In that poor nerveless hour of mine,

I mused—A wanderer still must grieve.
Half I resolved to kneel and believe,
Believe and submit, the veil take on.
But thee, armed Virgin! less benign,
Thee now I invoke, thou mightier one.
Helmeted woman—if such term
Befit thee, far from strife
Of that which makes the sexual feud
And clogs the aspirant life—
O self-reliant, strong and free,
Thou in whom power and peace unite,
Transcender! raise me up to thee,
Raise me and arm me!

Fond appeal.
For never passion peace shall bring,
Nor Art inanimate for long
Inspire. Nothing may help or heal
While Amor incensed remembers wrong.
Vindictive, not himself he'll spare;
For scope to give his vengeance play
Himself he'll blaspheme and betray.

Then for Urania, virgins everywhere,
O pray! Example take too, and have care.

THE NIGHT-MARCH

With banners furled, and clarions mute,
An army passes in the night;
And beaming spears and helms salute
The dark with bright.

In silence deep the legions stream,
With open ranks, in order true;
Over boundless plains they stream and gleam—
No chief in view!

Afar, in twinkling distance lost,
(So legends tell) he lonely wends
And back through all that shining host
His mandate sends.

THE RAVAGED VILLA

In shards the sylvan vases lie,
Their links of dance undone,
And brambles wither by thy brim,
Choked fountain of the sun!
The spider in the laurel spins,
The weed exiles the flower:
And, flung to kiln, Apollo's bust
Makes lime for Mammon's tower.

THE MARGRAVE'S BIRTHNIGHT

Up from many a sheeted valley,
From white woods as well,
Down too from each fleecy upland
Jingles many a bell

Jovial on the work-sad horses
Hitched to runners old
Of the toil-worn peasants sledging
Under sheepskins in the cold;

Till from every quarter gathered
Meet they on one ledge,
There from hoods they brush the snow off
Lighting from each sledge

Full before the Margrave's castle,
Summoned there to cheer
On his birth-night, in mid-winter,
Kept year after year.

O the hall, and O the holly!
Tables line each wall;
Guests as holly-berries plenty,
But—no host withal!

May his people feast contented
While at head of board
Empty throne and vacant cover
Speak the absent lord?

Minstrels enter. And the stewards
Serve the guests; and when,
Passing there the vacant cover,
Functionally then

Old observance grave they offer;
But no Margrave fair,
In his living aspect gracious,
Sits responsive there;

No, and never guest once marvels,
None the good lord name,
Scarce they mark void throne and cover—
Dust upon the same.

Mindless as to what importeth
Absence such in hall;
Tacit as the plough-horse feeding
In the palfrey's stall.

Ah, enough for toil and travail,
If but for a night
Into wine is turned the water,
Black bread into white.

MAGIAN WINE

Amulets gemmed, to Miriam dear,
  Adown in liquid mirage gleam;
Solomon's Syrian charms appear,
  Opal and ring supreme.
The rays that light this Magian Wine
Thrill up from semblances divine.

And, seething through the rapturous wave,
What low Elysian anthems rise:
Sibylline inklings blending rave,
  Then lap the verge with sighs.
Delirious here the oracles swim
Ambiguous in the beading hymn.

THE GARDEN OF METRODORUS

The Athenians mark the moss-grown gate
And hedge untrimmed that hides the haven green
  And who keeps here his quiet state?
  And shares he sad or happy fate
Where never foot-path to the gate is seen?

Here none come forth, here none go in,
Here silence strange, and dumb seclusion dwell:
  Content from loneness who may win?
  And is this stillness peace or sin
Which noteless thus apart can keep its dell?

THE NEW ZEALOT TO THE SUN

Persian, you rise
Aflame from climes of sacrifice
Where adulators sue,
And prostrate man, with brow abased,
Adheres to rites whose tenor traced
All worship hitherto.

Arch type of sway,
Meetly your over-ruling ray
You fling from Asia's plain,
Whence flashed the javelins abroad
Of many a wild incursive horde
Led by some shepherd Cain.

Mid terrors dinned
Gods too came conquerors from your Ind,
The brood of Bramha throve;
They came like to the scythed car,
Westward they rolled their empire far,
Of night their purple wove.

Chemist, you breed
In orient climes each sorcerous weed
That energizes dream—
Transmitted, spread in myths and creeds,
Houris and hells, delirious screeds
And Calvin's last extreme.

What though your light
In time's first dawn compelled the flight
Of Chaos' startled clan,
Shall never all your darted spears
Disperse worse Anarchs, frauds and fears,
Sprung from these weeds to man?

But Science yet
An effluence ampler shall beget,
And power beyond your play—
Shall quell the shades you fail to rout,
Yea, searching every secret out
Elucidate your ray.

THE WEAVER

For years within a mud-built room
For Arva's shrine he weaves the shawl,
Lone wight, and at a lonely loom,
His busy shadow on the wall.

The face is pinched, the form is bent,
No pastime knows he nor the wine,
Recluse he lives and abstinent
Who weaves for Arva's shrine.

LAMIA'S SONG

Descend, descend!
Pleasant the downward way—
From your lonely Alp
With the wintry scalp
To our myrtles in valleys of May.
Wend then, wend:
Mountaineer, descend!
And more than a wreath shall repay.
Come, ah come!
With the cataracts come,
That hymn as they roam
How pleasant the downward way!

IN A GARRET

Gems and jewels let them heap—
Wax sumptuous as the Sophi:
For me, to grapple from Art's deep
One dripping trophy!

MONODY

To have known him, to have loved him
After loneness long;
And then to be estranged in life,
And neither in the wrong;
And now for death to set his seal—
Ease me, a little ease, my song!

By wintry hills his hermit-mound
The sheeted snow-drifts drape,
And houseless there the snow-bird flits
Beneath the fir-trees' crape:
Glazed now with ice the cloistral vine
That hid the shyest grape.

LONE FOUNTS

Though fast youth's glorious fable flies,
View not the world with worldling's eyes;
Nor turn with weather of the time.
Foreclose the coming of surprise:
Stand where Posterity shall stand;
Stand where the Ancients stood before,
And, dipping in lone founts thy hand,
Drink of the never-varying lore:
Wise once, and wise thence evermore.

THE BENCH OF BOORS

In bed I muse on Tenier's boors,
Embrowned and beery losels all:
A wakeful brain
Elaborates pain:
Within low doors the slugs of boors
Laze and yawn and doze again.

In dreams they doze, the drowsy boors,
Their hazy hovel warm and small:
    Thought's ampler bound
    But chill is found:
Within low doors the basking boors
Snugly hug the ember-mound.

Sleepless, I see the slumberous boors
Their blurred eyes blink, their eyelids fall:
    Thought's eager sight
    Aches—overbright!
Within low doors the boozy boors
Cat-naps take in pipe-bowl light.

THE ENTHUSIAST

"THOUGH HE SLAY ME YET WILL I TRUST IN HIM."

Shall hearts that beat no base retreat
  In youth's magnanimous years—
Ignoble hold it, if discreet
  When interest tames to fears;
Shall spirits that worship light
  Perfidious deem its sacred glow,
  Recant, and trudge where worldlings go,
Conform and own them right?

Shall Time with creeping influence cold
  Unnerve and cow? the heart
Pine for the heartless ones enrolled
  With palterers of the mart?

Shall faith abjure her skies,
  Or pale probation blench her down
  To shrink from Truth so still, so lone
Mid loud gregarious lies?

Each burning boat in Caesar's rear,
  Flames—No return through me!
So put the torch to ties though dear,
  If ties but tempters be.
Nor cringe if come the night:
  Walk through the cloud to meet the pall,
  Though light forsake thee, never fall
From fealty to light.

ART

In placid hours well-pleased we dream
Of many a brave unbodied scheme.
But form to lend, pulsed life create,
What unlike things must meet and mate:
A flame to melt—a wind to freeze;
Sad patience—joyous energies;
Humility—yet pride and scorn;
Instinct and study; love and hate;
Audacity—reverence. These must mate,
And fuse with Jacob's mystic heart,
To wrestle with the angel—Art.

BUDDHA

"FOR WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? IT IS EVEN A VAPOR THAT APPEARETH FOR A LITTLE TIME AND THEN VANISHETH AWAY."

Swooning swim to less and less,
  Aspirant to nothingness!
Sobs of the worlds, and dole of kinds
  That dumb endurers be—
Nirvana! absorb us in your skies,
  Annul us into thee.

C———'S LAMENT

How lovely was the light of heaven,
What angels leaned from out the sky
In years when youth was more than wine
And man and nature seemed divine
Ere yet I felt that youth must die.

Ere yet I felt that youth must die
How insubstantial looked the earth,
Alladin-land! in each advance,
Or here or there, a new romance;
I never dreamed would come a dearth.

And nothing then but had its worth,
Even pain. Yes, pleasure still and pain
In quick reaction made of life
A lovers' quarrel, happy strife
In youth that never comes again.

But will youth never come again?
Even to his grave-bed has he gone,
And left me lone to wake by night
With heavy heart that erst was light?
O, lay it at his head—a stone!

SHELLEY'S VISION

Wandering late by morning seas
When my heart with pain was low—
Hate the censor pelted me—
Deject I saw my shadow go.

In elf-caprice of bitter tone
I too would pelt the pelted one:
At my shadow I cast a stone.

When lo, upon that sun-lit ground
I saw the quivering phantom take
The likeness of St. Stephen crowned:
Then did self-reverence awake.

FRAGMENTS OF A LOST GNOSTIC POEM OF THE 12TH CENTURY

* * * * *

Found a family, build a state,
The pledged event is still the same:
Matter in end will never abate
His ancient brutal claim.

* * * * *

Indolence is heaven's ally here,
And energy the child of hell:
The Good Man pouring from his pitcher clear,
But brims the poisoned well.

THE MARCHIONESS OF BRINVILLIERS

He toned the sprightly beam of morning
  With twilight meek of tender eve,
Brightness interfused with softness,
  Light and shade did weave:
And gave to candor equal place
With mystery starred in open skies;
And, floating all in sweetness, made
  Her fathomless mild eyes.

THE AGE OF THE ANTONINES

While faith forecasts millennial years
  Spite Europe's embattled lines,
Back to the Past one glance be cast—
  The Age of the Antonines!
O summit of fate, O zenith of time
When a pagan gentleman reigned,
And the olive was nailed to the inn of the world
Nor the peace of the just was feigned.
  A halcyon Age, afar it shines,
Solstice of Man and the Antonines.

Hymns to the nations' friendly gods
Went up from the fellowly shrines,
No demagogue beat the pulpit-drum
  In the Age of the Antonines!
The sting was not dreamed to be taken from death,
No Paradise pledged or sought,
But they reasoned of fate at the flowing feast,
Nor stifled the fluent thought.
  We sham, we shuffle while faith declines—
They were frank in the Age of the Antonines.

Orders and ranks they kept degree,
Few felt how the parvenu pines,
No law-maker took the lawless one's fee
  In the Age of the Antonines!

Under law made will the world reposed
And the ruler's right confessed,
For the heavens elected the Emperor then,
The foremost of men the best.
  Ah, might we read in America's signs
The Age restored of the Antonines.

HERBA SANTA

I

After long wars when comes release
Not olive wands proclaiming peace
  An import dearer share
Than stems of Herba Santa hazed
  In autumn's Indian air.
Of moods they breathe that care disarm,
They pledge us lenitive and calm.

II

Shall code or creed a lure afford
To win all selves to Love's accord?
When Love ordained a supper divine
  For the wide world of man,
What bickerings o'er his gracious wine!
  Then strange new feuds began.

Effectual more in lowlier way,
  Pacific Herb, thy sensuous plea
The bristling clans of Adam sway
  At least to fellowship in thee!
Before thine altar tribal flags are furled,
Fain woulds't thou make one hearthstone of the world.

III

To scythe, to sceptre, pen and hod—
  Yea, sodden laborers dumb;
To brains overplied, to feet that plod,
In solace of the *Truce of God*
  The Calumet has come!

IV

Ah for the world ere Raleigh's find
  Never that knew this suasive balm
That helps when Gilead's fails to heal,
  Helps by an interserted charm.

Insinuous thou that through the nerve
  Windest the soul, and so canst win
  Some from repinings, some from sin,
The Church's aim thou dost subserve.

The ruffled fag fordone with care
  And brooding, Gold would ease this pain:
Him soothest thou and smoothest down
Till some content return again.

Even ruffians feel thy influence breed
  Saint Martin's summer in the mind,
They feel this last evangel plead,
As did the first, apart from creed,
  Be peaceful, man—be kind!

V

Rejected once on higher plain,
O Love supreme, to come again
  Can this be thine?
Again to come, and win us too
  In likeness of a weed
That as a god didst vainly woo,
  As man more vainly bleed?

VI

Forbear, my soul! and in thine Eastern chamber
  Rehearse the dream that brings the long release:
Through jasmine sweet and talismanic amber
  Inhaling Herba Santa in the passive Pipe of Peace.

FRUIT OF TRAVEL LONG AGO

VENICE

With Pantheist energy of will
The little craftsman of the Coral Sea
Strenuous in the blue abyss,
Up-builds his marvellous gallery

And long arcade,
Erections freaked with many a fringe
Of marble garlandry,
Evincing what a worm can do.

Laborious in a shallower wave,
Advanced in kindred art,
A prouder agent proved Pan's might
When Venice rose in reefs of palaces.

IN A BYE-CANAL

A swoon of noon, a trance of tide,
The hushed siesta brooding wide
Like calms far off Peru;
No floating wayfarer in sight,
Dumb noon, and haunted like the night
When Jael the wiled one slew.
A languid impulse from the oar
Plied by my indolent gondolier
Tinkles against a palace hoar,
And, hark, response I hear!
A lattice clicks; and lo, I see
Between the slats, mute summoning me,
What loveliest eyes of scintillation,
What basilisk glance of conjuration!

Fronted I have, part taken the span
Of portents in nature and peril in man.
I have swum—I have been
Twixt the whale's black flukes
and the white shark's fin;
The enemy's desert have wandered in,
And there have turned, have turned and scanned,
Following me how noiselessly,
Envy and Slander, lepers hand in hand.
All this. But at the latticed eye—
"Hey! Gondolier, you sleep, my man;
Wake up!" And, shooting by, we ran;
The while I mused, This, surely now,
Confutes the Naturalists, allow!
Sirens, true sirens verily be,
Sirens, waylayers in the sea.

Well, wooed by these same deadly misses,
Is it shame to run?
No! flee them did divine Ulysses,
Brave, wise, and Venus' son.

PISA'S LEANING TOWER

The Tower in tiers of architraves,
Fair circle over cirque,
A trunk of rounded colonades,
The maker's master-work,
Impends with all its pillared tribes,

And, poising them, debates:
It thinks to plunge—but hesitates;
Shrinks back—yet fain would slide;
Withholds itself—itself would urge;
Hovering, shivering on the verge,
A would-be suicide!

IN A CHURCH OF PADUA

In vaulted place where shadows flit,
An upright sombre box you see:
A door, but fast, and lattice none,
But punctured holes minutely small
In lateral silver panel square
Above a kneeling-board without,
Suggest an aim if not declare.

Who bendeth here the tremulous knee
No glimpse may get of him within,
And he immured may hardly see
The soul confessing there the sin;
Nor yields the low-sieved voice a tone
Whereby the murmurer may be known.

Dread diving-bell! In thee inurned
What hollows the priest must sound,
Descending into consciences
Where more is hid than found.

MILAN CATHEDRAL

Through light green haze, a rolling sea
  Over gardens where redundance flows,
  The fat old plain of Lombardy,
The White Cathedral shows.

  Of Art the miracles
  Its tribes of pinnacles
Gleam like to ice-peaks snowed; and higher,
Erect upon each airy spire
  In concourse without end,
Statues of saints over saints ascend
Like multitudinous forks of fire.

What motive was the master-builder's here?
Why these synodic hierarchies given,
Sublimely ranked in marble sessions clear,
Except to signify the host of heaven.

PAUSILIPPO
(IN THE TIME OF BOMBA)

A hill there is that laves its feet
In Naples' bay and lifts its head
In jovial season, curled with vines.
Its name, in pristine years conferred
By settling Greeks, imports that none
Who take the prospect thence can pine,
For such the charm of beauty shown
Even sorrow's self they cheerful weened
Surcease might find and thank good Pan.

Toward that hill my landeau drew;
And there, hard by the verge, was seen
Two faces with such meaning fraught
One scarce could mark and straight pass on.

A man it was less hoar with time
Than bleached through strange immurement long,
Retaining still, by doom depressed,
Dim trace of some aspiring prime.
Seated he tuned a homely harp
Watched by a girl, whose filial mien
Toward one almost a child again,
Took on a staid maternal tone.
Nor might one question that the locks
Which in smoothed natural silvery curls
Fell on the bowed one's thread-bare coat
Betrayed her ministering hand.

Anon, among some ramblers drawn,
A murmur rose "Tis Silvio, Silvio!"
With inklings more in tone suppressed
Touching his story, part recalled:
Clandestine arrest abrupt by night;
The sole conjecturable cause
The yearning in a patriot ode
Construed as treason; trial none;
Prolonged captivity profound;
Vain liberation late. All this,
With pity for impoverishment
And blight forestalling age's wane.

Hillward the quelled enthusiast turned,
Unmanned, made meek through strenuous wrong,
Preluding, faltering; then began,
But only thrilled the wire—no more,
The constant maid supplying voice,
Hinting by no ineloquent sign
That she was but his mouth-piece mere,
Himself too spiritless and spent.

Pausilippo, Pausilippo,
Pledging easement unto pain,
Shall your beauty even solace
If one's sense of beauty wane?

Could light airs that round ye play
Waft heart-heaviness away
Or memory lull to sleep,
Then, then indeed your balm
Might Silvio becharm,
And life in fount would leap,
Pausilippo!

Did not your spell invite,
In moods that slip between,
A dream of years serene,
And wake, to dash, delight—
Evoking here in vision
Fulfilment and fruition—

Nor mine, nor meant for man!
Did hope not frequent share
The mirage when despair
Overtakes the caravan,
Me then your scene might move
To break from sorrow's snare,
And apt your name would prove,
Pausilippo!

But I've looked upon your revel—
It unravels not the pain:
Pausilippo, Pausilippo,
Named benignly if in vain!

It ceased. In low and languid tone
The tideless ripple lapped the passive shore;
As listlessly the bland untroubled heaven
Looked down as silver doled was silent given
In pity—futile as the ore!

THE ATTIC LANDSCAPE

Tourist, spare the avid glance
That greedy roves the sight to see:
Little here of "Old Romance,"
Or Picturesque of Tivoli.

No flushful tint the sense to warm—
Pure outline pale, a linear charm.
The clear-cut hills carved temples face,
Respond, and share their sculptural grace.

'Tis Art and Nature lodged together,
  Sister by sister, cheek to cheek;
Such Art, such Nature, and such weather
  The All-in-All seems here a Greek.

THE SAME

A circumambient spell it is,
  Pellucid on these scenes that waits,
Repose that does of Plato tell—
  Charm that his style authenticates.

THE PARTHENON

I

SEEN ALOFT FROM AFAR

Estranged in site,
Aerial gleaming, warmly white,
You look a suncloud motionless
In noon of day divine;
Your beauty charmed enhancement takes
In Art's long after-shine.

II

NEARER VIEWED

Like Lais, fairest of her kind,
In subtlety your form's defined—
The cornice curved, each shaft inclined,

While yet, to eyes that do but revel
  And take the sweeping view,
Erect this seems, and that a level,
  To line and plummet true.

Spinoza gazes; and in mind
Dreams that one architect designed
  Lais—and you!

III

THE FRIEZE

What happy musings genial went
With airiest touch the chisel lent
  To frisk and curvet light
Of horses gay—their riders grave—
Contrasting so in action brave
  With virgins meekly bright,
Clear filing on in even tone
With pitcher each, one after one
  Like water-fowl in flight.

IV

THE LAST TILE

  When the last marble tile was laid
The winds died down on all the seas;
  Hushed were the birds, and swooned the glade;
  Ictinus sat; Aspasia said
"Hist!—Art's meridian, Pericles!"

GREEK MASONRY

Joints were none that mortar sealed:
Together, scarce with line revealed,
The blocks in symmetry congealed.

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

Not magnitude, not lavishness,
But Form—the Site;
Not innovating wilfulness,
But reverence for the Archetype.

OFF CAPE COLONNA

Aloof they crown the foreland lone,
  From aloft they loftier rise—
Fair columns, in the aureola rolled
  From sunned Greek seas and skies.
They wax, sublimed to fancy's view,
A god-like group against the blue.

Over much like gods! Serene they saw
  The wolf-waves board the deck,
And headlong hull of Falconer,
  And many a deadlier wreck.

THE ARCHIPELAGO

Sail before the morning breeze
The Sporads through and Cyclades
They look like isles of absentees—
Gone whither?

You bless Apollo's cheering ray,
But Delos, his own isle, today
Not e'en a Selkirk there to pray
God friend me!

Scarce lone these groups, scarce lone and bare
When Theseus roved a Raleigh there,
Each isle a small Virginia fair—
Unravished.

Nor less through havoc fell they rue,
They still retain in outline true
Their grace of form when earth was new
And primal.

But beauty clear, the frame's as yet,
Never shall make one quite forget
Thy picture, Pan, therein once set—
Life's revel!

'Tis Polynesia reft of palms,
Seaward no valley breathes her balms—
Not such as musk thy rings of calms,
Marquesas!

SYRA

(A TRANSMITTED REMINISCENCE.)

Fleeing from Scio's smouldering vines
(Where when the sword its work had done
The Turk applied the torch) the Greek
Came here, a fugitive stript of goods,
Here to an all but tenantless isle,
Nor here in footing gained at first,
Felt safe. Still from the turbaned foe
Dreading the doom of shipwrecked men
Whom feline seas permit to land
Then pounce upon and drag them back,
For height they made, and prudent won
A cone-shaped fastness on whose flanks
With pains they pitched their eyrie camp,
Stone huts, whereto they wary clung;
But, reassured in end, come down—
Multiplied through compatriots now,
Refugees like themselves forlorn—
And building along the water's verge
Begin to thrive; and thriving more
When Greece at last flung off the Turk,
Make of the haven mere a mart.

I saw it in its earlier day—
Primitive, such an isled resort
As hearthless Homer might have known
Wandering about the Ægean here.
Sheds ribbed with wreck-stuff faced the sea
Where goods in transit shelter found;

And here and there a shanty-shop
Where Fez-caps, swords, tobacco, shawls
Pistols, and orient finery, Eve's—
(The spangles dimmed by hands profane)
Like plunder on a pirate's deck
Lay orderless in such loose way
As to suggest things ravished or gone astray.

Above a tented inn with fluttering flag
A sunburnt board announced Greek wine
In self-same text Anacreon knew,
Dispensed by one named "Pericles."
Got up as for the opera's scene,
Armed strangers, various, lounged or lazed,
Lithe fellows tall, with gold-shot eyes.
Sunning themselves as leopards may.

Off-shore lay xebecs trim and light,
And some but dubious in repute.
But on the strand, for docks were none,
What busy bees! no testy fry;
Frolickers, picturesquely odd,
With bales and oil-jars lading boats,
Lighters that served an anchored craft,
Each in his tasseled Phrygian cap,
Blue Eastern drawers and braided vest;
And some with features cleanly cut
As Proserpine's upon the coin.
Such chatterers all! like children gay
Who make believe to work, but play.

I saw, and how help musing too.
Here traffic's immature as yet:
Forever this juvenile fun hold out
And these light hearts? Their garb, their gle
Alike profuse in flowing measure,
Alike inapt for serious work,
Blab of grandfather Saturn's prime
When trade was not, nor toil, nor stress,
But life was leisure, merriment, peace,
And lucre none and love was righteousness.

DISINTERMENT OF THE HERMES

What forms divine in adamant fair—
Carven demigod and god,
And hero-marbles rivalling these,
Bide under Latium's sod,
Or lost in sediment and drift
Alluvial which the Grecian rivers sift.

To dig for these, O better far
Than raking arid sands
For gold more barren meetly theirs
Sterile, with brimming hands.

THE APPARITION

(THE PARTHENON UPLIFTED ON ITS ROCK FIRST CHALLENGING THE VIEW ON THE APPROACH TO ATHENS)

Abrupt the supernatural Cross,
  Vivid in startled air,
Smote the Emperor Constantine
And turned his soul's allegiance there.

With other power appealing down,
  Trophy of Adam's best!
If cynic minds you scarce convert,
You try them, shake them, or molest.

Diogenes, that honest heart,
  Lived ere your date began;
Thee had he seen, he might have swerved
In mood nor barked so much at Man.

IN THE DESERT

Never Pharaoh's Night,
Whereof the Hebrew wizards croon,
Did so the Theban flamens try
As me this veritable Noon.

Like blank ocean in blue calm
Undulates the ethereal frame;
In one flowing oriflamme
God flings his fiery standard out.

Battling with the Emirs fierce
Napoleon a great victory won,
Through and through his sword did pierce;
But, bayonetted by this sun
His gunners drop beneath the gun.

Holy, holy, holy Light!
Immaterial incandescence,
Of God the effluence of the essence,
Shekinah intolerably bright!

THE GREAT PYRAMID

Your masonry—and is it man's?
More like some Cosmic artisan's.
Your courses as in strata rise,
Beget you do a blind surmise
Like Grampians.

Far slanting up your sweeping flank
Arabs with Alpine goats may rank,
And there they find a choice of passes
Even like to dwarfs that climb the masses
Of glaciers blank.

Shall lichen in your crevice fit?
Nay, sterile all and granite-knit:
Weather nor weather-strain ye rue,
But aridly you cleave the blue
As lording it.

Morn's vapor floats beneath your peak,
Kites skim your side with pinion weak;
To sand-storms battering, blow on blow,
Raging to work your overthrow,
You—turn the cheek.

All elements unmoved you stem,
Foursquare you stand and suffer them:
Time's future infinite you dare,
While, for the past, 'tis you that wear
Eld's diadem.

Slant from your inmost lead the caves
And labyrinths rumored. These who braves
And penetrates (old palmers said)
Comes out afar on deserts dead
And, dying, raves.

Craftsmen, in dateless quarries dim,
Stones formless into form did trim,
Usurped on Nature's self with Art,
And bade this dumb I AM to start,
Imposing him.

L'ENVOI

THE RETURN OF THE SIRE DE NESLE. A.D. 16—

My towers at last! These rovings end,
Their thirst is slaked in larger dearth:
The yearning infinite recoils,
  For terrible is earth!

Kaf thrusts his snouted crags through fog:
Araxes swells beyond his span,
And knowledge poured by pilgrimage
  Overflows the banks of man.

But thou, my stay, thy lasting love
One lonely good, let this but be!
Weary to view the wide world's swarm,
  But blest to fold but thee.

WEEDS AND WILDINGS
WITH
A ROSE OR TWO

PART I

THE YEAR

THE LOITERER

1

She will come tho' she loiter, believe,
Her pledge it assigns not the day;
Why brood by the embers night after night,
Sighing over their dying away—
Well, let her delay;
She is everywhere longed for as here;
A favorite, freakish and young:
Her can we gladden, then us she can cheer?
Let us think no wrong.

2

But watch and wait:
Wait by the pasture-bars
Or watch by the garden-gate;
For, after coming, tho' wide she stray,
First ever she shows on the slender way—
Slim sheep-track threads the hill-side brown,
Or foot-path leads to the garden down.

3

While snow lingered under the fir,
Loth to melt from embrace of the earth,
And ashy red embers of logs
In moonlight dozed on the hearth;
And in cage by the window sun-warmed
Our bird was enheartened to song;
It was then that, as yearly before,
By the self-same foot-path along,
She drew to the weather-beat door
That was sunned thro' the skeleton-tree:
Nothing she said, but seemed to say—
"Old folks, aren't ye glad to see *me!*"
And tears brimmed our eyes—bless the day!

Then she turned; revisited in sort—
She was here—she was there,
Peeping eager everywhere,
Like one who revisits scenes never forgot.

WHEN FORTH THE SHEPHERD LEADS THE FLOCK

When forth the shepherd leads the flock,
White lamb and dingy ewe,
And there's dibbling in the garden,
Then the world begins anew.

When Buttercups make bright
The meadows up and down,
The Golden Age returns to fields
If never to the town.

When stir the freshening airs
  Forerunning showers to meads,
And Dandelions prance,
Then Heart-Free shares the dance—
  A Wilding with the Weeds!

    But alack and alas
  For things of wilding feature!
    Since hearsed was Pan
  Ill befalls each profitless creature—
    Profitless to man!

  Buttercup and Dandelion,
  Wildings, and the rest,
  Commoners and holiday-makers,
    Note them in one test:

The farmers scout them,
Yea, and would rout them,
Hay is better without them—
Tares in the grass!
The florists pooh-pooh them;
Few but children do woo them,
Love them, reprieve them,
Retrieve and inweave them,
Never sighing—*Alas!*

THE LITTLE GOOD FELLOWS

Make way, make way, give leave to rove
Under your orchard as above;
A yearly welcome if ye love!
And all who loved us alway throve.

Love for love. For ever we
When some unfriended man we see
Lifeless under forest-eaves,
Cover him with buds and leaves;
And charge the chipmunk, mouse, and mole—
Molest not this poor human soul!

Then let us never on green floor
Where your paths wind round about,
Keep to the middle in misdoubt,
Shy and aloof, unsure of ye;
But come like grass to stones on moor,
Wherever mortals be.

But toss your caps, O maids and men,
Snow-bound long in farm-house pen:
We chase Old Winter back to den.
See our red waistcoats! Alive be then—
Alive to the bridal-favors when
They blossom your orchards every Spring,
And cock-robin curves on a bridegroom's wing!

CLOVER

The June day dawns, the joy-winds rush,
  Your jovial fields are dresst;
Rosier for thee the Dawn's red flush,
  Ruddier the Ruddock's breast.

MADCAPS

Through the orchard I follow
Two children in glee.
From an apple-tree's hollow
They startle the bee.
The White Clover throws
Perfume in their way
To the hedge of Red Rose;
Between Roses and Clover
The Strawberry grows.
It is Lily and Cherry
Companioned by Butterflies
Madcaps as merry!

THE OLD FASHION

Now youthful is Ver
  And the same, and forever,
  Year after year;
And her bobolinks sing,
  And they vary never
  In juvenile cheer.

Old-fashioned is Ver
  Tho' eternally new,
And her bobolink's young
  Keep the old fashion true:
Chee, Chee! they will sing
  While the welkin is blue.

BUTTERFLY DITTY

Summer comes in like a sea,
  Wave upon wave how bright;
Thro' the heaven of summer we'll flee
  And tipple the light!

From garden to garden,
  Such charter have we,
We'll rove and we'll revel,
  And idlers we'll be!

We'll rove and we'll revel,
  Concerned but for this,—
That Man, Eden's bad boy,
  Partakes not the bliss.

THE BLUE-BIRD

Beneath yon Larkspur's azure bells
That sun their bees in balmy air
In mould no more the Blue-Bird dwells
Tho' late he found interment there.

All stiff he lay beneath the Fir
When shrill the March piped overhead,
And Pity gave him sepulchre
Within the Garden's sheltered bed.

And soft she sighed—Too soon he came;
On wings of hope he met the knell;
His heavenly tint the dust shall tame;
Ah, some misgiving had been well!

But, look, the clear etherial hue
In June it makes the Larkspur's dower;
It is the self-same welkin-blue—
The Bird's transfigured in the Flower.

THE LOVER AND THE SYRINGA BUSH

Like a lit-up Christmas Tree,
  Like a grotto pranked with spars,
Like white corals in green sea,
  Like night's sky of crowded stars—
To me like these you show, Syringa
  Such heightening power has love, believe,
While here by Eden's gate I linger
  Love's tryst to keep, with truant Eve.

THE DAIRYMAN'S CHILD

Soft as the morning
  When South winds blow,
Sweet as peach-orchards
  When blossoms are seen,
Pure as a fresco
  Of roses and snow,
  Or an opal serene.

TROPHIES OF PEACE
ILLINOIS IN 1840

Files on files of Prairie Maize:
On hosts of spears the morning plays!
Aloft the rustling streamers show:
The floss embrowned is rich below.

When Asia scarfed in silks came on
Against the Greek and Marathon,
Did each plume and pennon dance
Sun-lit thus on helm and lance
Mindless of War's sickle so?

For them, a tasseled dance of death:
For these—the reapers reap them low.
Reap them low, and stack the plain
With Ceres' trophies, golden grain.

Such monuments, and only such,
O Prairie! termless yield,
Though trooper Mars disdainful flout
Nor Annals fame the field.

IN THE PAUPER'S TURNIP-FIELD

Crow, in pulpit lone and tall
Of yon charred hemlock, grimly dead,
Why on me in preachment call—
Me, by nearer preachment led
Here in homily of my hoe.
The hoe, the hoe,
My heavy hoe
That earthward bows me to foreshow
A mattock heavier than the hoe.

A WAY-SIDE WEED

By orchards red he whisks along,
A charioteer from villa fine;
With passing lash o' the whip he cuts
A way-side Weed divine.

But knows he what it is he does?
He flouts October's god
Whose sceptre is this Way-side Weed,
This swaying Golden Rod?

THE CHIPMUNK

Heart of autumn!
Weather meet,
Like to sherbert
Cool and sweet.

Stock-still I stand,
And *him* I see
Prying, peeping
From Beech-tree;
Crickling, crackling
Gleefully!
But, affrighted
By wee sound,
Presto! vanish—
Whither bound?

So did Baby,
Crowing mirth
E'en as startled
By some inkling
Touching Earth,
Flit (and whither?)
From our hearth!

FIELD ASTERS

Like the stars in commons blue
Peep their namesakes, Asters here,
Wild ones every autumn seen—
Seen of all, arresting few.

Seen indeed. But who their cheer
Interpret may, or what they mean
When so inscrutably their eyes
Us star-gazers scrutinize.

ALWAYS WITH US!

Betimes a wise guest
His visit will sever.
Yes, absence endears.
Revisit he would,
So remains not forever.

Well, Robin the wise one
He went yestreen,
Bound for the South
Where his chums convene.

Back, he'll come back
In his new Spring vest
And the more for long absence
Be welcomed with zest.

But thou, black Crow,
Inconsiderate fowl,
Wilt never away —
Take elsewhere they cowl?

From the blasted hemlock's
Whitened spur;
Whatever the season,
Or Winter or Ver
Or Summer or Fall,
Croaker, foreboder,
We hear thy call—
Caw! Caw! Caw!

STOCKINGS IN THE FARM-HOUSE CHIMNEY

Happy, believe, this Christmas Eve
Are Willie and Rob and Nellie and May—
Happy in hope! in hope to receive
These stockings well stuffed from Santa Claus' sleigh.

O the delight to believe in a wight
More than mortal, with something of man,
Whisking about, an invisible spright,
Almoner blest of Oberon's clan.

Stay, Truth, O stay in a long delay!
Why should these little ones find you out?
Let them forever with fable play,
Evermore hang the Stocking out!

A DUTCH CHRISTMAS UP THE HUDSON IN THE TIME OF PATROONS

Over the ruddy hearth, lo, the green bough!
In house of the sickle and home of the plough,
Arbored I sit and toast apples now!

Hi, there in barn! have done with the flail.
Worry not the wheat, nor winnow in the gale:
'Tis Christmas and holiday, turkey too and ale!

Creeping round the wainscot of old oak red,
The ground-pine, see—smell the sweet balsam shed!

Leave off, Katrina, to tarry there and scan:
The cream will take its time, girl, to rise in the pan.
Meanwhile here's a knocking, and the caller it is *Van*—
Tuenis Van der Blumacher, your merry Christmas man.

Leafless the grove now where birds billed the kiss:
To-night when the fidler wipes his forehead, I wis,
And panting from the dance come our Hans and Cousin Chris,
Yon bush in the window will never be amiss!

But oats have ye heaped, men, for horses in stall?
And for each heifer young and the old mother-cow
Have ye raked down the hay from the aftermath-mow?
The Christmas let come to the creatures one and all!

Tho' the pedlar, peering in, doubtless deemed it but folly,
The yoke-cattle's horns did I twine with green holly.
Good to breathe their sweet breath this blest Christmas
morn,
Mindful of the ox, ass, and Babe new-born.

The snow drifts and drifts, and the frost it benumbs:
Elsie, pet, scatter to the snow-birds your crumbs.

Sleigh-bells a' jingle! 'Tis Santa Claus: hail!
Villageward he goes thro' the spooming of the snows;
Yea, hurrying to round his many errands to a close,
A mince-pie he's taking to the one man in jail.—
What! drove right out between the gate-posts here?
Well, well, little Sharp-Eyes, blurred panes we must clear!

Our Santa Claus a clever way has and a free:
Gifts from him some will take who would never take from
me.
For poor hereabouts there are none:—none so poor
But that pudding for an alms they would spurn from the door.

All the same to all in the world's wide ways—
Happy harvest of the conscience on many Christmas Days.

PART II

THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER

TIME'S BETRAYAL

The tapping of a mature maple for the syrup, however recklessly done, does not necessarily kill it. No; since being an aboriginal child of Nature, it is doubtless blest with a constitution enabling it to withstand a good deal of hard usage. But systematically to bleed the immature trunk, though some sugar-makers, detected in the act on ground not their own, aver that it does the sylvan younker a deal of good, can hardly contribute to the tree's amplest development or insure patriarchal long life to it. Certain it is, that in some young maples the annual tapping would seem to make precocious the autumnal ripening or change of the leaf. And such premature change would seem strikingly to enhance the splendor of the tints.

Someone, whose morals need mending,
Sallies forth like the pillaging bee;
He waylays the syrup ascending
In anyone's saccharine tree;
So lacking in conscience indeed,
So reckless what life he makes bleed,
That to get at the juices, his staple,
The desirable sweets of the Spring,
He poignards a shapely young maple,
In my second-growth coppice—its King.
Assassin! secure in a crime never seen,
The underwood dense, e'en his victim a screen,

So be. But the murder will out,
  Never doubt, never doubt:
In season the leafage will tell,
  Turning red ere the rime
Yet, in turning, all beauty excell
  For a time, for a time!

Small thanks to the scamp. But, in vision, to me
A goddess mild pointing the glorified tree,
"So they change who die early, some bards who life render:
Keats, stabbed by the Muses, his garland's a splendor!"

PROFUNDITY AND LEVITY

An owl in his wonted day-long retirement ruffled by the meadow-lark curvetting and caroling in the morning-sun high over the pastures and woods, comments upon that rollicker, and in so doing lets out the meditation engrossing him when thus molested. But the weightiness of the wisdom ill agrees with its somewhat trilling expression; an incongruity attributable doubtless to the contagious influence of the reprehended malapert's overruling song.

So frolic, so flighty,
Leaving wisdom behind,
  Lark, little you ween
Of the progress of mind.

While fantastic you're winging,
Up-curving and singing,
A skylarking dot in the sun;
Under eaves here in wood
My wits am I giving
To this latest theme:
Life blinks at strong light,
Life wanders in night like a dream—
Is then life worth living?

INSCRIPTION

For a Boulder near the spot where the last Hardhack was laid low By the new proprietor of the Hill of Arrowhead.

A weed grew here.—Exempt from use,
Weeds turn no wheel, nor run;
Radiance pure or redolence
Some have, but this had none.
And yet heaven gave it leave to live
And idle it in the sun.

THE CUBAN PIRATE

Some of the more scintillant West Indian humming-birds are in frame hardly bigger than a beetle or bee.

Buccaneer in gemmed attire—
Ruby, amber, emerald, jet—
Darkling, sparkling dot of fire,
Still on plunder are you set?

Summer is your sea, and there
The flowers afloat you board and ravage,
Yourself a thing more dazzling fair—
Tiny, plumed, bejewelled Savage!

Midget! yet in passion a fell
Furioso, Creoles tell.
Wing'd are you Cupid in disguise
You flying spark of Paradise?

IRIS
(1865)

When Sherman's March was over
And June was green and bright,
She came among our mountains,
A freak of new delight;
Provokingly our banner
Salutes with Dixie's strain,—
Little rebel from Savannah,
Three Colonels in her train.

Three bearded Puritan colonels:
But O her eyes, her mouth—
Magnolias in their languor
And sorcery of the South.
High-handed rule of beauty,
Are wars for man but vain?
Behold, three disenslavers
Themselves embrace a chain!

But, loveliest invader,
  Out of Dixie did ye rove
By sallies of your raillery
  To rally us, or move?
For under all your merriment
  There lurked a minor tone;
And of havoc we had tidings
  And a roof-tree overthrown.

Ah, nurtured in the trial—
  And ripened by the storm,
Was your gaiety your courage,
  And levity its form?
O'er your future's darkling waters,
  O'er your past, a frozen tide,
Like the petrel would you skim it,
  Like the glancing skater glide?

But the ravisher has won her
  Who the wooers three did slight;
To his fastness he has borne her
  By the trail that leads thro' night.
With Peace she came, the rainbow,
  And like a Bow did pass,
The balsam-trees exhaling,
  And tear-drops in the grass.

Now laughed the leafage over
  Her pranks in woodland scene:
Hath left us for the revel
  Deep in Paradise the green?
In truth we will believe it
  Under pines that sigh a balm,
Though o'er thy stone be trailing
  Cypress-moss that drapes the palm.

THE AVATAR

Bloom or repute for graft or seed
In flowers the flower-gods never heed.
The rose-god once came down and took—
Form in a rose? Nay, but indeed
The meeker form and humbler look
Of Sweet-Briar, a wilding or weed.

THE AMERICAN ALOE ON EXHIBITION

It is but a floral superstition, as everybody knows, that this plant flowers only once in a century. When in any instance the flowering is for decades delayed beyond the normal period, (eight or ten years at furthest) it is owing to something retarding in the environment or soil.

But few they were who came to see
  The Century-Plant in flower:
Ten cents admission—price you pay
  For bon-bons of the hour.

In strange inert blank unconcern
  Of wild things at the Zoo,
The patriarch let the sight-seers stare—
  Nor recked who came to view.

But lone at night the garland sighed
  While moaned the aged stem:
"At last, at last! but joy and pride
  What part have I with them?"

Let be the dearth that kept me back
  Now long from wreath decreed;
But, Ah, ye Roses that have passed
  Accounting me a weed!

A GROUND VINE
INTERCEDES WITH THE QUEEN OF FLOWERS FOR THE MERITED RECOGNITION OF CLOVER

Hymned down the years from ages far,
The theme of lover, seer, and king,
Reign endless, Rose! for fair you are,
Nor heaven reserves a fairer thing.
To elfin ears the bell-flowers chime
Your beauty, Queen, your fame;
Your titles, blown thro' Ariel's clime,
Thronged trumpet-flowers proclaim.

Not less with me, a groundling, bear,
Here bold for once, by nature shy:—
If votaries yours be everywhere,
And flattering you the laureats vie,—
Meekness the more your heart should share.

O Rose, we plants are all akin,
Our roots enlock; Each strives to win
The ampler space, the balmier air.
But beauty, plainness, shade, and sun—
Here share-and-share-alike is none!

And, ranked with grass, a flower may dwell,
Cheerful, if never high in feather,
With pastoral sisters thriving well
In bloom that shares the broader weather;
Charmful, mayhap, in simple grace,
A lowlier Eden mantling in her face.

My Queen, so all along I lie,
But creep I can, scarce win your eye.
But, O, your garden-wall peer over,
And, if you blush, 'twill barely be
At owning kin with Cousin Clover
Who winsome makes the low degree.

PART III

RIP VAN WINKLE'S LILAC

TO A HAPPY SHADE

Under the golden maples where thou now reclinest, sharing fame's Indian Summer with those mellowing Immortals who as men were not only excellent in their works but pleasant and love-worthy in their lives; little troublest thou thyself, O Washington Irving, as to who peradventure may be poaching in that literary manner which thou leftest behind. Still less is it thou, happy Shade, that wilt charge with presumption the endeavor to render something tributary to the story of that child of thy heart—Rip Van Winkle. For aught I, or anybody, knows to the contrary, thy vision may now be such that it may even reach here where I write, and thy spirit be pleased to behold me inspired by whom but thyself.

RIP VAN WINKLE

Riverward emerging toward sunset in leafy June from a dark upper clove or gorge of the Kattskills, dazed with his long sleep in an innermost hollow of those mountains, the good-hearted good-for-nothing comes to an upland pasture. Hearing his limping footfall in the loneliness, the simpletons of young steers, there left to themselves for the summer, abruptly lifting their heads from the herbage, stand as stupified with astonishment while he passes.

In further descent he comes to a few raggedly cultivated fields detached and apart; but no house as yet, and presently strikes a wood-chopper's winding road lonesomely

skirting the pastoral uplands, a road for the most part unfenced, and in summer so little travelled that the faint wheel-tracks were traceable but on forming long, parallel depressions in the natural turf. This slant descending way the dazed one dimly recalls as joining another less wild and leading homeward. Even so it proved. For anon he comes to the junction. There he pauses in startled recognition of a view only visible in perfection at that point; a view deeply stamped in his memory, he having been repeatedly arrested by it when going on his hunting or birding expeditions. It was where, seen at the far end of a long vistaed close, the head of one distant blue summit peered over the shoulder of a range not so blue as less lofty and remote. To Rip's present frame of mind, by no means normal, that summit seemed like a man standing on tiptoes in a crowd to get a better look at some extraordinary object. Inquisitively it seemed to scrutinise him across the green solitudes, as much as to say "Who, I wonder, art thou? And where, pray, didst thou come from?" This freak of his disturbed imagination was not without pain to poor Rip. That mountain, so well remembered on his part, *him* had it forgotten? quite forgotten him, and in a day? But the evening now drawing on revives him with the sweet smells it draws from the grasses and shrubs. Proceeding on his path he after a little becomes sensible of a prevailing fragrance wholly new to him, at least in that vicinity, a wafted deliciousness growing more and more pronounced as he nears his house, one standing all by itself and remote from others. Suddenly, at a turn of the road it comes into view. Hereupon, something that he misses there, and quite another thing that he see, brings him amazed to a stand. Where, according to his hazy rem-

iniscences, all had been without floral embellishment of any kind save a small plot of pinks and hollyhocks in the sunny rear of the house—a little garden tended by the Dame herself—lo, a Lilac of unusual girth and height stands in full flower hard by the open door, usurping, as it were, all but the very spot which he could only recall as occupied by an immemorial willow.

Now Rip's humble abode, a frame one, though indeed, as he remembered it, quite habitable, had in some particulars never been carried to entire completion; the builder and original proprietor, a certain honest woodman, while about to give it the last touches having been summoned away to join his progenitors in that paternal house where the Good Book assures us are many mansions. This sudden arrest of the work left the structure in a condition rather slatternly as to externals. Though a safe shelter enough from the elements, ill-fitted was it as a nuptial bower for the woodman's heir, none other than Rip, his next living kin; who, enheartened by his inheritance boldly took the grand venture of practical life—matrimony. Yes, the first occupants were Rip and his dame, then the bride. A winsome bride it was too, with attractiveness all her own; her dowry constisting of little more than a chest of clothes, some cooking utensils, a bed and spinning-wheel. A fair shape, cheeks of down, and black eyes were hers, eyes indeed with a rogueish twinkle at times, but apparently as little capable of snapping as two soft sable violets.

Well, after a few days occupying of the place, returning thereto at sunset from a romantic ramble among the low-whispering pines, Rip the while feelingly rehearsing to his beloved some memories of his indulgent mother now

departed, she suddenly changed the subject. Pointing to the unfinished house, she amiably suggested to the bridegroom that he could readily do what was needful to putting it in trim; for was not her dear Rip a bit of a carpenter? But Rip, though rather taken at unawares, delicately pleaded something to the effect that the clattering hammer and rasping saw would be a rude disturbance to the serene charm of the honeymoon. Setting out a little orchard for future bearing, would suit the time better, and this he engaged shortly to do. "Sweetheart," he said in conclusion, with sly magnetism, twining an arm round her jimp waist, "Sweetheart, I will take up the saw and hammer in good time." That good time proved very dilatory; in fact, it never came. But, good or bad, time has a persistent, never-halting way of running on, and by so doing brings about wonderful changes and transformations. Ere very long the bride developed into the dame; the bridegroom into that commonplace entity, the married man. Moreover, some of those pleasing qualities which in the lover had won the inexperienced virgin's affections, turned out to be the points least desirable, as of least practical efficiency in a husband, one not born to fortune, and who therefor, to advance himself in the work-a-day world, must needs energetically elbow his way therein, quite regardless of the amenities while so doing; either this, or else resort to the sinuous wisdom of the serpent.

Enough. Alike with the unfinished house, and its tenants new to the complexities of the lock wedlock, things took their natural course. As to the house, never being treated to a protective coat of paint, since Rip's exchequer was always at low ebb, it soon contracted, signally upon its northern side, a gray weather-stain, supplying one topic for Dame Van-

Winkle's domestic reproaches; for these in the end came, though, in the present instance, they did not wholly originate in any hard utilitarian view of matters.

Women, more than men, disrelishing the idea of old age, are sensitive, even the humblest of them, to aught in any way unpleasantly suggestive of it. And the gray weather-stain not only gave the house the aspect of age, but worse; for in association with palpable evidences of its recentness as an erection, it imparted a look forlornly human, even the look of one grown old before his time. The roof quite as much as the clapboards contributed to make notable in it the absence of that spirit of youth which the sex, however hard the individual lot, inheriting more of the instinct of Paradise than ourselves, would fain recognise in everything. The shingles there, with the supports for the shingler—which temporary affairs had through Rip's remissness been permanently left standing—these it too, but a few autumns to veneer with thin mosses, especially in that portion where the betrayed purpose expressed by the uncompleted abode had been lamented over by a huge willow—the object now missing—a willow of the weeping variety, under whose shade the house had originally been built. Broken bits of rotted twigs and a litter of discolored leaves were the tears continually wept by this ancient Jeremiah upon the ever-greening roof of the house fatally arrested in course of completion.

No wonder that so untidy an old inhabitant had always been the object of Dame Van Winkle's dislike. And when Rip, no longer the bridegroom, in obedience to her imperative command, attacking it with an exe none the sharpest, and finding the needful energetic blows sorely jarring to

the natural quiescence of his brain-pan, ignominiously gave it up, the indignant dame herself assaulted it. But the wenned trunk was of inordinate diameter, and, under the wens, of an obtuse soft toughness all but invincible to the dulled axe. In brief the venerable old tree long remained a monument of the negative victory of a stub[b]orn inertia over spasmodic activity and an ineffectual implement.

But the scythe that advances forever and never needs whetting, sweeping that way at last, brought the veteran to the sod. Yes, during Rip's sylvan sumbers the knotty old inhabitant had been gathered to his fathers. Falling prone, and luckily away from the house, in time it made its own lowly monument; an ever-crumbling one, to be sure, yet, all the more for that, tenderly dressed by the Spring: an umber-lined mound of mellow punk, mossed in spots, with wild violets springing from it here and there, attesting the place of the departed, even the same place where it fell.

But, behold: shooting up above the low, dilapidated eaves, the Lilac now laughed where the inconsolable willow had wept. Lightly it dropt upon the green roof the pink little bells from its bunched blossoms in place of the old willow's yellowed leaves. Seen from the wood, as Rip in his reappearance viewed it, in part it furnished a gay screen to the late abode, now a tenantless ruin, hog-backed at last by the settling of the ridge-pole in the middle, abandoned to leisurely decay, and to crown its lack of respectability, having a scandalous name as the nightly rendezvous of certain disreputable ghosts, including that of poor Rip himself. Nevertheless, for all this sad decay and disrepute, there must needs have been something of redeeming attractiveness in those deserted premises, as the following inci-

dent may show, the interest whereof may perchance serve to justify its insertion even at this critical point.

In the month of blossoms long after Rip's disappearance in the mountain forests, followed in time by the yet more mysterious evanishment of his dame under the sod of the lowlands, a certain meditative vagabondo, to wit, a young artist, in his summer wanderings after the Picturesque, was so taken by the pink Lilac relieved against the greenly ruinous home, that camping under his big umbrella before those admirable objects one fine afternoon he opened his box of colors, brushes, and so forth, and proceeded to make a study.

While thus quietly employed he arrested the attention of a gaunt hatchet-faced stony-eyed individual, with a gray sort of salted complexion like that of a died cod-fish, jogging by on a lank horse. The stranger alighted, and after satisfying his curiosity as to what the artist was about, expressed his surprise that such an object as a miserable old ruin should be thought worth painting. "Why," said he, "if you *must* idle it this way—can find nothing more useful to do, paint something respectable, or, better, something godly; paint our new tabernacle—there is it," pointing right ahead to a rectangular edifice stark on a bare hill-side, with an aspiring wooden steeple whereon the distant blue peaks of the Catts-kills placidly looked down, peradventure mildly wondering whether any rivalry with them was intended. "Yes, paint *that* now," he continued; "just the time for it; it got its last coat only the other day. Ain't it white, though!"

A cadaver! shuddered the artist to himself, glancing at it, and instantly averting his eyes. More vividly than ever he felt the difference between dead planks or dead iron smeared over with white-lead; the difference between these

and white marble, when new from the quarry sparkling with the minute mica in it, or, mellowed by ages, taking on another and more genial tone endearing it to that Pantheistic antiquity, the sense whereof is felt or latent in every one of us. In visionary flash he saw in their prime the perfect temples of Attica flushed with Apollo's rays on the hill-tops, or on the plain at eve disclosed in glimpses through the sacred groves around them. For the moment, in this paganish dream he quite lost himself.

"Why don't you speak?" irritably demanded the other; "won't you paint it?"

"It is sufficiently painted already, heaven knows," said the artist coming to himself with a discharging sigh, and now resignedly setting himself to work.

"You will stick to this wretched old ruin, then, will you?"

"Yes, and the Lilac."

"The Lilac? and black what-do-you-call-it—lichen, on the trunk, so old is it. It is half-rotten, and its flowers spring from the rottenness under it, just as the moss on those eaves does from the rotting shingles."

"Yes, decay is often a gardener," assented the other.

"What's that gibberish? I tell you this beggarly ruin is no more a fit object for a picture than the disreputable vagabond who once lived in it."

"Ah!" now first pricking his ears; "who was he? Tell me."

And straightway the hatchet-faced individual rehearsed, and in a sort of covertly admonitory tone, Rip's unheroic story up to the time of his mysterious disappearance. This, by the way, he imputed to a Providential visitation overtak-

ing a lazy reprobate whose chief occupation had been to loaf up and down the country with a gun and game-bag, much like some others with a big umbrella and a box.

"Thank you, friend," said the sedate one, never removing his eyes from his work, "Thank you; but what should we poor devils of Bohemians do for the Picturesque, if Nature was in all things a precisian, each building like that church, and every man made in your image.—But, bless me, what am I doing? I must tone down the green here!"

"Providence will take you in hand one of these days, young man," in high dudgeon exclaimed the other; "Yes, it will give you a *toning down* as you call it. *Made in my image!* You wrest Holy Writ; I shake the dust off my feet and leave you for profane."

"Do," was the mildly acquiescent and somewhat saddish response; and the busy brush intermitted not, while the lean visitor, remounting his lank albino, went on his way.

But presently in an elevated turn of the hilly road man and horse, outlined against the vivid blue sky, obliquely crossed the Bohemian's sight, and the next moment as if swallowed by the grave disappeared in the descent.

"What is that verse in the Apocalypse," murmured the artist to himself, now suspending the brush and ruminatingly turning his head sideways, "the verse that prompted Benjamin West to his big canvas?—'*And I looked and beheld a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death.*'—Well, I won't allegorise and be mystical, and all that, nor even say that Death dwells not under the cemetery turf, since rather it is Sleep inhabits there; no, only this much will I say, that to-day have I seen him, even Death, seen him in the guise of a living man on a living horse; that he dismounted

and had speech with me; and that though an unpleasant sort of person, and even a queer threatener withal, yet, if one meets him, one must get along with his as one can; for his ignorance is extreme. And what under heaven indeed should such a phantasm as Death know, for all that the Appearance tacitly claims to be somebody that knows much?"

Luck is a good deal in this world. Had the Bohemian, instead of chancing that way when he did, come into the same season but a few years later, the period of the present recital, who knows but that the opportunity might have been furnished him of sketching tattered Rip himself in his picturesque resurrection bewildered and at a stand before his own door, even as erewhile we left him.

Ere sighting the premises, Rip's doddering faculties had been sufficiently nonplussed by various unaccountable appearances, such as branch-roads which he could not recall, and fields rustling with young grain where he seemed to remember waving woods; so that now the absence of the old willow and its replacement by the lilac— a perfect stranger, standing sentry at his own door, and, as it were, challenging his right to further approach—these phenomena quite confound him.

Recovering his senses a little, while yet with one hand against his wrinkled brow remaining bodily transfixed, in wandering sort half unconsciously he begins:

"Ay,—no!—My brain is addled yet;
With last night's flagons — full I forget.
But look.—Well, well, it so must be,
For there it *is,* and, sure, I see.
Yon Lilac is all right, no doubt,
Tho' never before, Rip — spied him out!
But where's the willow? — Dear, dear me!
This is the hill-side,—sure; the stream
Flows yon; and *that,* wife's house would seem
But for the silence. Well, may be,
For this one time — Ha! do I see
Those burdocks going in at door?
They only loitered round before!
No, — ay! — Bless me, it is the same!
But yonder Lilac! how now came —
Rip, where does Rip van Winkle live?
Lilac? — a lilac? Why, just there,
If my cracked memory don't deceive,
'Twas *I* set out a Lilac fair,
Yesterday morning, seems to me.
Yea, sure, that it might thrive and come
To plead for me with wife, tho' dumb.
I found it — dear me — well, well, well,
Squirrels and angels they can tell!
My head! — whose head? — Ah, Rip, (I'm Rip)
That lilac was a little slip,
And yonder lilac is a tree!"

But why rehearse in every section
The withered good-fellow's resurrection,
Happily told by happiest Irving
Never from genial verity swerving;
And, more to make the story rife,
By Jefferson acted true to life.
Me here it but behooves to tell
Of things that postumously fell.

It came to pass as years went on
(An Indian file in stealthy flight
With purpose never man has known)
A villa brave transformed the sight
Of Rip's abode to nothing gone,
Himself remanded into night.
Each June the owner joyance found
In one prized tree that held its ground,
One tenant old where all was new,—
Rip's Lilac to its youth still true.
Despite its slant ungainly trunk
Atwist and black like strands in junk,
Annual yet it flowered aloft
In juvenile pink, complexion soft.

That owner hale, long past his May,
His children's children — every one
Like those Rip romped with in the sun —
Merrily plucked the clusters gay.

The place a stranger scented out
By Boniface told in vinous way —
"Follow the fragrance!" Truth to own
Such reaching wafture ne'er was blown
From common Lilac. Came about
That neighbors, unconcerned before
When bloomed the tree by lowly door,
Craved now one little slip to train;
Neighbor from neighbor begged again.
On every hand stem shot from slip,
Till, lo, that region now is dowered
Like the first Paradise embowered,
Thanks to the poor good-for-nothing Rip!

Some think those parts should bear his name;
But no — the blossoms take the fame.
Slant finger-posts by horsemen scanned
Point the green miles—*To Lilac Land.*

Go ride there down one charmful lane,
O reader mine, when June's at best,
A dream of Rip shall slack the rein,
For there his heart flowers out confessed.
And there you'll say, — O, hard ones, truce!
See, where man finds in man no use,
Boon Nature finds one — Heaven be blest!

A ROSE OR TWO

A ROSE OR TWO
PART I
AS THEY FELL

AMOROSO

Rosamond, my Rosamond
  Of roses is the rose;
Her bloom belongs to summer,
  Nor less in winter glows,
When, mossed in furs all cosey,
  We speed it o'er the snows
By ice-bound streams enchanted,
  While red Arcturus, he
A huntsman ever ruddy,
  Sees a ruddier star by me.

O Rosamond, Rose Rosamond,
  Is yonder Dian's reign?
Look, the icicles despond
  Chill drooping from the fane!
But Rosamond, Rose Rosamond,
  In us, a plighted pair,
First makes with flame a bond,—
  One purity they share.
To feel your cheek like ice,
  While snug the furs inclose—
This is spousal love's device
This is Arctic Paradise,
  And wooing in the snows!
Rosamond, my Rosamond,
  Rose Rosamond, Moss-Rose!

HEARTH-ROSES

The Sugar-Maple embers in bed
Here fended in Garden of Fire,
Like the Roses yield musk,
Like the Roses are Red,
Like the Roses expire
  Lamented when low;
But, excelling the flower,
  Are odorous in ashes
  As e'en in their glow.

Ah, Love, when life closes,
Dying the death of the just,
May we vie with Hearth-Roses,
Smelling sweet in our dust.

UNDER THE GROUND

Between a garden and old tomb
Disused, a foot-path threads the clover;
And there I met the gardener's boy
Bearing some dewy chaplets over.

I marvelled, for I just had passed
The charnel vault and shunned its gloom:
"Stay, whither wend you, laden thus;
Roses! you would not these inhume?"

"Yea, for against the bridal hour
My Master fain would keep their bloom;
A charm in the dank o'the vault there is,
Yea, we the rose entomb."

THE AMBUSCADE

Meek crossing of the bosom's lawn
Averted revery veil-like drawn,
Well beseem thee, nor obtrude
The cloister of thy virginhood.
And yet, white nun, that seemly dress
Of purity pale passionless,
A May-snow is; for fleeting term,
Custodian of love's slumbering germ—
Nay, nurtures it, till time disclose
How frost fed Amor's burning rose.

THE NEW ROSICRUCIANS

To us, disciples of the Order
  Whose rose-vine twines the Cross,
Who have drained the rose's chalice
  Never heeding gain or loss;
For all the preacher's din
There is no mortal sin—
  No, none to us but Malice!

Exempt from that, in blest recline
  We let life's billows toss;
If sorrow come, anew we twine
  The Rose-Vine round the Cross.

Lesbia's lover when bereaved
In pagan times of yore
Ere the gladsome tidings ran
Of reunion evermore,
He wended from the pyre
Now hopeless in return—
Ah, the vial hot with tears
For the ashes cold in urn!

But I, the Rose's lover,
When *my* belovèd goes
Followed by the Asters
Toward the sepulchre of snows,
Then, solaced by the Vial
Less grieve I for the Tomb,
Not widowed of the fragrance
If parted from the bloom—
Parted from the bloom
That was but for a day;

Rose! I dally with thy doom:
The solace will not stay!
There *is* nothing like the bloom;
And the Attar poignant minds me
Of the bloom that's passed away.

ROSE WINDOW

The preacher took from *Solomon's Song*
Four words for text with mystery rife—
The Rose of Sharon,—figuring Him
The Resurrection and the Life;
And, pointing many an urn in view,
How honied a homily he drew.

There in the slumberous afternoon,
Through minster gray, in lullaby rolled
The brimmed metheglin charged with swoon.
Drowsy, my decorous hands I fold
Till sleep overtakes with dream for boon.

I saw an Angel with a Rose
Come out of Morning's garden-gate,
And lamp-like hold the Rose aloft,
He entered a sepulchral Strait.
I followed. And I saw the Rose
Shed dappled down upon the dead;
The shrouds and mort-cloths all were lit
To plaids and chequered tartans red.

I woke, the great Rose-Window high,
A mullioned wheel in gable set,
Suffused with rich and soft in dye
Where Iris and Aurora met;
Aslant in sheaf of rays it threw
From all its foliate round of panes
Transfiguring light on dingy stains,
While danced the motes in dusty pew.

ROSARY BEADS

1
THE ACCEPTED TIME

Adore the Roses; nor delay
  Until the rose-fane fall,
Or ever their censers cease to sway:
  "To-day!" the rose-priests call.

2
WITHOUT PRICE

Have the Roses. Needs no pelf
  The blooms to buy,
Nor any rose-bed to thyself
  Thy skill to try:
But live up to the Rose's light,
Thy meat shall turn to roses red,
  Thy bread to roses white.

3
GRAIN BY GRAIN

Grain by grain the Desert drifts
Against the Garden-Land:
Hedge well thy Roses, head the stealth
Of ever-creeping Land.

THE DEVOTION OF THE FLOWERS TO THEIR LADY

Attributed to Clement Drouon, monk, a Provençal of noble birth in the 11th century. In earlier life a troubadour, a devotee of Love and the Rose, but eventually, like some others of his stamp in that age, for an unrevealed cause retiring from the gay circles where he had long been a caressed favorite and ultimately disappearing from the world in a monastery.

TO OUR QUEEN

O Queen, we are loyal: shall sad ones forget?
  We are natives of Eden—
Sharing its memory with you, and your handmaidens yet.

You bravely dissemble with looks that beguile
  Musing mortals to murmur
Reproachful "So festal, O Flower, we but weary the while?

What nothing has happened? no event to make wan,
  Begetting things hateful—
Old age, decay, and the sorrows, devourers of man?"

They marvel and marvel how came you so bright,
  Whence the splendor, the joyance—
Florid revel of joyance, the Cypress in sight!

Scarce *you* would poor Adam upbraid that his fall
  Like a land-slide by waters
Rolled an out-spreading impulse disordering all;

That the Angel indignant, with eyes that foreran
  The betrayed generations,
Cast out the flowers wherewith Eve decked her nuptials
    with man.

Ah, exile is exile, tho' spiced be the sod,
  In Shushan we languish—
Languish with the secret desire for the garden of God.

  But all of us yet—
We the Lilies whose palor is passion,
  We the Pansies that muse nor forget—
In harbinger airs how we freshen,
When, clad in the amice of gray silver-hemmed
  Meek coming in twilight and dew,
The Day-Spring, with pale priestly hand and begemmed,
  Touches, and coronates you:—
Breathing, O daughter of far descent,
Banished, yet blessed in banishment,
  Whereto is appointed a term;
Flower, voucher of Paradise, visible pledge,
  Rose, attesting it spite of the Worm.

PART II

THE ROSE FARMER

Coming through the rye:
Thereof the rural poet whistles;
But who the flute will try
At *scrambling through the thistles!*
Nor less upon some roseate way
Emerge the prickly passage may.

But we who after ragged scrambles
Through fate's blessed thorns and brambles
Come unto our roses late—
Aright to manage the estate,
This indeed it well may task us
Quite inexperienced as we be
In aught but thickets that unmasque us
Of man's ennobling drapery.

Indigence is a plain estate:
Riches imply the complicate.
What peevish pestering wants surprise,
What bothering ambitions rise!
Then, too, Fate loans a lot luxurious
At such hard cent-per-cent usurious!
Mammon, never meek as Moses,
Gouty, mattressed on moss-roses,
A crumpled rose-leaf makes him furious.

Allow, as one's purveyor here
Of sweet content of Christian cheer,
"Vile Pelf" we overestimate.
Howbeit, a rose-farm nigh Damascus
Would Dives change at even rate
For Lazarus' snow-farm in Alaskus?

But that recalls me: I return.—
A friend, whose shadow has decreased,
For whom they reared a turbaned urn,
A corpulent grandee of the East,
Whose kind good will to me began
When I against his Rhamadan
Prepared a *chowder* for his feast,
Well dying, he remembered me:
A brave bequest, a farm in fee
Forever consecrate to roses,
And laved by streams that sacred are,
Pharpar and twin-born Abana,
Which last the pleasure-ground incloses,
At least winds half-way roundabout—
That garden to caress, no doubt.

But, ah, the stewardship it poses!
Every hour the bloom, the bliss
Upbraid me that I am remiss.
For still I dally,—I delay,—
Long do hesitate, and say,
"Of fifty thousand Damask Roses,—

(For my rose-farm no great matter),
Shall I make me heaps of posies,
Or some crystal drops of Attar?
To smell or sell or for a boon.
Quick you cull a rose and easy;
But Attar is not got so soon,
Demanding more than gesture breezy.
Yet this same Attar, I suppose,
Long time will last, outlive indeed
The rightful sceptre of the rose
And coronations of the weed.

Sauntering, plunged in this debate,
And somewhat leaning to elect
The thing most easy to effect,
I chanced upon a Persian late,
A sort of gentleman-rose-farmer
On knees beside his garden-gate
Telling his beads, just like a palmer.
Beads? coins, I meant. Each golden one
Upon a wire of silver run;
And every time a coin he told
His brow he raised and eyes he rolled
Devout in grateful orison.

Surely, methought, this pious man,
A florist, too, will solve my doubt.
Saluting him, I straight began:
"Decide, I pray, a dubious matter—"
And put the Roses and the Attar.

Whereat the roses near and far—
For all his garden was a lawn
Of roses thick as daisies are
In meads from smoky towns withdrawn—

They turned their heads like ladies, when
They hear themselves discussed by men.
But he, he swerved a wrinkled face,
Elderly, yet with ruddy trace—
Tinged doubly by warm flushings thrown
From sunset's roses and his own;
And, after scanning me and sounding,
"And you?—an older man than I?
Late come you with your sage propounding:
Allah! your time has long gone by."—
"Alack, Sir, but so ruled the fate
I came unto my roses late.
What then? these gray hairs but disguise,
Since down in heart youth never dies—
O, sharpened by the long delay,
I'm eager for my roses quite;
But first would settle this prime matter—
Touching the Roses and the Attar:
I fear to err there; set me right."

Meseemed his purs'd eyes grateful twinkled
Hearing of veteran youth unwrinkled,
Himself being old. But now the answer
Direct came, like a charging lancer:

"Attar? Go ask the Parsee yonder.
Lean as a rake with his distilling,
Cancel his debts, scarce worth a shilling!
How he exists I frequent wonder.
No neighbor loves him: sweet endeavor
Will get a nosegay from him never;
No, nor even your ducats will;
A very save-all for his still!
Of *me,* however, all speak well:
You see, my little coins I tell;
I give away, but more I sell,
In mossy pots, or bound in posies,
Always a market for my roses.
But attar, why, it comes so dear
Tis far from popular, that's clear.
I flourish, I; yon heavens they bless me,
My darlings cluster to caress me."
At that fond sentence overheard,
Methought his rose-seraglio stirred.
But further he: "Yon Parsee lours
Headsman and Blue Beard of the flowers.
In virgin flush of efflorescence
When buds their bosoms just disclose,
To get a mummified quintessence
He scimeters the living rose!
I grant, against my different way,
Something, and specious, one might say.
Ay, pluck a rose in dew Auroral,
For buttonette to please the sight,—
The dawn's bloom and the bloom but floral,
Why, what a race with them in flight!

Quick, too, the redolence it stales.
And yet you have the brief delight,
And yet the next morn's bud avails;
And on in sequence."
Came that close,
And, lo, in each flushed garden-bed,
What agitation! every rose
Bridling aloft the passionate head!
But *what* it was that angered here,—
Just *why* the high resentment shown,
Pray ask of her who'll hint it clear—
A Mormon's first-wife making moan.
But he, rose-farmer, long time versed
In roses husbanded by him,
Letting a glance upon them skim,
Followed his thread and more rehearsed;
And, waxing now a trifle warm:
"This evansecence is the charm!
And most it wins the spirits that be
Celestial, Sir. It comes to me
It was this fleeting charm in show
That lured the sons of God below,
Tired out with perpetuity
Of heaven's own seventh heaven aglow;
Not Eve's fair daughters, Sir; nay, nay,
Less fugitive in charm are they:

It was the rose." As this he said
So flattering in imputation,—
Angelic sweethearts overhead,
Even seraphs paying them adoration,—
Each rose, as favoring the whim
Grave nodded,—as attesting him.

"But now, Sir, for your urgent matter.
Every way—for wise employment,
Repute and profit, health, enjoyment,
I am for roses—*sink* the Attar!"

And hereupon the downright man
To tell his rosary re-began.
And never a rose in all the garden
Blushed deeper there to hear their warden
So forcefully express his mind.
Methought they even seemed to laugh—
True ladies who, in temper kind,
Will pardon aught, though unrefined,
Sincerely vouched in their behalf.

Discreet, in second thought's immersion
I wended from this prosperous Persian
Who, verily, seemed in life rewarded
For sapient prudence not amiss,
Nor transcendental essence hoarded
In hope of quintessential bliss:
No, never with painstaking throes
Essays to crystallize the rose.

But here arrest the loom—the line.
Though damask be your precious stuff,
Spin it not out too superfine:
The flower of a subject is enough.

L'ENVOI

Rosy dawns the morning Syrian,
  Youthful as in years of Noah:
  Why then aging at three-score?
Do moths infest your mantle Tyrian?
  Shake it out where the sun-beams pour!
Time, Amigo, does but masque us—
  Boys in gray wigs, young at core.
Look, what damsels of Damascus,
  Roses, lure the Pharpar's shore!
Sigh not—Age, dull tranquilizer,
  And arid years that filed before,
For flowers unfit us. Nay, be wiser:
  Wiser in relish, if sedate
  Come gray-beards to their roses late.

MARQUIS DE GRANDVIN

AT THE HOSTELRY

Not wanting in the traditional suavity of his countrymen, the Marquis makes his salutation. Thereafter, with an ulterior design, entering upon a running retrospect touching Italian affairs.

Candid eyes in open faces
Clear, not keen, no narrowing line:
Hither turn your favoring graces
Now the cloth is drawn for wine.

In best of worlds if all's not bright,
Allow, the shadow's chased by light,
Though rest for neither yet may be.
And beauty's charm, where Nature reigns,
Nor crimes nor codes may quite subdue,
As witness Naples long in chains
Exposed dishevelled by the sea—
Ah, so much more her beauty drew,
Till Savoy's red-shirt Perseus flew
And cut that fair Andromeda free.

Then Fancy flies. Nor less the trite
Matter-of-fact transcends the flight:
A rail-way train took Naples' town;
But Garibaldi sped thereon:
This movement's rush sufficing there
To rout King Fanny, Bomba's heir,
Already stuffing trunks and hampers,
At news that from Sicilia passed—
The banished Bullock from the Pampas
Trampling the royal levies massed.

And, later: *He has swum the Strait,*
And in Calabria making head,
Cheered by the peasants garlanded,
Pushes for Naples' nearest gate.
From that red Taurus plunging on
With lowered horns and forehead dun,
Shall matadores save Bomba's son?
He fled. And her Redeemer's banners
Glad Naples greeted with strown flowers
Hurrahs and secular hosannas
That fidgety made all tyrant powers.

Ye halls of history, arched by time,
Founded in fate, enlarged by crime,
Now shines like phosphorus scratched in dark
'Gainst your grimed walls the luminous mark
Of one who in no paladin age
Was knightly—him who lends a page
Now signal in time's recent story
Where scarce in vogue are "Plutarch's Men,"
And jobbers deal in popular glory.—
But he the hero was a sword
Whereto at whiles Cavour was guard.
The point described a fiery arc,
A swerve of wrist ordained the mark.
Wise statemanship, a ruling star
Made peace itself subserve the war.

In forging into fact a dream—
For dream it was, a dream for long—
Italia disenthralled and one,
Above her but the Alps—no thong
High flourished, held by Don or Hun;
Italia, how cut up, divided
Nigh paralysed, by cowls misguided;
Locked as in Chancery's numbing hand,
Fattening the predatory band
Of shyster-princes, whose ill sway
Still kept her a calamitous land;
In ending this, spite cruel delay,
And making, in the People's name,
Of Italy's disunited frame,
A unit and a telling State
Participant in the world's debate;
Few deeds of arms, in fruitful end,
The statecraft of Cavour transcend.
What towns with alien guards that teemed
Attest Art's Holy Land redeemed.

Slipt from the Grand Duke's gouty tread,
Florence, fair flower up-lifts the head.
Ancona, plucked from Peter's Chair,
With all the Papal fiefs in band,
Her Arch Imperial now may wear
For popular triumph and command.
And Venice: there the Croatian horde
Swagger no more with clattering sword
Ruffling the doves that dot the Square.
In Rome no furtive cloaked one now
Scribbles his gibe on Pasquin's brow,

Since wag his tongue at Popes who may
The Popedom needs endure his say.
But (happier) feuds with princelings cease,
The *People* federate a peace.
Cremona fiddles, blithe to see
Contentious cities comrades free.
Sicilia,—Umbria,—muster in
Their towns in squads, and hail Turin.
One state, one flag, one sword, one crown,
Till time build higher or Cade pull down.

Counts this for much? Well, more is won.
Brave public works are schemed or done.
Swart Tiber, dredged, may rich repay—
The Pontine Marsh, too, drained away.
And, far along the Tuscan shore
The weird Maremma reassume
Her ancient tilth and wheaten plume.
Ay, to reclaim Ansonia's land
The Spirit o' the Age he'll take a hand.
He means to dust each bric-a-brac city,
Pluck the feathers from all banditti;
The Pope he'll hat, and, yea or nay ye,
Rejuvenate e'en poor old Pompeii!
Concede, accomplished aims unite
With many a promise hopeful and as bright.

II

Effecting a counterturn, the Marquis evokes—and from the Shades, as would seem—an inconclusive debate as to the exact import of a current term significant of that one of the manifold aspects of life and nature which under various forms all artists strive to transmit to canvas. A term, be it added, whereof the lexicons give definitions more lexicographical than satisfactory.

Ay. But the *Picturesque,* I wonder—
The *Picturesque* and *Old Romance!*
May these conform and share advance
With Italy and the world's career?
At little suppers, where I'm one,
My artist-friends this question ponder
When ale goes round; but, in brave cheer
The vineyards yield, they'll beading run
Like Arethusa burst from ground.
Ay, and in lateral freaks of gamesome wit
Moribund Old Romance irreverent twit.
"Adieu, rosettes!" sighs Steen in way
Of fun convivial, frankly gay,
"Adieu, rosettes and point-de-vise!"
All garnish strenuous time refuse;
In peacocks' tails put out the eyes!
Utility reigns—Ah, well-a-way!—
And bustles along in Bentham's shoes.
For the Picturesque—suffice, suffice
The picture that fetches a picturesque price!

Less jovial ones propound at start
Your Picturesque in what inheres?
"In nature point, in life, in art
Where the essential thing appears.
First settle that, we'll then take up
The prior question."
"Well, so be,"
Said Frater Lippi, who but he—
Exchanging late in changeable weather
The cowl for the cap, a cap and feather;
With wicked eye then twinkling fun,
Suppressed in friendly decorous tone,
"Here's Spagnoletto. He, I trow
Can best avail here, and bestead.—
Come then, hidalgo, what sayst thou?
The *Picturesque*—an example yield."
The man invoked, a man of brawn
Tho' stumpt in stature, raised his head
From sombre musings, and revealed
A brow by no blest angel sealed,
And mouth at corners droopt and drawn;
And, catching but the last words, said
"The Picturesque?—Have ye not seen
My Flaying of St. Batholomew—
My Laurence on the gridiron lean?
There's Picturesque; and done as well
As old Giotto's *Dammed in Hell*
At Pisa in the Campo Santa."
They turn hereat. In merriment
Ironic jeers and juniors vent,

"That's modest now, one hates a vaunter."
But Lippi: "Why not Guido cite
In *Herod's Massacre?*"—weening well
The *Little Spaniard's* envious spite
Guido against, as gossips tell.
The sombrous one igniting here
And piercing Lippi's mannered mien
Flared up volcanic.—Ah, too clear,
At odds are furious and serene.

Misliking Lippi's mischievous eye
As much as Spagnoletto's mood,
And thinking to put unpleasantness by,
Swanevelt spake, that Dutchman good:
"Friends, but the Don errs not so wide.
Like beauty strange with horror allied,—
As shown in great Leonardo's head
Of snaky Medusa,—so as well *
Grace and the Picturesque may dwell
With Terror. Vain here to divide—
The Picturesque has many a side.
For me, I take to Nature's scene
Some scene select, set off serene
With any tranquil thing you please—
A crumbling tower, a shepherd piping.
My master, sure, with this agrees,"
His turned appeal on Claude here lighting.
But he, the mildest tempered swain
And eke discreetest, too, may be,
That ever came out from Lorraine
To lose himself in Arcady

(Sweet there to be lost, as some have been,
And find oneself in losing e'en)
To Claude no pastime, none, nor gain
Wavering in theory's wildering maze;
Better he likes, though sunny he,
To haunt the Arcadian woods in haze,
Intent shy charms to win or ensnare,
Beauty his Daphne, he the pursuer there.

So naught he said whate'er he felt,
Yet friendly nodded to Swanevelt.

III

With all the ease of a Prince of the Blood gallantly testifying in behalf of an indiscreet lady the Marquis incontinently fibs, laying the cornerstone of a Munchausen fable—

But you, ye pleasant faces wise
Saluted late, your candid eyes
Methinks ye rub them in surprise:
"What's this? Jan Steen and Lippi? Claude?
Long since they embarked for Far Abroad!
Have met them, you?"
"Indeed. have I!
Ma foi! The immortals never die;
They are not so weak, they are not so craven;
They keep time's sea and skip the haven.—
Well, letting minor memories go:
With other illustrious ones in row
I met them once at that brave tavern
Founded by the first Delmonico,
Forefather of a flourishing line!

'Twas all in off-hand easy way—
Pour passer le temps, as loungers say.
In upper chamber did we sit
The dolts below never dreaming it.
The cloth was drawn—we left alone,
No solemn lackeys looking on.
In wine's meridian, halcyon noon,
Beatitude excludes elation.

Thus for a while. Anon ensues
All round their horizon, ruddying it,
Such Lights Auroral, mirth and wit—
Thy flashes, O Falernian Muse!

IV

After a little bye-scene between Van Dyke, and Franz Hals of Mechlin, an old topic is by the company, here and there, discussed anew. In which rambling talk Adrian Brouwer, tickled undesignedly by two chance-words from a certain grandee of artists, and more waggish than polite in addressing Carlo Dolce and Rembrant whimsically delivers his mind.

'Twas Hals began. He to Vandyck,
In whose well-polished gentle mien
The practiced courtier of Kings was seen:
"Van, how, pray, do these revels strike?
Once you'd have me to England—there
Riches to get at St.. James's. Nay—
Patronage! 'Gainst that flattering snare,
The more of it lure from hearth away,
Old friends—old vintages carry the day!"

Whereto Vandyck, in silken dress
Not smoother than his courteousness
Smiled back, "Well, Franz, go then thy ways;
Thy pencil anywhere earns thee praise,
If not heapt gold.—But hark the chat!"
" 'Tis gay," said Hals, not deaf to that,
"And witty should be. O the cup,
Wit rises in exhalation up!"
And sympathetic viewed the scene.
Then, turning, with yet livelier mien,
"More candid than kings, less coy than the Graces,
The pleasantness, Van, of these festival faces!—
But what's the theme?"
"The theme was bent—
Be sure, in no dry argument—
On the Picturesque, what 'tis,—its essence,
Fibre and root, bud, efflorescence,
Congenial soil, and where at best;
Till, drawing attention from the rest,
Some syllables dropt from Tintoretto,
Negligent dropt; with limp lax air
One long arm lolling over chair,
Nor less evincing latent nerve
Potential lazing in reserve.
For strong he was—the dyer's son,
A leonine strength, no strained falsetto—
The *Little Tinto,* Tintoretto,
Yes, Titan work by him was done.
And now as one in Art's degree
Superior to his topic—he:

"This *Picturesque* is scarce my care.
But note it now in Nature's work—
A thatched hut settling, rotting trees
Mossed over. Some decay must lurk:
In florid things but small its share.
You'll find it in Rome's squalid Ghetto,
In Algiers at the lazaretto,
In many a grimy slimy lair."

"Well put!" cried Brouwer with ruddled face,
His wine-stained vesture,—hardly new,—
Buttoned with silver florins true;
"*Grime* mark and *slime!*—Squirm not, *Sweet Charles.*"
Slyly, in tone mellifluous
Addressing Carlo Dolce thus,
Fidgety in shy fellowship,
Fastidious even to finger-tip,
And dainty prim; "In Art the stye
Is quite inodorous. Here am I:
I don't paint *smells,* no no, no no,
No more than Huysum here, whose touch
In pinks and tulips takes us so;
But haunts that reek may harbor much;
Hey, Teniers? Give us boors at inns,
Mud floor—dark settles—jugs—old bins,
Under rafters foul with fume that blinks
From logs too soggy much to blaze
Which yet diffuse an umberish haze
That beautifies the grime, methinks."

To Rembrandt then: "Your sooty stroke!
'Tis you, old sweep, believe in smoke."
But he, reserved in self-control,
Jostled by that convivial droll,
Seemed not to hear, nor silence broke.

V

One of the greater Dutchman dirges the departed three-deckers of De Ruyter and Van Trump. To divert from which monody, a Lesser Master verbally hits off a kitchen-dresser, and in such sort as to evoke commendation from one [of] the Grand Masters, who nevertheless proposes a certain transmuting enhancement in the spirit of the latter's own florid and allegoric style.

Here Van der Velde, who dreamy heard
Familiar Brouwer's unanswered word,
Started from thoughts leagues off at sea:
"Believe in smoke? Why, ay, such smoke
As the swart old *Dunderberg* erst did fold—
When, like the cloud-voice from the mountain rolled,
Van Tromp through the bolts of her broadside spoke—
Bolts heard by me!" And lapsed in thought
Of yet other frays himself had seen
When, fired by adventurous love of Art,
With De Ruyter he'd cruised, yea, a tar had been.
Reminiscent he sat. Some lion-heart old,
Austerely aside, on latter days cast,
So muses on glories engulfed in the Past,
And laurelled ones stranded or overrolled
By eventful Time.—He awoke non,
Or, rather, his dream took audible tone.—

Then filling his cup:

"On Zealand's strand
I saw morn's rays slant 'twixt the bones
Of the oaken *Dunderberg* broken up;
Saw her ribbed shadow on the sand.
Ay—picturesque! But naught atones
For heroic navies, Pan's own ribs and knees,
But a story now that storied made the seas!"
There the gray master-hand marine
Fell back with desolated mien
Leaving the rest in fluttered mood
Disturbed by such an interlude
Scarce genial in over earnest tone,
Nor quite harmonious with their own.
To meet and turn the tide-wave there,
"For me, friends," Gerard Douw here said,
Twirling a glass with sprightly air,
"I too revere forefather Eld,
Just feeling's mine too for old oak,
One here am I with Van der Velde;
But take thereto in grade that's lesser:
I like old oak in kitchen-dresser,
The same set out with Delf ware olden
And well scoured copper sauce-pans—golden
In aureate rays that on the hearth
Flit like fairies or frisk in mirth.
Oak buffet too; and, flung thereon,
As just from evening-market won,

Pigeons and prawns, bunched carrots bright,
Gilled fish, clean radish red and white,
And greens and cauliflowers, and things
The good wife's good provider brings;
All these too touched with fire-side light.
On settle there, a Phillis pleasant
Plucking a delicate fat pheasant.
Agree, the picture's *picturesque.*"

"Ay, hollow beats all Arabsque!
But Phillis? Make her Venus, man,
Peachy and plump; and for the pheasant,
No fowl but will prove acquiescent
Promoted into Venus' swan;
Then in suffused warm rosy weather
Sublime them in sun-cloud together.
The Knight, Sir Peter Paul, 'twas he,
Hatted in rich felt, spick and span,
Right comely in equipment free
With court-air of Lord Chamberlain:
"So! 'twere a canvas meet for donor.
What say you, Paola of Verona?"—
Appealing here.
"Namesake, 'tis good!"
Laughed the frank master, gorgeous fellow,
Whose raiment matched his artist-mood:
Gold chain over russet velvet mellow—
A chain of honor; silver-gilt,
Gleamed at his side a jewelled hilt.
In feather high, in fortune free,
Like to a Golden Pheasant, he.

"By Paul, 'tis good, Sir Peter! Yet
Our Hollander here his picture set
In flushful light much like your own,
Tho' but from kitchen-ingle thrown.—
But come to Venice, Gerard,—do,"
Round turning genial on him there,
"Her sunsets,—there's hearth-light for you;
And matter for you on the Square.
To Venice, Gerard!"
"O, we Dutch,
Signor, know Venice, like her much.
Our unction thence we got, some say,
Tho' scarce our subjects, nor your touch."—
"To Saint Mark's again, Mynheer, and stay!
We're Cyprus wine.—But, Monsieur," turning
To Watteau nigh; "You vow in France,
This *Pittoresque* our friends advance,
How seems it to your ripe discerning?
If by a sketch it best were shown,
A hand I'll try, yes, venture one:—
A chamber on the Grand Canal
In season, say, of Carnival.
A revel reigns; and, look, the host
Handsome as Cæsar Borgia sits—"

"Then Borgia be it, bless your wits!"
Snapped Spagnoletto, late engrossed
In splenetic mood, now riling up;
I'll lend you hits. And let His Grace
Be launching, ay, the loving-cup

Among the princes in the hall
At Sinigaglia: You recall?
I mean those gudgeons whom his smile
Flattered to sup, ere yet awhile,
In Hades with Domitian's lords.

Let sunny frankness charm his air,
His raiment lace with silver cords,
Trick forth the *'Christian statesman'* there.
And, mind ye, don't forget the pall;
Suggest it—how politeness ended:
Let lurk in shade of rearward wall
Three bravoes by the arras splendid."

VI

The superb gentleman from Verona, pleasantly parrying the not-so-pleasant little man from Spain, resumes his off-hand sketch.—Toward Jan Steen, sapient spendthrift in shabby raiment, smoking his tavern-pipe and whiffing out his unconventional philosophy, Watteau, habited like one of his own holiday-courtiers in the Park of Fontainebleau, proves himself, tho' but in a minor incident, not lacking in considerate courtesy humane.

"O, O, too picturesque by half!"
Was Veronese's turning laugh;
"Nay, nay: but see, on ample round
Of marble table silver-bound
Prince Comus, in mosaic, crowned;
Vin d'oro there in crystal flutes—
Shapely as those, good host of mine,
You summoned ere our *Sillery* fine

We popped to Bacchus in salutes;—
Well, cavaliers in manhood's flower
Fanning the flight o' the fleeing hour;
Dames, too, like sportful dolphins free:—
Silks irridescent, wit and glee.
Midmost, a Maltese knight of honor
Toasting and clasping his Bella Donna;
One arm round waist with pressure soft,
Returned in throbbed transporting rhyme;
A hand with minaret-glass aloft,
Pinnacle of the jovial prime!
What think? I daub, but daub it, true;
And yet some dashes there may do."

The Frank assented. But Jan Steen,
With fellowly yet thoughtful mien,
Puffing at skull-bowl pipe serene,
"Come, a brave sketch, no mincing one!
And yet, adzooks, to this I hold,
Be it cloth of frieze or cloth of gold,
All's picturesque beneath the sun;
I mean, all's picture; death and life
Pictures and pendants, nor at strife—
No, never to hearts that muse thereon.
For me, 'tis life, plain life, I limn—
Not satin-glossed and flossy-fine
(Our Turburg's forte here, good for him).
No, but the life that's *wine and brine,*

The mingled brew; the thing as spanned
By Jan who kept the Leyden tavern
And every rollicker fellowly scanned—
And, under his vineyard, lo, a cavern!
But jolly is Jan, and never in picture
Sins against sinners by Pharisee stricture.
Jan o' the Inn, 'tis he, for ruth,
Dashes with fun art's canvas of truth."

Here Veronese swerved him round
With glance well-bred of ruled surprise
To mark a prodigal so profound,
Nor too good-natured to be wise.

Watteau, first complimenting Steen,
Ignoring there his thriftless guise,
Took up the fallen thread between.
Tho' unto Veronese bowing—
Much pleasure at his sketch avowing;
Yet fain he would in brief convey
Some added words—perchance, in way
To vindicate his own renown,
Modest and true in pictures done:
"Ay, Signor; but—your leave—admit,
Besides such scenes as well you've hit,
Your *Pittoresco* too abounds
In life of old patrician grounds
For centuries kept for luxury mere:
Ladies and lords in mimic dress
Playing at shepherd and shepherdess
By founts that sing *The sweet o'the year!*

But, Signor—how! what's this? you seem
Drugged off in miserable dream.
How? What impends?"
"Barbaric doom!
Worse than the Constable's sack of Rome!"
"*Ceil, ceil!* The matter? tell us, do."

"This cabbage *Utility, parbleu!*
What shall insure the Carnival—
The gondola—the Grand Canal?
That palaced duct they'll yet deplete,
Improve it to a huckster's street.
And why? Forsooth, *malarial!*"
There ending with an odd grimace,
Reflected from the Frenchman's face.

VII

Brouwer inurbanely applauds Veronese, and is convivially disrespectful in covert remark on M. Angelo across the table.—Raphael's concern for the melancholy estate of Albert Durer. And so forth.

At such a sally, half grotesque,
That indirectly seemed to favor
His *own* view of the Picturesque,
Suggesting Dutch canals in savor;
Pleased Brouwer gave a porpoise-snort,
A trunk-hose Triton trumping glee.
Claude was but moved to smile in thought;
The while Velasques, seldom free,
Kept council with himself sedate,
Isled in his ruffed Castilian state,

Viewing as from aloft the mien
Of Hals hilarious, Lippi, Steen,
In chorus frolicking back the mirth
Of Brouwer, careless child of earth;
Salvator Rosa posing nigh
With sombre-proud satiric eye.

But Poussin, he, with antique air,
Complexioned like a marble old,
Unconscious kept in merit there
Art's pure Acropolis in hold.

For Durer, piteous good fellow—
(His Agnes seldom let him mellow)
His Sampson locks, dense curling brown,
Sideways unbrageously fell down,
Enshrining so the Calvary face.
Hals says, Angelico sighed to Durer,
Taking to heart his desperate case,
"Would, friend, that Paradise might allure her!"
If Fra Angelico so could wish
(That fleece that fed on lilies fine)
Ah, saints! the head in Durer's dish,
And how may hen-pecked seraph pine!

For Leonardo, lost in dream,
His eye absorbed the effect of light
Rayed thro' red wine in glass—a gleam
Pink on the polished table bright;
The subtle brain, convolved in snare,
Inferring and over-refining there.

But Michael Angelo, brief his stay,
And, even while present, sat withdrawn.
Irreverent Brouwer in sly way
To Lippi whispered, "Brother good,
How to be free and hob-nob with
Yon broken-nosed old monolith
Kin to the battered colossi-brood?
Challenged by rays of sunny wine
Not Memnon's stone in olden years
Ere magic fled, had grudged a sign!
Water he drinks, he munches bread.
And on pale lymph of fame may dine.
Cheaply is this Archangel fed!"

VIII

Herein, after noteing certain topics glanced at by the company, the Marquis concludes the entertainment by rallying the Old Guard of Greybeards upon the somnolent tendency of their years. This, with polite considerateness he does under the fellowly form of the plural pronoun. Finally he recommends them to give audience, by way of pastime, to the "Afternoon in Naples" of his friend and disciple Jack Gentian. And so the genial Frenchman takes French leave, a judicious way of parting as best sparing the feelings on both sides.

So Brouwer, the droll. But others sit
Flinting at whiles scintillant wit
On themes whose tinder takes the spark,
Igniting some less light perchance —
The *romanesque* in men of mark;

And this, Shall coming time enhance
Through favoring influence, or abate
Character picturesquely great—
That rumored age whose scouts advance?
And costume too they touch upon:
The Cid, his net-work shirt of mail,
And Garibaldi's woolen one:
In higher art would each avail
So just expression nobly grace—
Declare the hero in the face?

On themes that under orchards old
The chapleted Greek would frank unfold,
And Socrates, a spirit divine,
Not alien held to cheerful wine,
That reassurer of the soul—
On these they chat.

But more whom they,
Even at the Inn of Inns do meet—
The Inn with greens above the door:
There the mahogany's waxed how bright,
And, under chins such napkins white.
Never comes the mart's intrusive roar,
Nor heard the shriek that starts the train,
Nor teasing telegraph clicks again,
No news is cried, and hurry is no more—
For us, whose lagging cobs delay
To win that tavern free from cumber,
Old lads, in saddle shall we slumber?

Here's Jack, whose genial sigh-and-laugh
Where youth and years yblend in sway,
Is like the alewife's half-and-half;
Jack Gentian, in whose beard of gray
Persistent threads of auburn tarry
Like streaks of amber after day
Down in the west; you'll not miscarry
Attending here his bright-and-sombre
Companion good to while the way
With Naples in the Times of Bomba.

END

A SEQUEL

Touching the Grand Canal's depletion
If Veronese did but feign,
Grave frolic of a gay Venetian
Masking in Jeremy his vein;
Believe, that others too may gambol
In syllables as light—yea, ramble
All over each esthetic park,
Playing, as on the violin,
One random theme our dames to win—
The picturesque in Men of Mark.
Nor here some lateral points they shun,
And pirouette on this, for one:

That rumored Age, whose scouts advance,
Musters it one chivalric lance?
Or shall it foster or abate
Qualities picturesquely great?

There's Garibaldi, off-hand hero,
A very Cid Campeadór,
Lion-Nemesis of Naples' Nero—
But, tut, why tell that story o'er!
A natural knight-errant, truly,
Nor priding him in parrying fence,
But charging at the helm-piece—hence
By statesmen deemed a lord unruly.
Well now, in days the gods decree,
Toward which the levellers scything move
(The Sibyl's page consult, and see)
Could this our Cid a hero prove?
What meet emprise? What plumed career?
No challenges from crimes flagitious
When all is uniform in cheer;
For Tarquins—none would be extant,
Or, if they were, would hardly daunt,
Ferruling brats, like Dionysius;
And Mulciber's sultans, overawed,
In dumps and mumps, how far from menace,
Tippling some claret about deal board
Like Voltaire's kings at inn in Venice.
In fine, the dragons penned or slain,
What for St. George would then remain!

A don of rich erratic tone,
By jaunty junior club-men known

As one, who buckram in demur,
Applies then the Johnsonian *Sir;*
'Twas he that rollicked thus of late
Filliped by turn of chance debate.
Repeat he did, or vary more
The same conceit, in devious way
Of grandees with dyed whiskers hoar
Tho' virile yet: "Assume, and say
The Red Shirt Champion's natal day
Is yet to fall in promised time,
Millennium of the busy bee;
How would he fare in such a Prime?
By Jove, sir, not so bravely, see!
Never he'd quit his trading trips,
Perchance, would fag in trade at desk,
Or, slopped in slimy slippery sludge,
Lifelong on Staten Island drudge,
Melting his tallow, Sir, dipping his *dips,*
Scarce savoring much of the Picturesque!"
"Pardon," here purled a cultured wight
Lucid with transcendental light;
"Pardon, but tallow none nor trade
When, thro' this Iron Age's reign
The Golden one comes in again;
That's on the card."
"She plays the spade!
Delving days, Sir, heave in sight—
Digging days, Sir; and, sweet youth,
They'll set on edge the sugary tooth:
A treadmill—Paradise they plight."

Let be, and curb this rhyming race!—

Angel o' the Age! advance, God speed.
Harvest us all good grain in seed;
But sprinkle, do, some drops of grace
Nor polish us into commonplace.

NAPLES IN THE TIME OF BOMBA
as told by
MAJOR JACK GENTIAN

Chartering a nondescript holiday hack at his Neapolitan inn, Jack Gential drives out, and is unexpectedly made the object of a spontaneous demonstration more to be prized by an appreciative recipient than the freedom of the city of New Jerusalem presented in a diamond box by a deputation from the Crown Council of Seraphim.

Behind a span whose cheery pace
Accorded well with gala trim—
Each harness, in arch triumphal reared,
With festive ribbons fluttering gay;
In Bomba's Naples sallying forth
In season when the vineyards mellow,
Suddenly turning a corner round—
Ha, happy to meet you, Punchinello!

And, merrily there, in license free,
The crowd they caper, droll as he;
While, arch as any, rolled in fun,
Such tatterdemalions, many a one!

We jounced along till, just ahead,
Nor far from shrine in niche of wall,
A stoppage fell. His rug or bed
In midmost way a tumbler spread,
A posturing mountebank withall;
Who, though his stage was out of doors,
Brought down the house in jolly applause.

"Signor," exclaims my charioteer,
Turning, and reining up, the while
Trying to touch his jaunty hat;
But here, essaying to condense
Such opposite movements into one
Failing, and letting fall his whip,
"His Excellency stops the way!"
His Excellency there, meanwhile—
Reversed in stature, legs aloft,
And hobbling jigs on hands for heels—
Gazed up with blood-shot brow that told
The tension of that nimble play—
Gazed up as martyred Peter might;
And, noting me in landeau-seat
(*Milor,* there he opined, no doubt)
Brisk somersetted back, and stood
Urbanely bowing, then gave place;
While, tickled at my puzzled plight,
Yet mindful that a move was due,
And knowing me a stranger there,
With one consent the people part
Yielding a passage, and with eyes
Of friendly fun,—how courteous too!
Catching an impulse from their air,
To feet I spring, my beaver doff
And broadcast wave a blithe salute.
In genial way how humorsome
What pleased responses of surprise;
From o'er the Alps, and so polite!
They clap their hands in frank acclaim

Matrons in door-ways nod and smile
From balcony roguish girls laugh out
Or kiss their fingers, rain their nosegays down.
At such a shower—laugh, clap, and flower—
My horses shy, the landeau tilts,
Distractedly the driver pulls.

But I, Jack Gentian, what reck I,
The popular hero, object sole
Of this ovation!—I aver
No viceroy, king, nor emperor,
Panjandrum Grand, conquistador—
Not Caesar's self in car aloft
Triumphal on the Sacred Way,
No, nor young Bacchus through glad Asia borne,
Pelted with grapes, exulted so
As I in hackney-landeau here
Jolting and jouncing thro' the waves
Of confluent commoners who in glee
Good natured past before my prow.

II

Arrested by a second surprise not in harmony with the first, he is thereupon precipitated into meditations more or less profound, though a little mixed, as they say.

Flattered along by following cheers
We sped; I musing here in mind,
Beshrew me, needs be overdrawn
Those shocking stories bruited wide,
In England which I left but late,
Touching dire tyranny in Naples.

True freedom is to be care-free!
And care-free seem the people here
A truce indeed they seem to keep
Gay truce to care and all her brood.

But, look: what mean yon surly walls?
A fortress? and in heart of town?
Even so. And rapt I stare thereon.
The battlements black-beetling hang
Over the embrasures' tiers of throats
Whose enfilading tongues seem trained
Less to beat alien foemen off
Than awe the town. "Rabble!" they said,
Or in dumb threatening seemed to say,
"Revolt, and we will rake your lanes!"

But what strange quietude of wall!
While musing if response would be
Did tourist on the clampt gate tap
Politely there with slender cane—
Abrupt, to din condensed of drums
And blast of thronged trumps trooping first,
Right and left with clangor and clash
The double portals outward burst
Before streamed thronged bayonets that flash
Like lightning's sortie from the cloud.
Storming from the gloomy tower
Tempestuous thro' the carverned arch,
Like one long lance they lunge along,
A thousand strong of infantry!

The captains like to torches flaring,
Red plumes and scarlet sashes blown,
Bare sword in hand audacious gleaming;
While, like ejected lava rolled,
The files on files are vomited forth
Eruptive from their crater belched!
Sidelong, in vulpine craven sort,
On either flank at louring brows
Of tag-rag who before their sortie
Divide in way how all unlike
Their parting late before my wheels!
Who makes this sortie? who? and why?
Anon I learned. Sicilians, these—
Sicilians from Palermo shipped
In meet exchange for hirelings lent
From Naples here to hold the Isle;
And daily thus in seething town
From fort to fort are trooping streamed
To threaten, intimidate, and cow.

Flaunting the overlording flag,
Thumping the domineering drum,
With insolent march of blustering arms
They clean put out the festive stir,
Ay, quench the popular fun.

The fun they quench, but scarce the hate
In bridled imprecations pale
Of brooding hearts vindictive there,

The deadlier bent for rasping curb,
Through mutterings like deep thunder low,
Couched thunder ere the leaping bolt,
The swaggering troops and bullying trumpets go.

They fleet—they fade. And, altered much,
In serious sort my way I hold,
Till revery, taking candor's tone
With optimistic influence plead:
Sad, bad, confess; but solace bides!
For much has Nature done, methinks,
In offset here with kindlier aim.
If bayonets flash, what vineyards glow!
Of all these hells of wrath and wrong
How little feels the losel light
Who, thrown upon the odorous sod
In this indulgent clime of charm
Scarce knows a thought or feels a care
Except to take his careless pleasure:
A fig for Bomba! life is fair
Squandered in superabundant leisure!

Ay, but ye ragamuffs cutting pranks
About the capering mountebanks
Was *that* indeed mirth's true elation?
Or even in some a patched despair,
Bravery in tatters debonair,
True devil-may-care dilapidation?

Well, be these rubs even how they may,
Smart cock-plumes in yon headstalls dance,
Each harness with ribbons flutters gay,
I see at pole our wreath advance:
Inodorous muslin garland—true:
Impostor, but of jocund hue!
Ah, could one but realities rout
A holiday-world it were, no doubt.
But Naples, sure she lacks not cheer,
Religion, it is jubilee here—
Feast follows festa thro' the year;
And then such Nature all about!
No surly moor of forge and mill,
She charms us glum barbarians still,
Fleeing from frost, bad bread, or duns,
Despotic *Biz,* and devils blue,
And there's our pallid invalid ones,
Their hollow eyes the scene survey;
They win this clime of more than spice,
These myrtled shores, to wait the boat
That ferries (so the pilots say),
Yes, ferries to the isles afloat,
The floating Isles of Paradise
If God's Ægean far away!
O, scarce in trival tenor all,
Much less to mock man's mortal sigh,
Those syllables proverbial fall,
Naples, see Naples, and—then die!

But hark: yon low note rising clear;
A singer!—rein up, charioteer!

III

Opening with a fervent little lyric which, if obscure in purport or anyway questionable to a Hyperborean professor of Agnostic Moral Philosophy, will nevertheless to readers as intelligently sympathetic as our honest narrator, be transparent enough and innocent as the Thirty Thousand Virgins of Cologne.

"Name me, do, that dulcet Donna
  Whose perennial gifts engaging
Win the world to dote upon her
  In meridian never ageing!

Look, in climes beyond the palms
Younger sisters bare young charms—
  She the mellower graces!
Ripened heart maturely kind,
St. Martin's summer of the mind,
And pathos of the years behind—
  More than empty faces!"

Who sings? Behold him under bush
Of vintner's ivy nigh a porch,
His rag-fair raiment botched and darned
But face much like a Delphic coin's
New disinterred with clinging soil.
Tarnished Apollo!—But let pass.
Best here be heedful, yes, and chary,
Sentiment nowadays waxeth wary,
And idle the ever-cooked *Alas.*

IV

Quick as lightning he is presented with a festive flower by the titillating fingers of a flying Peri, who thereupon spinning in pirouette, evaporates or vanishes.

Advancing now, we passed hard by
A regal court where under drill
Drawn up in line the palace-guard
Behind tall iron pickets spiked
With gilded barbs, in martial din
Clanged down their muskets on the pave.
Some urchins small looked on, and men
With eye-lids squeezed, yet letting out
A flame as of quick lightning thin;
The Captain of the guard meanwhile,
A nervous corpulence, on these
Stealing a restive sidelong glance.
A curve. And rounding by the bay
Nigh Edens parked along the verge,
Brief halt was made amid the press;
And, instantaneous thereupon,
A buoyant nymph on odorous wing
Alighting on the landeau-step,
Half hovering like a humming-bird,
A flower pinned to my lapelle,
Letting a thrill from finger brush
(Sure, unaware) the sensitive chin;
Yes, badged me in a twinkling bright
With O a red and royal rose;

A rose just flowering from the bud
Received my tribute, random coins,
Beaming received it, chirped adieu,
Twirled on her pivot and—was gone!
An opening came; and in a trice
The horses went, my landeau rocked,
The ribbons streamed; while, ruddy now,
Flushed with the rose's reflex bloom,
I dwelt no more on things amiss:
Come, take thine ease; lean back, my soul;
The world let spin; what signifies?
Look, she, the flower-girl—what recks she
Of Bomba's sortie? what indeed!
Fine sortie of her own, the witch,
But now she made upon my purse,
And even a craftier sally too!

V

Giving way to thoughts less cheerful than archaic, he is checked by a sportive sally from the Rose. But is anew troubled, catching sight of an object attesting a Power even more nitrous and menacing than the Bomb-King himself. In short, another and greater crowned artilleryman, a capricious dominator, impossible to dethrone, and reigning by right incontestably divine. Pondering which discouraging fact, once more our genial friend is twitted by the festive Mentor.

"Signor, turn here?" And turn we did,
Repassing scenes that charmed erewhile,
Nor less could charm reviewed even now.

What blandishment in clime, or else
What subtler influence, my rose,
From thee exhaled, thou Lydian one,
Seductive here could flatter me
Even in emotion not unfelt
While fleeting from that warmish pair!
If, taking tone indeed from them,
No lightsome thought awhile prevailed
Devious it drifted like a dream.
I mused on Virgil, here inurned
On Pausilippo, legend tells—
Here on the slope that pledges ease to pain,
For him a pledge assuredly true
If here indeed his ashes be—
Rome's laureat in Rome's palmy time;
Nor less whose epic's undertone
In volumed numbers rolling bland,
Chafing against the metric bound,
Plains like the South Sea ground-swell heaved
Against the palm-isle's halcyon strand.
What Mohawk of a mountain 'lours!
A scalp-lock of Tartarian smoke
Thin streaming forth from tawny brow,
One heel on painted Pompeii set,
And one on Hercules 'whelmed town!

The Siren's seat for pleasurists lies
Betwixt two threatening bombardiers
Their mortars loaded, linstocks lit—
Vesuvius yonder—Bomba here.

Events may Bomba's batteries spike:
But how with thee, sulphurious Hill
Whose vent far hellward reaches down!

Ah, funeral urns of time antique
Inwrought with flowers in gala play,
Whose form and bacchanal dance in freak,
Even as of pagan time ye speak
Type ye what Naples is alway?
Yes, round these curved volcanic shores,
Vined urn of ashes, bed on bed,
Abandonment as thoughtless pours
As when the revelling pagan led.
And here again I droopt the brow,
And, lo, again I saw the Rose,
The red red ruddy and royal Rose!
Expanded more from bud but late
Sensuous it lured, and took the tone
Of some light taunting Cyprian gay
In shadow deep of college-wall
Startling some museful youth afoot—
"Mooning in mind? Ah, lack-a-day!"

VI

Uninfluenced by the pranks and rhymes of certain Merry Andrews of the beach, he unaccountably falls into an untimely fit of historic reminiscences. For which dereliction, the Rose, now in a pleading mood, touchingly upbraids him. But again he relapses, notwithstanding an animated call, subsequently heard, to regale himself with ruddy apples and sweet oranges.

I turned me short; and, timely now,
Beheld this scene: damsels sun-burnt,

In holiday garb with tinsel trimmed;
And men and lads behind them ranged
About a carpet on the beach,
Whereon a juggler in brocade
Made rainbows of his glittering balls,
Cascading them with dexterous sleight;
And as from hand to hand they flew
With minglings of interior din,
He trilled a ditty deftly timed
To every lilted motion light:—

"The balls, hey! the balls,
Cascatella of balls—
Baseless arches I toss up in air!
Spinning we go,—
Now over, now under;
High Jack is Jack low,
And never a blunder!
Come hither—go thither:
But wherefor nowhither?
I lose them—I win them,
From hand to hand spin them,
Reject them, and seize them,
And toss them, and tease them,
And keep them forever in air,
All to serve but a freak of my glee!

Sport ye thus with your spoonies, ye fair,
For your mirth? nor even forbear

To juggle with Nestors your thralls?
Do ye keep them in play with your smiling and
frowning,
Your flirting, your fooling, abasing and crowning,
And dance them as I do these balls?"

With that, and hurrying his two hands,
Arching he made his meteors play;
When, lo, like Mercury dropped from heaven,
Precipitate there a tumbler flew,
Alighting on winged feet; then sang,
Dancing at whiles, and beating time,
Clicking his nimble heels together
In hornpipe of the gamesome kid:

"Over mines, by vines
That take hot flavor
From Vesuvius—
Hark, in vintage
Sounds the tabor!

"In brimstone-colored
Tights or breeches
There the Wag-fiend
Dancing teaches;

"High in wine-press
Hoop elastic
Pigeon-wings cut
In rite fantastic;

"While the black grape,
Spirting, gushing,
Into red wine
Foameth rushing!

"Which wine drinking,
Drowning thinking,
Every night-fall,
Heard in Strada,
Kiss the doves
And coos the adder!"

While yet I listened, vivid came
A flash of thought that carried me
Back to five hundred years ago.
I saw the panoramic bay
In afternoon beneath me spread—
All Naples from siesta risen
Peopling the benches, barges, moles.
Cooled over blue waves tinkling bland
Came waftures from Sorrento's vines,
And Queen Joanna, queen and bride,
Sat in her casement by the sea,
Twining three strands of silk and gold
Into a cord how softly strung.
"For what this dainty rope, sweet wife?"
It was the bridegroom who had stolen
Behind her chair, and now first spoke.
"To hang you with, Andrea," she said
Smiling. He shrugged his shoulders; "Nay,
What need? I'll hang but on your neck."

And straight caressed her; and when she
Sat mutely passive, smiling still.
For jest he took it? But that night
A rope of twisted silk and gold
Droopt from a balcony where vines
In flower showed violently torn;
And, starlit, thence what tassel swung!
For offset to Eve's serpent twined
In that same sleek and shimmering cord,
Quite other scene recurred. In hall
Of Naples here, withall I stood
Before the pale mute-speaking stone
Of seated Agrippina—she
The truest woman that ever wed
In tragic widowhood transfixed;
In cruel craft exiled from Rome
To gaze on Naples' sunny bay,
More sharp to feel her sunless doom.
O ageing face, O youthful form,
O listless hand in idle lap,
And, ah, what thoughts of God and man!

But intervening here, my Flower,
Opening yet more in bloom the less,
Maturing toward the wane,—low-breathed,
Again? and quite forgotten me?
You wear an Order, me, the Rose,
To whom the favoring fates allot

A term that shall not bloom outlast;
No future's mine, nor mine a past.
Yet I'm the Rose, the flower of flowers.
Ah, let time's present time suffice,
No Past pertains to Paradise.

Time present. Well, in present time
It chanced a lilting note I heard,
A fruit-girl's, and she fluted this:

"Love-apples, love-apples!
All dew, honey-dew,
From orchards of Cyprus—
Blood-oranges too!

"Will you buy? prithee, try!
They grew facing south;
See, mutely they languish
To melt in your mouth!

" 'Tis now, take them now
In the hey-day of flush,
While the crisis is on,
And the juices can gush!

"Love-apples, love-apples,
All dew, honey-dew,
From orchards of Cyprus—
Blood-oranges, too!"

Warbling and proffering them she went,
And passed, and left me as erewhile,
For the dun annals would not down.
Murky along the sunny strand
New spectres streamed from shades below,
Spectres of Naples under Spain,
Phantoms of that incensed Revolt
With whose return Wrath threatens still
Bomba engirt with guards.—Lo, there,
A throng confused, in arms they pass,
Arms snatched from smithy, forge and shop:
Craftsman and sailors, peasants, boys,
And swarthier faces dusked between—
Brigands and outlaws; linked with these
Salvator Rosa, and the fierce
Falcone with his fiery school;
Pell-mell with riff-raff, banded all
In league as violent as the sway
Of feudal claims and foreign lords
Whose iron heel evoked the spark
That fired the populace into flame.
And, see, dark eyes and sunny locks
Of Masaniello, bridegroom young,
Tanned marigold-cheek and tasselled cap;
The darling of the mob; nine days
Their great Apollo; then, in pomp
Of Pandemonium's red parade,
His curled head Gorgoned on the pike,
And jerked aloft for God to see.

A portent. Yes, and typed the years
Red after-years, and whirl of error -
When Freedom linkt with Furies raved
In Carmagnole and cannibal hymn,
Mad song and dance before the ark
From France imported with *The Terror!*
To match the poison, mock the clime,
Hell's cornucopia crammed with crime!
Scarce cheerful here the revery ran.
Nor did my Rose now intervene,
Full opening out in dust and sun
Which hurried along that given term,
She said would never bloom outlast.

VII

He encounters a prepossessing little tatterdemalion Triton, shell in hand, dewy in luminous spray of a rainbowed fountain. With the precocity of his precocious tribe, the juvenile Levantine, knowing that there is nothing the populace everywhere more like to hear than something touching upon themselves, their town and their period, entertains his street-audience accordingly with certain improvisations partaking alike of the sentiment and devil-may-care incident to the Neapolitan.

By marbles where a fountain rose
In jubilant waters scurrying high
To break in sleet against the blue,
I saw a thing as freshly bright—
A boy, who holding up a shell,
Enamelled part, with pinkish valve

New dipped in rainbows of the spray,
By mute appeal, with deference touched,
As if invoking Naples' monarch,
Not her mob, attention craved.

A weed of life, a sea-weed he
From the Levant adventuring out;
A cruiser light, like all his clan
Who, in repletion's lust for more,
And penury's strife for daily bread,
As licensed by compassionate heaven
To privateer it on their wits,
The Mid Sea rove from quay to quay,
At home with Turban, Fez, or Hat;
Ready in French, Italian, Greek—
Linguists at large; alert to serve
As chance interpreters or guides;
Suave in address, with winning ways—
Arch imps of Pandarus, a few;
Others with improvising gift
Of voweled rhyme in antic sort,
Or passionate, spirited by their sun
That ripens them in early teens;
And some with small brown fingers slim
Busier than the jackdaw's bill.

But *he,* what gravity is his!
Precociously sedate indeed
In beauty sensuously serene.
White-draped, and ranked aloft in choir
A treble clear in rolling laud
Meet would he look on Easter morn.

The muster round him closing more,
How circumspect he plays his part;
His glance intelligent taking in
The motley miscellaneous groups:
Large-chested porters, swarthy dames
In dress provincial that beseems;
Fishermen bronzed, and barbers curled;
Fat monk with paunched umbrella blue;
The quack, magnific in brocade
Chapeau and aigulets; the wight
That cobbles shoes in public way;
Mariners in red Phrygian caps.
But, twinkling brief, his liquid glance
Skims one poor figure limp that leans
Listlessly deaf amid the hum.
A purblind man, too, sly he views
With staff before him, pattering thin;
Informers these, perchance, and spies?
So queries one, a craftsman there,
Nudging his fellow, winking back.
And, verily, rumor long has run
That Bomba's blind men well can see,
His deaf men hear, his dumb men talk.
But never amid the varied throng
The boy a stragging soldier notes
In livery lace declaring him.

Howbeit, some sombre garbs he views:
A Jesuit grave, genteely sleek
In dapper small-clothes and fine hose
Of sable silk, and shovel-hat,
Hard by a doctor of the law,
In sables, too, with parchment cheek;
A useful man to lawless power,
Expert to legalise the wrong.
The twain, brief tarrying there behind,
Went sauntering off ere came the close.

But now the lad, in posture grave,
With sidelong leaning head intent,
The shell's lips to his listening ear,
In modulating tone began:

"Metheglin befuddles this freak o' the sea,
Humming, low humming—in brain a bee!

"Hymns it of Naples her myriads warming?
Involute hive in fever of swarming.

"What Hades of sighs in irruption suppressed,
Suffused with huzzahs that buzz in arrest!

"Neapolitans, ay, 'tis the soul of the shell
Intoning your Naples, Parthenope's bell.

"O, couch of the Siren renowned thro' the sea
That enervates Salerno, seduces Baiæ;

"I attend you, I hear; but how to resolve
The complex of conflux your murmurs involve!"

He paused, as after prelude won;
Abrupt then in recitative, he:

"Hark, the stir
The ear invading:

"Crowds on crowds
All promenading;

"Clatter and clink
Of cavalcading;

"*Yo-heave-ho!*
From ships unlading;

"Funeral dole,
Thro' arches fading;

"*All hands round!*
In masquerading;

"Litany low—
High rodomontading;

"*Grapes, ripe grapes!*
In cheer evading;

"Lazarus' plaint
All vines upbraiding;

"*Crack-crick-crack*
Of fusillading!

"Hurly-burly, late and early,
Gossips prating, quacks orating,
Daft debating:
Furious wild reiteration
And incensed expostulation!

"Din condensed,
All hubbub summing:
Larking, laughing,
Chattering, chaffing,
Thrumming, strumming
Singing, jingling
All commingling—
Till the *Drum,*

Rub-a-dub sounded, doubly pounded,
Redundant in deep din rebounded,
Deafning all this hive of noises
Babel-tongued with myriad voices,
Drubs them *dumb!*

No more larking,
No more laughing,
No more chattering,
Nay, nor chaffing—
All is *glum!*

To blab the reason—
Were out of season,
For, look, they *come!*

Rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub,
Rub-a-double-dub-dub,
Rub-a-double-dub-dub- o' the drum!"

Alert in his young senses five
The lad had caught the wafted roll
Of Bomba's barbarous tom-toms thumped,
And improvised the beat. Anon
The files wheeled into open view.
A second troop a thousand strong
With band and banners, flourished blades,
Launched from second cannoned den
And now in countermarch thereon;
The great drum-major towering up
In aigulets and tinsel tags—
Pagoda glittering in Cathay!
Arch whiskerando and gigantic
A grandiose magnifico antic
Tossing his truncheon in the van.
A hifalutin exaggeration,
Barbaric in his bearskin shako,
Of bullying Bomba's puffed elation
And blood-and-thunder proclamation,
A braggadocio Bourbon-Draco!

VIII

While yet the bayonets flashed along
And all was silent save the drum,

Then first it was I chanced to note
Some rose-leaves fluttering off in air,
While on my lap lay wilted ones.
Ah, Rose, that should not bloom outlast
Now leaf by leaf art leaving me?

But here anew the lad broke in:—

"Lo, the King's men
They go marching!
O, the instep
Haughty arching!—
Live the King!

"What's the grin for—
Queer grimacing?
Who, yon grenadiers
Outfacing,
Here dare sing
Ironically—
Live the King?"

But there, a comely wine-wife plump,
A bustling motherly good body
Who all along in fidgety sort
Concern had shown, and tried her way
To push up to this imp satiric,
Got next him now, and clapping hand
Across his mouth, she whispered him.
He heard; then, turning toward the throng,
"She says, Young chick come down a peg,
Nor risk being pent anew in egg."

Castel dell Ovo here was meant,
The oval fortress on the bay,
Hiving its captives in sea-cells;
Nor patriots only, plotters deemed,
But talkers, rhymesters, every kind
Of indiscreetly innocent mind.
Nor less the volatile audience—late
Grinding their teeth at Bomba's guards,
Were tickled by the allusive pun,
Howbeit, the boy here made an end;
And dulcet now, with decent air,
Of mild petitionary grace:
"Carlo am I, some *carlins* then!"
He twitched his sash up, scarlet rag,
Blithely in bonnet caught the coins,
Then disappeared beyond the marge
To dice with other imps as young,
Ere yet a little and his star
Evanish like the Pleiad lost.

IX

Herein, if Jack Gentian, ever reputed a man of veracity, is to be credited, so thin a thing as a wafer made of a little flour and water, and so forth, the same being viewless, or carefully covered from view, proves of far more efficacy in bringing a semi-insurgent populace to their knees than all the bombs, bayonets, and fusilades of the despot of Naples.

The younker faded, voice and all—
He faded, and his carol died,
Forgot anon in shifted scene;
For, hark, what slender chimes are these

On zephyr borne? And, look, the folk
In one consent of strange accord,
Part, and in expectation stand;
Yet scarce as men who mirth await—
More like to crowds that wait eclipse,
So gravely sobering seems to fall
Those light lilt chimes now floating near,
In harbinger of—what behind?
It comes; a corpulent form erect,
And holds what looks a Titan stem
Of lily-of-the-vale, the buds
A congregation of small bells—
Small, silver, and of dulcet tone,
Drooping from willowy light wires;
Behind, in square, four boys in albs
Whose staves uphold a canopy,
And, under this, a shining priest
Who to some death-bed bears the *host*
In mystic state before him veiled.

A hush falls; and the people drop
Stilly and instantaneous all
As plumps the apple ripe from twig
And cushions motionless in sod.
My charioteer reins short—transfixed;
The very mountebanks, they kneel;
And idlers, all along and far,
Bow over as the *host* moves on—
Bow over, and for time remain
Like to Pompeiian masquers caught
With fluttering garb in act of flight,
For ages glued in deadly drift.

But, look, the Rose, brave Rose, is where?
Last petals falling, and its soul
Of musk dissolved in empty air!

And here this draught at hazard drawn,
Like squares of fresco newly dashed,
Cools, hardens, nor will more receive,
Scarce even the touch that mends a slip:
The plaster sets; quietus—bide.

Let bide; nor all the piece esteem
A medley mad of each extreme;
Since, in those days, gyved Naples, stung
By tickling tantalising pain,
Like tried St. Anthony giddy hung
Betwixt the tittering hussies twain:
She sobbed, she laughed, she rattled her chain;
Till the Red Shirt proved signal apt
Of danger ahead to Bomba's son,
And presently freedom's thunder clapt,
And lo, he fell from toppling throne—
Fell down, like Dagon on his face,
And ah, the unfeeling populace!

But Garibaldi—Naples' host
Uncovers to her deliverer's ghost,
While down time's aisle, mid clarions clear
Pale glory walks by valor's bier.

Skimming over the Poem a book, he tables it, and after sipping a cup of peevish tea, dwells upon the first verse.

Pale "Glory-walks-by-Valor's-bier."
Now why a catafalque in close?
No relish I that stupid cheer
Ringing down the curtain on the Rose.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

IMMOLATED

Children of my happier prime,
When One yet lived with me, and threw
Her rainbow over life and time,
Even Hope, my bride, and mother to you!
O, nurtured in sweet pastoral air,
And fed on flowers and light, and dew
Of morning meadows—spare, Ah, spare
Reproach; spare, and upbraid me not
That, yielding scarce to reckless mood
But jealous of your future lot,
I sealed you in a fate subdued.
Have I not saved you from the drear
Theft and ignoring which need be
The triumph of the insincere
Unanimous Mediocrity?
Rest therefore, free from all despite,
Snugged in the arms of comfortable night.

MADAM MIRROR

With wrecks in a garret I'm stranded,
Where, no longer returning a face,
I take to reflections the deeper
On memories far to retrace.

In me have all people confided,
The maiden her charms has displayed,
And truths unrevealed and unuttered
To me have been freely betrayed.

Some truths I might tell of the toilet
Did not tenderness make me forget;
But the glance of proud beauty slow fading
It dies not away from me yet;
Nor the eyes too long ceasing to shine,—
Soliciting, shunning, well knowing that mine
Were too candid to flatter when met.

But pledged unto trueness forever,
My confessional close as the friar's,
How sacred to me are the trusting,
Here nothing for scandal transpires.
But ah, what of all that is perished,
Nor less shall again be, again!
What pangs after parties of pleasure,
What smiles but disclosures of pain!
O, the tears of the hopeless unloved,
O, the start at old age drawing near—
And what shadows of thoughts more tragical far
Like clouds on a lake have been here!

Tho' lone in a loft I must languish
Far from closet and parlor at strife,
Content I escape from the anguish
Of the Real and the Seeming in life.

THE WISE VIRGINS TO MADAM MIRROR

Madam Mirror, believe we are sorry for you;
But Ah, how console you or cheer!
We are young, we go skipping, but you
Are an old and forlorn garreteer!
'Tis we view the world thro' an arbor,
The bride with the bridegroom appears;
But you, retrospecting thro' tunnels
See but widowers and widows on biers!
To us that is foreign, in no sense will pair
With cake, wine and diamonds, and blossoms in hair!

But *age!*—Ah, the crow will scarce venture
To tread near the eyes flashing bold;
He's a craven; and youth is immortal;
'Tis the elderly only grow old!

But, Dame, for all misty recurrings
To beacons befogged in the past—
Less dismal they are, dame, than dubious;
Nor joy leaves us time to forecast.
Tho' the battered we hardly would banter,
And never will ridicule use,
Let us say that a twilight of inklings
Is worth scarse the Pope's old shoes.
For the rest, the skeletons meeting glass eyes
Let a parable serve, if by chance it applies.

A brace of green goggles they gabbled, old elves,
Touching my queer *spectacles* they had descried;
But the queerest of all were the goggles themselves,
Rusty, fusty shagreen of the puckered fish-hide!
But you, Madam Mirror, not here we type you,
Nor twit you for being a glass
With a druggish green blur and a horrible way
Of distorting all objects, alas!
Ourselves, so symmetric, our cavaliers tell,
What, squint us to witches with broomsticks to sell!
Oh yes, we are giddy, we whirl in youth's waltz,
But a fig for *Reflections* when crookedly false!

THE NEW ANCIENT OF DAYS
THE MAN OF THE CAVE OF ENGIHOUL

The man of bone confirms his throne
  In cave where fossils be;
Outdating every mummy known,
Not older Cuvier's mastodon,
  Nor older much the sea:
  Old as the Glacial Period, he;
And claims he calls to mind the day
When Thule's king, by reindeer drawn,
His sleigh-bells jingling in icy morn,
Slid clean from the Pole to the Wetterhorn
Over frozen waters in May!
  Oh, the man of the cave of Engihoul,
  With Eld doth he dote and drule?

A wizard one, his lore is none
  Ye spell with A. B. C.;
But *do-do* tracks, all up and down
That slate he poreth much upon,
  His algebra may be:—
Yea, there he cyphers and sums it free;
To ages ere Indus met ocean's swell
Addeth æons ere Satan or Saturn fell.
His totals of time make an awful schism,
And old Chronos he pitches adown the abysm
Like a pebble down Carisbrook well.
  Yea, the man of the cave of Engihoul
  From Moses knocks under the stool.

In *bas-relief* he late has shown
  A horrible show, agree—
Megalosaurus, iguanodon,
Palæotherium Glypthæcon,
  A Barnum-show raree;
  The vomit of slimy and sludgey sea:
Purposeless creatures, odd inchoate things
Which splashed thro' morasses on fleshly wings;
The cubs of Chaos, with eyes askance,
Preposterous griffins that squint at Chance
And Anarch's cracked decree!
  Oh the showman who dens in Engihoul,
  Would he fright us, or quit us, or fool?

But, needs to own, he takes a tone,
  Satiric on nobs, pardee!
"Though in ages whose term is yet to run,
Old Adam a seraph may have for son,

His gran'ther's a crab, d'y'see!
And why cut your kinsman the ape?" adds he:
"Your trick of scratching is borrowed from him,
Grimace and cunning, with many a whim,
Your fidgets and hypoes, and each megrim—
All's traced in the family tree!"
Ha, the wag of the cave of Engihoul:
Buss me, gorilla and ghoul!

Obstreperous grown he'd fain dethrone
Joe Smith, and e'en Jones Three;
Against even Jos and great Mahone
He flings his fossiliffer's stone
And rattles his shanks for glee.
I'll settle these parvenu fellows, he-he!
Diluvian Jove of Ducalion's day—
A parting take to the Phocene clay!
He swears no Ens that takes a name
Commensurate is with the vasty claim
Of the protoplastic Fegee.
O, the spook of the cave of Engihoul
He flogs us and sends us to school.

Hyena of bone! Ah, beat him down,
Great Pope, with Peter's key,
Ere the Grand Pan-Jam be overthrown
With Joe and Jos and great Mahone,
And the firmament mix with the sea;
And then, my masters, where should we be?

But the ogre of bone he snickers alone,
He grins for his godless glee:
'I have flung my stone, my fossil stone,
And your gods, how they scamper," saith he.
  Imp! imp of the cave of Engihoul,
  Shall he grin like the Gorgon and rule?

THE RUSTY MAN
(BY A SOURED ONE)

In La Mancha he mopeth,
  With beard thin and dusty;
He doteth and mopeth
  In library fusty—
'Mong his old folios gropeth:
  Cites obsolete saws
  Of chivalry's laws—
  Be the wronged one's knight:
  Die, but do right.
So he rusts and musts,
While each grocer green
Thriveth apace with the fulsome face
Of a fool serene.

THY AIM, THY AIM?

Thy aim, thy aim?
'Mid the dust dearth and din,
An exception wouldst win
By some deed shall ignite the acclaim?
Then beware, and prepare thee
Lest Envy ensnare thee,
And yearning be sequelled by shame.
But strive bravely on, yet on and yet on,
Let the goal be won;
Then if, living, you kindle a flame,
Your guerdon will be but a flower,
Only a flower,
The flower of repute,
A flower cut down in an hour.

But repute, if this be too tame,
And, dying, you truly ennoble a name—

Again but a flower!
Only a flower,
A funeral flower,
A blossom of Dis from Proserpine's bower—
The belated funeral flower of fame.

THE OLD SHIPMASTER AND HIS CRAZY BARN

Bewrinkled in shingle and lichened in board,
With sills settling down to the sward,
My old barn it leaneth awry;
It sags, and the wags wag their heads going by.

In March winds it creaks,
Each gaunt timber shrieks
Like ribs of a craft off Cape Horn;
And in midst of the din
The foul weather beats in;
And the grain-chest—'twould mould any corn!

Pull it down, says a neighbor.
Never mine be that labor!
For a Spirit inhabits, a fellowly one,
The like of which never responded to me
From the long hills and hollows that make up the sea,
Hills and hollows where Echo is none.

The site should I clear, and rebuild,
Would that Voice reinhabit?—Self-willed,
Says each pleasing thing
Never Dives can buy,
Let me keep where I cling!
I am touchy as tinder
Yea, quick to take wing,
Nor return if I fly.

CAMOENS

1

(BEFORE)

Restless, restless, craving rest,
Forever must I fan this fire,
Forever in flame on flame aspire?
Yea, for the God demands thy best.
The world with endless beauty teems,
And thought evokes new worlds of dreams:
Then hunt the flying herds of themes.
And fan, yet fan thy fervid fire
Until the crucibled ore shall show
That fire can purge, as well as glow.
In ordered ardor nobly strong,
Flame to the height of ancient song.

CAMOENS IN THE HOSPITAL

2

(AFTER)

What now avails the pageant verse,
Trophies and arms with music borne?
Base is the world; and some rehearse
How noblest meet ignoble scorn.
Vain now the ardor, vain thy fire,
Delirium mere, unsound desire:
Fate's knife hath ripped the chorded lyre.
Exhausted by the exacting lay,
Thou dost but fall a surer prey

To wile and guile ill understood;
While they who work them, fair in face,
Still keep their strength in prudent place,
And claim they worthier run life's race,
Serving high God with useful good.

MONTAIGNE AND HIS KITTEN

Hither, Blanche! 'Tis you and I.
Now that not a fool is by
To say we fool it—let us fool!
We, you know, in mind are one,
Alumni of no fagging school;
Superfluous business still we shun;
And ambition we let go,
The while poor dizzards strain and strive,
Rave and slave, drudge and drive,
Chasing ever, to and fro,
After ends that seldom gain
Scant exemption from life's pain.

But preachment proses, and so I.
Blanche, round your furred neck let me tie
This Order, with brave ribbon, see,—
The King he pinned it upon me.

But, hark ye, sweeting—well-a-day!
Forever shall ye purr this way—
Forever comfortable be?
Don't you wish now 'twas for ye,

Our grandiose eternity?
Pish! what fops we humans here,
Won't admit within our sphere
The whitest doe, nor even thee—
We, the spotless humans, we!

Preaching, prosing—scud and run,
Earnestness is far from fun.
Bless me, Blanche; we'll frisk to-night,
Hearts be ours lilt and light—
Gambol, skip, and frolic, play:
Wise ones fool it while they may!

FALSTAFF'S LAMENT OVER PRINCE HAL BECOME HENRY V

One that I cherisheed,
Yea, loved as a son—
Up early, up late with,
My promising one:
No use in good nurture,
None, lads, none!

Here on this settle
He wore the true crown,
King of good fellows,
And Fat Jack was one—
Now, Beadle of England
In formal array—
Best fellow alive
On a throne flung away!

Companions and cronies
Keep fast and lament;—
Come drawer, more sack here
To drown discontent;

For now intuitions
Shall wither to codes,
Pragmatical morals
Shall libel the gods.—

One I instructed,
Yea, talked to—alone:
Precept—example
Clean away thrown!

(Sorrow makes thisty:
Sack, drawer, more sack!—)
One that I prayed for,
I, Honest Jack!—

To bring down these gray hairs—
To cut his old pal!
But, I'll be magnanimous—
Here's to thee, Hal!

SHADOW AT THE FEAST

MRS. B———

(1847)

Now churches are leafy,
Now evergreens reign;
'Tis green Burnam wood
Come to gray Dunsinane!

Now the night it is starry
And lavishly go
In a largess of music
The bells thro' the snow.

Now burn the decanters
Like turrets that rise
All garnet in sunset
Of orient skies.

O, snugged in the Valley,
A homestead of hearts!
Love flies like a shuttle,
And knits while it darts.

Brown brothers, fair sisters,
Bright cousins and all,
Keeping Christmas at table,
The large and the small.

But a kinswoman glideth,
Infantile in grace,
Sits down and is silent—
Medallion in place!

O, the hearth is like ruby,
The curtains they glow;
But she who sits sadly
Her story we know:

The blossom of orange
Turned cypress so soon!
Child-bride of the May-time
Child-widow in June!

Snow-white is her raiment;
And sorrow so mild,
An elf-sorrow seemeth,
As she an elf-child.

In patience she sitteth;
Tho' cometh no balm,
She floats, holy lily,
On waters of calm.

Come pass the decanter!
Our hearts let us cheer,
Yea, I wish *Merry Christmas*—
But let her not hear!

MERRY DITTY OF THE SAD MAN

Let us all take to singing
Who feel the life-thong;
Let us all take to singing,
And this be the song—
  Nothing like singing
  When blue-devils throng!

Along, come along:
Nothing like singing
(The rhyme keep a' ringing)
Just nothing like singing,
No, nothing for sorrow but song!

HONOR

With jeweled tusks and damask housings
August the elephants appear:
Grandees, trumpets, banners, soldiers—
One flame from van to rear!

Bid by India's King they travel
In solemn embassage to-day,
To meet the Diamond from Golconda,
The Great Find of Cathay.

O the honor, O the homage!
But, methinks, 'twere nice,
Would they say but *How-de-do?*
To the Little Pearl of Price.

FRUIT AND FLOWER PAINTER

She dens in a garret
  As void as a drum;
In lieu of plum-pudding—
  She paints the plum!

No use in my grieving,
  The shops I must suit:
Broken hearts are but potsherds—
  Paint flowers and fruit!

How whistles her garret,
  A seine for the snows:
She hums *Si fortuna,*
  And—paints the rose!

December is howling,
  But feign it a flute:
Help on the deceiving—
  Paint flowers and fruit!

THE MEDALLION
IN VILLA ALBINA &C

Since seriousness in many a face,
Open or latent, you may trace—
The ground-expression, wherein close
All smiles at last; and ever still
The revelation of repose;

Which sums the life, and tells the mood
Of inmost self in solitude—

Then wherefore, World, of bards complain
Whose verse the years and fate imbue
With reveries where no glosings reign—
An even unelated strain
In candor grave, to nature due?

TIME'S LONG AGO!

Time's Long Ago! Nor coral isles
In the blue South Sea more serene
When the lagoons unruffled show.
There, Fates and Furies change their mien.
Though strewn with wreckage be the shore
The halcyon haunts it; all is green
And wins the heart that hope can lure no more.

IN THE HALL OF MARBLES
(LINES RECALLED FROM A DESTROYED POEM)

If genius, turned to sordid ends
  Ye count to glory lost,
How with mankind that flouts the aims
  Time's Attic years engrossed?

Waxes the world so rich and old?
  Richer and narrower, age's way?
But, primal fervors all displaced
  Our arts but serve the clay.
This plaint the sibyls unconsoled renew:
Man fell from Edem, fall from Athens too.

GOLD IN THE MOUNTAIN

Gold in the mountain
And gold in the glen,
And greed in the heart,
Heaven having no part,
And unsatisfied men.

IN SHARDS THE SYLVAN VASES LIE

In shards the sylvan vases lie,
Their links of dance undone;
And brambles wither by thy brim,
Choked Fountain of the Sun!
The spider in the laurel spins,
The weed exiles the flower,
And, flung to kiln, Apollo's bust
Makes lime for Mammon's tower.

IN THE JOVIAL AGE OF OLD

In the jovial age of old
Named from gold,
Gold was none for Danæs shower;
While forever silvery fell
Down in dell
Bridal blossoms from love's bower.

A SPIRIT APPEARED TO ME

A Spirit appeared to me, and said
"Where now would you choose to dwell?
In the Paradise of the Fool,
Or in wise Solomon's hell?"

Never he asked me twice:
"Give me the fool's Paradise."

GIVE ME THE NERVE

Give me the nerve
That never will swerve
Running out on life's ledges of danger;
Mine, mine be the nerve
That in peril will serve,
Since life is to safety a stranger.

When roaring below
The cataracts go,
And tempests are over me scudding;
Give, give me the calm
That is better than balm,
And the courage that keepeth new-budding.

MY JACKET OLD

My jacket old, with narrow seam—
When the dull day's work is done
I dust it, and of Asia dream,
Old Asia of the sun!
There other garbs prevail;
Yea, lingering there, free robe and vest
Edenic Leisure's age attest
Ere Work, alack, came in with Wail.

IN THE OLD FARM-HOUSE

THE GHOST

Dead of night, dead of night,
  Living souls are a'bed;
Dead of night, dead of night,
  And I sit with the dead.

He laughs in white sheet,
  And I, I laugh too,
'Tis Shakespeare—good fellow—
  And Falstaff in view.

TO————

Ah, wherefore, lonely, to and fro
Flittest like the shades that go
Pale wandering by the weedy stream?
We, like they, are but a dream:
Then dreams, and less, our miseries be;
Yea, fear and sorrow, pain, despair
Are but phantoms. But what plea
Avails here? phantoms having power
To make the heart quake and the spirit cower.

A BATTLE PICTURE

Three mounted buglers laced in gold,
  Sidelong veering, light in seat,
High on the crest of battle rolled
  Ere yet the surge is downward beat,
The pennoned trumpets lightly hold—
  Mark how they snatch the swift occasion
  To thrill their rearward invocation—
While the sabres, never coy,
  Ring responses as they ride;
And, like breakers of the tide,
  All the mad plumes dance for joy!

OLD AGE IN HIS AILING

Old Age in his ailing
At youth will be railing
It scorns youth's regaling
Pooh-pooh it does, silly dream;
But me, the fool, save
From waxing so grave
As, reduced to skimmed milk, to slander the cream.

Pity, if true,
What the pewterer said—
Hearts-of-gold be few.
Howbeit, when snug in my bed,
And the fire-light flickers and yellows,
I dream of the hearts-of-gold sped—
The Falernian fellows—
Hafiz and Horace,
And Beranger—all
Dexterous tumblers eluding the Fall,
Fled? can be sped?
But the marygold's morris
Is danced o'er their head;
And their memory mellows,
Embalmed and becharmed,
Hearts-of-gold and good fellows!

PONTOOSUCE

Crowning a bluff where gleams the lake below,
Some pillared pines in well-spaced order stand
And like an open temple show.
And here in best of seasons bland,
Autumnal noon-tide, I look out
From dusk arcades on sunshine all about.

Beyond the Lake, in upland cheer
Fields, pastoral fields and barns appear,

They skirt the hills where lonely roads
Revealed in links thro' tiers of woods
Wind up to indistinct abodes
And faery-peopled neighborhoods;
While further fainter mountains keep
Hazed in romance impenetrably deep.

Look, corn in stacks, on many a farm,
And orchards ripe in languorous charm,
As dreamy Nature, feeling sure
Of all her genial labor done,
And the last mellow fruitage won,
Would idle out her term mature;
Reposing like a thing reclined
In kinship with man's meditative mind.

For me, within the brown arcade—
Rich life, methought; sweet here in shade
And pleasant abroad in air!—But, nay,
A counter thought intrusive played,
A thought as old as thought itself,
And who shall lay it on the shelf!—
I felt the beauty bless the day
In opulence of autumn's dower;
But evanescence will not stay!
A year ago was such an hour,
As this, which but foreruns the blast
Shall sweep these live leaves to the dead leaves past.

All dies!—

I stood in revery long.
Then, to forget death's ancient wrong,
I turned me in the deep arcade,
And there by chance in lateral glade
I saw low tawny mounds in lines
Relics of trunks of stately pines
Ranked erst in colonnades where, lo!
Erect succeeding pillars show!

All dies! and not alone
The aspiring trees and men and grass;
The poet's forms of beauty pass,
And noblest deeds they are undone
Even truth itself decays, and lo,
From truth's sad ashes fraud and falsehood grow.

All dies!

The workman dies, and after him, the work;
Like to these pines whose graves I trace,
Statue and statuary fall upon their face:
In very amaranths the worm doth lurk,
Even stars, Chaldæans say, have left their place.
Andes and Apalachee tell
Of havoc ere our Adam fell,
And present Nature as a moss doth show
On the ruins of the Nature of the æons of long ago.

But look — and hark!

Adown the glade,
Where light and shadow sport at will,
Who cometh vocal, and arrayed
As in the first pale tints of morn —
So pure, rose-clear, and fresh and chill!
Some ground-pine sprigs her brow adorn,
The earthy rootlets tangled clinging.
Over tufts of moss which dead things made,
Under vital twigs which danced or swayed,
Along she floats, and lightly singing:

"Dies, all dies!
The grass it dies, but in vernal rain
Up it springs and it lives again;
Over and over, again and again
It lives, it dies and it lives again.
Who sighs that all dies?
Summer and winter, and pleasure and pain
And everything everywhere in God's reign,
They end, and anon they begin again:
Wane and wax, wax and wane:
Over and over and over amain
End, ever end, and begin again—
End, ever end, and forever and ever begin again!"

She ceased, and nearer slid, and hung
In dewy guise; then softlier sung:

"Since light and shade are equal set
And all revolves, nor more ye know;
Ah, why should tears the pale cheek fret
For aught that waneth here below.
Let go, let go!"

With that, her warm lips thrilled me through,
She kissed me, while her chaplet cold
Its rootlets brushed against my brow,
With all their humid clinging mould.
She vanished, leaving fragrant breath
And warmth and chill of wedded life and death.

UNPUBLISHED OR UNCOLLECTED POEMS

EPISTLE TO DANIEL SHEPHERD

To Daniel Shepherd:

Come, Shepherd, come and visit me:
Come, we'll make it Arcady;
Come, if but for charity.
Sure, with such a pastoral name,
Thee the city should not claim.
Come, then, Shepherd, come away,
Thy sheep in bordering pastures stray.

Come, Daniel, come and visit me:
I'm lost in many a quandary:
I've dreamed, like Bab'lon's Majesty:
Prophet, come expound for me.
—I dreamed I saw a laurel grove,
Claimed for his by the bird of Jove,
Who, elate with such dominion,
Oft cuffed the boughs with haughty pinion.
Indignantly the trees complain,
Accursing his afflictive reign.
Their plaints the chivalry excite
Of churlishness, a plucky host:
They battle with the bird of light.
Beaten, he wings his Northward flight,
No more his laurel realm to boast,
Where now, to crow, the cocks alight,
And—break down all the branches quite!

Such a weight of friendship pure
The grateful trees could not endure.
This dream, it still disturbeth me:
Seer, foreshows it Italy?

But other visions stir my head;
No poet-problems, fancy-fed—
Domestic prose of board and bed.
I marvel oft how guest *unwined*
Will to this farm-house be resigned.
Not a hint of ruby claret
  Cooleth in our cellar-bin;
And, ripening in our sultry garret,
  Otard glows no flask within.
(Claret and otard here I name
Because each is your fav'rite flame:
Placed 'tween the two decanters, you,
Like Alexander, your dear charmers view,
And both so fair you find, you neither can eschew:
—That's what they call an Alexandrine;
Don't you think it very damn'd fine?)
—Brackets serve to fence this prattle,
Pound for episodic cattle.—

I said that me the Fates do cripple
In matter of a wholesome 'tipple."
Now, is it for oft cursing gold,
  For lucre vile,
The Hags do thus from me withold
  Sweet Bacchus' smile?
Smile, that like other smiles as mellow,
Not often greets Truth's simple fellow:—

For why? Not his the magic Dollar?
You should know, you Wall-Street scholar!
—Of Bourbon that is rather new
I brag a fat black bottle or two,—
Shepherd, is this such Mountain-Dew
As one might fitly offer you?
But if cold water will content ye
My word, of that ye shall have plenty.
Thanks to late floods, our spring, it brims,—
Will't mind o'crunch of goblet-rims?

—I've told some doubts that sadly pose me:
Come thou now, and straight resolve me.
Come, these matters sagely read,
Daniel, of the prophet breed.

Daniel Shepherd, come and rove—
  Freely rove two fally dells;
The one the Housatonic clove,
  And that where genial Friendship dwells.

INSCRIPTION

FOR THE SLAIN AT FREDERICKSBURGH

A glory lights an earnest end;
In jubilee the patriot ghosts ascend.
Transfigured at the rapturous height
Of their passionate feat of arms,
Death to the brave's a starry night,—
Strown their vale of death with palms.

THE ADMIRAL OF THE WHITE

Proud, O proud in his oaken hall
The Admiral walks to-day,
From the top of his turreted citadel
French colors 'neath English play.—

Why skips the needle so frolic about,
Why danceth the ship so to-day?
Is it to think of those French Captains' swords
Surrendered when ended the fray?
O well may you skip, and well may you dance,
You dance on your homeward way;
O well may you skip and well may you dance
With homeward-bound victors to-day.

Like a baron bold from his mountain-hold,
  At night looks the Admiral forth:
Heavy the clouds, and thick and dun,
  They slant from the sullen North.

Catching at each little opening for life,
  The moon in her wane swims forlorn;
Fades, fades mid the clouds her pinched paled face
  Like the foeman's in seas sinking down.

Tack off from the land! And the watch below
  Old England the oak-crownd to drink:—
Knock, knock, knock, the loud billows go,
  Rapping "Bravo my boys!" ere they sink—
Knock, knock, knock, on the windward bow;
  The Anvil-Head Whale you would think.

Tis Saturday night, — the last of the week,
  The last of the week, month, and year —
On deck! shout it out, you forecastle-man,
  Shout "Sail ho, Sail ho — the New Year!"

Drink, messmates, drink; tis sweet to think
  Tis the last of the week, month, and year,
Then perils are past, and Old England at last,
  Though now shunned, in the morn we will near;
We've beaten the foe, their ship blown below,
  Their flags in St.. Paul's Church we'll rear.

Knock, knock, knock, the loud billows go —
  God! what's that shouting and roar?
Breakers! — close, close ahead and abeam:
  She strikes — knock, knock — we're ashore!

Why went the needle so trembling about,
  Why shook you, and trembled to-day?
Was it, perchance, that those French Captains' swords
  In the arm-chest too near you lay?
Was it to think that those French Captains' swords,
  Surendered, might yet win the day?
O woe for the brave no courage can save,
  Woe, woe for the ship led astray.

High-beetling the rocks below which she shocks,
  Her boats they are stove by her side,
Fated seas lick her round, as in flames she were bound,
  Roar, roar like a furnace the tide.

O jagged the rocks, repeated she knocks,
  Splits the hull like a cracked filbert there,
Her timbers are torn, and ground-up are thrown,
  Float the small chips like filbert-bits there.

  Pale, pale, but proud, 'neath the billows loud,
The Admiral sleeps to night;
  Pale, pale, but proud, in his sea-weed shroud,—
The Admiral of the White:
  And by their gun the dutiful ones,
Who had fought, bravely fought the good fight.

TO TOM

Thou that dost thy Christmas keep
Lonesome on the torrid deep,
But in thy "Meteor" proudly sweep
O'er the waves that vainly comb —
  Of thee we think,
  To thee we drink,
And drain the glass, my gallant Tom!

Thou that, duty-led, dost roam
Far from thy shepherd-brother's home —
Shearer of the ocean-foam!
To whom one Christmas may not come, —
  Of thee I think
  Till on its brink
The glass shows tears, beloved Tom!

SUGGESTED BY THE RUINS OF A MOUNTAIN-TEMPLE IN ARCADIA, ONE BUILT BY THE ARCHITECT OF THE PARTHENON

Like stranded ice when freshets die
These shattered marbles tumbled lie:
  They trouble me.

What solace?—Old in inexhaustion,
Interred alive from storms of fortune,
  The quarries be!

PUZZLEMENT

AS TO A FIGURE LEFT SOLITARY ON A UNIQUE FRAGMENT OF GREEK BASSO-RILIEVO

A crescent brow—a quiver thrown
Behind the shoulder. A huntress, own.
It needs be Artemis. But, nay,
It breathes too much of Eve's sweet way,
And Artemis is high, austere,
Chill as her morn, a goddess mere.

She bends, and with one backward hand
Adjusts her buskin light,
The sidelong face upturned—how arch!
Sure, *somebody* meets her sight.

But never virgin on another
Virgin, or approaching brother
Turned a look like that, I wis.
Profane, if meant for Artemis!
Why, could one but piece out the stone—
Complete restore its primal state,
Some handsome fellow would be shown,
Some Lover she would fascinate
By that arch look.—
Nay—can it be?
Again methinks 't is Artemis.
Rogue of a Greek! and is it she?

Show'st thou the goddess, human yet—
The austere Artemis a coquette?
If so in sooth, some latter age
In faith's decay begot thine art—
Such impudence of sweet persiflage!

THE CONTINENTS

From bright Stamboul Death crosses o'er;
Beneath the cypress evermore
His camp he pitches by the shore
Of Asia old.

Requiting this unsocial mood
Stamboul's inmyrtled multitude
Bless Allah and the sherbert good
And Europe hold.

Even so the cleaving Bosphorous parts
Life and Death.—Dissembling hearts!
Over the gulf the yearning starts
To meet—infold!

Abreast through town by Nile they go
With water-skins the dust to lay,
A soggy set in sorry row
Squeezing their skins in bag-pipe way.
With droning rhyme that times the twitch
They squirt the water, squirt and switch
In execrable play!

Osiris! what indignity,
In open eye of day,
Offered the arch majesty
Of Thotmes passed away;
The atoms of his pomp no prouder
Than to be blown about in powder,
Or made a muddy clay!

A RAIL ROAD CUTTING NEAR ALEXANDRIA IN 1855

Plump thro' tomb and catacomb
Rolls the Engine ripping;
Egypt's ancient dust
This before the gust,
The Pyramid is slipping!

Too long inurned, Sesostres's spurned,
What glory left to Isis
Mid loud acclaim to Watts his name
Alack for Miriam's spices!

What though Reason forged your scheme?
'Twas Reason dreamed the Utopia's dream:
'Tis dream to think that Reason can
Govern the reasoning creature, man.

RAMMON

In touching upon historical matters the romancer and poet have generously been accorded a certain license, elastic in proportion to the remoteness of the period embraced and consequent incompleteness and incertitude of our knowledge as to events, personages, and dates. It is upon this privilege, assumed for granted, that I here venture to proceed.

Rammon, not mentioned in canonic Scripture, the unrobust child of Solomon's old age and inheriting its despondent philosophy, was immoderat[e]ly influenced thereby. Vanity of vanities—such is this life. As to a translated life in some world hereafter—far be that thought! A primary law binds the universe. The worlds are like apples on the tree; in flavor and tint one apple perchance may somewhat differ from another, but all partake of the same sap. One of the worlds we know. And what find we here? Much good, a preponderance of good; that is, good it would be could it be winnowed from the associate evil that taints it. But evil is no accident. Like good it is an irremovable element. Bale out your individual boat, if you can, but the sea abides.

To Rammon then cessation of being was the desirable event. But desired or not, an end or what would seem to be

an end, does come. Here he would have rested—rested but foe Buddha[.]

Solomon a very lax Hebrew did not altogether repell foreign ideas. It was in his time that reports of Buddha and the Buddhistic belief had, along with the recorded spices and pearls, been conveyed into Palestine by that travelled and learned Indian dame, not less communicative than inquisitive, the Princess of Sheba[.] Through her it was that the doctrine of the successive transmigration of souls came to circulate, along with egends og Ashtaroth and Chemosh, among a people whose theocratic lawgiver was silent as to any life to come. A significant abstention and serving the more to invest with speculative novelty Budd[h]a's affirmative scheme. But profound doctrine not directly imparted by miracle, but through many removes and in end through the sprightly chat of a clever queen, though naturally enough they might supply a passing topic for the amateur of thought, yet in any vital was they would scarcely affect but the exceptionally few. This applies to Rammon. But the wonderful conceptions of Prince ————[Siddhata?] were backed by something equally marvelous, his personality and life. These singularly appealed to Rammon also born a Prince, and conscious, too, that rank had not hardened his heart as to the mass of mankind, toilers and sufferers, nor in any wise intercepted a just view of the immense spectacle of things.

But, in large, his thought of Buddha partook of that tender awe with which long after Rammon's time, the earlier unconventional Christians were impressed by the story and character of Christ. It was not possible for him therefore to deem unworthy regard any doctrine however repugnant to his understanding and desire, authentically ascribed to so transcendent a nature.

Besides: If Budd[h]a['s] estimate of this present life confirms, and more than confirms, Solomon my wise father's view, so much the more then should a son of his attend to what Buddha reveals or alleges touching an unescapable life indefinitely continuous after death.

Rammon was young; his precocious mind eagerly receptive; in practical matters the honesty of his intel[l]ect in part compensated for his lack of experience and acquired knowledge. Nevertheless he had no grounding in axiomatic matters of the first consequence in passing judgement upon those vast claims, sometimes made as from heaven itself, upon the credence of man.

Moreover, in connection with Buddha it had never occurred to him as a conjecture, much less as a verity that the more spiritual, wide-seeing, conscientious and sympathetic the nature, so much the more is spiritually it isolationed, and isolation is the mother of illusion.

Lost between reverential love for Buddha's person and alarm at his confused teaching, (like all [ ] teaching alike unprovable and irrefutable) and with none to [ ] & enlighten him, there was no end to the sensitive Prince's reveries & misgivings.

He was left the more a prey to these disquietudes inasmuch as he took no part in public affairs. And for this reason. Upon the accession of Rehoboam his half-brother, troubles began, ending in the permanent disruption of the kingdom, a calamity directly traceable to the young king['s] disdain of the counsel of [i.e. and] advice of his father's councillors, and leaning to flatterers of his own age and arrogance of ignorance. The depressing event confirmed Rammon in his natural bias for a life with men. What avails it now that

Solomon my father was wise? Rehoboam succeeds. Such oscillations are not of a day. Why strive? Rehoboam is my brother. When the oil of coronation was not yet dry upon him, and repentant Jeroboam proffered his allegiance, only imploring that the king would not make his yoke grievous, and while the king had not yet determined the matter, I said to him, It is not wisdom to repulse a penitent. Jeroboam is a valorous, a mighty man. If you make him hopeless of lenity, he will stir up mischief, perchance a rebellion. When I said this much to the king my brother, without a word he turned on his heel. Then I foresaw what would come, and now I see it. But now as then, he hold[s] me for an imbecile. He surrounds himself with those natives he calls practical men. Why strive? And he withdrew to his meditations and abstractions.

But an interruption not unwelcome occurred. Tho' the Hebrews were not disposed as a people to superfluous intercourse with the Gentile's races, yet in one instance they would seem to have made an exception. The commercial alliance, between Solomon and Hiram partook something of personal good feeling which radiating out, resulted in an international amity that for a period survived both monarchs.

And so it came to pass that Tardi an importer of the coast[,] a versatile man, in reports for gifts other than the one popularly charting him, made a visit to the court in Jerusalem, a court still retaining something of the magnificence & luxury introduced by the Son of Jethro the shepherd. News of the Tyrian's arrival reaches Rammon's retreat. It interest him. With a view of eliciting something bearing on those questions that were cease[lessly] agitating his heart, he effects a privy interview with the new-comer; thinking

beforehand, My countrymen are stay-at-homes; whatsoever is extant in their thought is as contracted as their territory; but here comes an urbane stranger travelled intellectual, — Well, we shall see!

For Tardi, he was struck with the pure-minded ingenuousness of Rammon born to a station not favorable to candor. He was interested, perhaps entertained, by his youth and ardor entangled in problems which he for his own part had never seriously considered, holding them not more abstruse than profitless. But humoring a Prince so amiable, affably he lends himself to Rammon's purpose. But it is not long before Rammon divines, that Tardi, exempt from popular errors tho he was endowed with [ ] far beyond his own, [ ] and [ ], so bright too and prepossessing, was in essential character little more than a highly agreeable man-of-the-world, and as such, unconsciously prepared to avert himself, in a light-hearted way, from entire segments of life and thought. A fair urn, beautifully sculptured, but opaque and clay. True, among other things he is a poet; a poet, of a sensuous relish for the harmonious as to numbers and the thoughts they embody and a magic facility in infusing that double harmony, makes a poet then Tardi is such, and it is not necessary for a poet to be a seer. With a passionate exclamation he breaks off the conference, and for diversion from his disappoint[ment] solicits a trial of the accomplished stranger's improvising gift.

Let us attend the Prince & Tardi at that point in their interview when after some general discussion as to the strange doctrine troubling the former, he takes up the one mainly disturbing him, and makes a heart-felt appeal.

Who, friend that has lived, taking ampler view,
Running life's chances, would life renew?

Ay, Prince, but why fear? no use to dismay
When turning to enter death's chamber of spell
One waves back to life a good-natured farewell,
Bye-bye, I must sleep. That's in Tyrian way.

Not hereabouts very new.

But, piercing our Siddata's comfortable word,
Buddha, benign yet terrible, is heard:
It is Buddha I love.—

From his Ever-and-a-Day, friend, ravish me away!
Fable me something that may solace or repay—
Something of your art.

Well, — for a theme ?
A Phoenician are you. And your voyages of Tyre
From Ophir's far strand they return full of dream
That leaps to the heart of the nearby desire.
    Fable me, then, those Enviable Isles
Whereof King Hiram's tars used to tell;
Now looms the dim shore when the land is ahead;
And what the strange charm the tarrier beguiles
Time without end content there to dwell.
Ay, fable me, those enviable isles.

DITTY OF ARISTIPPUS

Noble gods at the board
Where lord unto lord
Light pushes the care-killing wine:
Urbane in their pleasure,
Superb in their leisure—
Lax ease—
Lax ease after labor divine!

Golden ages eternal
Autumnal, supernal,
Deep mellow their temper serene:
The rose by their gate
Shall it yield into fate?
They are gods—
They are gods and their garlands keep green.

Ever blandly adore them;
But spare to implore them:
They rest, they discharge them from time;
Yet believe, light believe
They would succor, reprieve—
Nay, retrieve—
Might but revellers pause in the prime.

IN A NUTSHELL

Take a reef, take a reef
In your wisdom: be brief.
Well then—well-a-day!
Wag the world how it may,
The knaves will be tricking
And fools still be kicking
And Grief, the sad thief
Will forever Joy's pocket be picking!

ADIEU

Ring down! The curtain falls and ye
Will go your ways. Yet think of me.
And genie take what 's genie given
And long be happy under heaven.

POEMS FROM THE NOVELS

From *Mardi*

WE FISH

We fish, we fish, we merrily swim,
We care not for friend nor for foe:
    Our fins are stout,
    Our tails are out,
As through the seas we go.

Fish, Fish, we are fish with red gills;
  Naught disturbs us, our blood is at zero:
We are buoyant because of our bags,
  Being many, each fish is a hero.
We care not what is it, this life
  That we follow, this phantom unknown:
To swim, it's exceedingly pleasant,—
  So swim away, making a foam.
This strange looking thing by our side,
  Not for safety, around it we flee:—
Its shadow's so shady, that's all,—
  We only swim under its lee.
And as for the eels there above,
  And as for the fowls in the air,
We care not for them nor their ways,
  As we cheerily glide afar!

We fish, we fish, we merrily swim,
We care not for friend nor for foe:
    Our fins are stout,
    Our tails are out,
As through the seas we go.

SONG OF THE PADDLERS

(*All.*)

Thrice waved on high,
Our paddles fly:
Thrice round the head, thrice dropt to feet:
And then well timed,
Of one stout mind,
All fall, and back the waters heap!

(*Bow-Paddler.*)

Who lifts this chant?
Who sounds this vaunt?

(*All.*)

The wild sea song, to the billows' throng,
Rising, falling,
Hoarsely calling,
Now high, now low, as fast we go,
Fast on our flying foe!

(*Bow-Paddler.*)

Who lifts this chant?
Who sounds this vaunt?

(*All.*)

Dip, dip, in the brine our paddles dip,
Dip, dip, the fins of our swimming ship!
How the waters part,
As on we dart;
Our sharp prows fly,
And curl on high,
As the upright fin of the rushing shark,
Rushing fast and far on his flying mark!
Like him we prey;
Like him we slay;
Swim on the foe,
Our prow a blow!

(*Bow-Paddler.*)

Who lifts this chant?
Who sounds this vaunt?

(*All.*)

Heap back; heap back; the waters back!
Pile them high astern, in billows black;
Till we leave our wake,
In the slope we make;
And rush and ride,
On the torrent's tide!

DRINKING SONG

Ha, ha, gods and kings; fill high, one and all;
Drink, drink! shout and drink! mad respond to the call!
Fill fast, and fill full; 'gainst the goblet ne'er sin;
Quaff there, at high tide, to the uttermost rim:—
Flood-tide, and soul-tide to the brim!

Who with wine in him fears? who thinks of his cares?
Who sighs to be wise, when wine in him flares?
Water sinks down below, in currents full slow;
But wine mounts on high with its genial glow:—
Welling up, till the brain overflow!

As the spheres, with a roll, some fiery of soul,
Others golden, with music, revolve round the pole;
So let our cups, radiant with many hued wines,
Round and round in groups circle, our Zodiac's Signs:—
Round reeling, and ringing their chimes!

Then drink, gods and kings; wine merriment bring;
It bounds through the veins; there, jubilant sings.
Let it ebb, then, and flow; wine never grows dim;
Drain down that bright tide at the foam beaded rim:—
Fill up, every cup, to the brim!

LIKE THE FISH

Like the fish of the bright and twittering fin,
  Bright fish! diving deep as high soars the lark,
So, far, far, far, doth the maiden swim,
  Wild song, wild light, in still ocean's dark.

ROYAL IS THE ROSE

Oh! royal is the rose,
  But barbed with many a dart;
Beware, beware the rose,
  'Tis cankered at the heart.

  Sweet, sweet the sunny down,
Oh! lily, lily, lily down!
  Sweet, sweet, Verbena's bloom!
Oh! pleasant, gentle, musky bloom!

Dread, dread the sunny down;
  Lo! lily-hooded asp;
Blooms, blooms no more Verbena;
  White-withered in your clasp.

BE MERRY

Be merry, oh men of Mondoldo,
  A maiden this night is to wed:
Be merry, oh damsels of Mardi,—
  Flowers, flowers for the bridal bed.

SEA BURIAL

We drop our dead in the sea,
The bottomless, bottomless sea;
Each bubble a hollow sigh,
As it sinks forever and aye.

We drop our dead in the sea,—
The dead reck not of aught;
We drop our dead in the sea,—
The sea ne'er gives it a thought.

Sink, sink, oh corpse, still sink,
Far down in the bottomless sea,
Where the unknown forms do prowl,
Down, down in the bottomless sea.

'Tis night above, and night all round,
And night will it be with thee;
As thou sinkest, and sinkest for aye,
Deeper down in the bottomless sea.

THE SONG

Far off in the sea is Marlena,
A land of shades and streams,
A land of many delights.
Dark and bold, thy shores, Marlena;
But green, and timorous, thy soft knolls,
Crouching behind the woodlands.

All shady thy hills; all gleaming thy springs,
Like eyes in the earth looking at you.
How charming thy haunts, Marlena!—
Oh, the waters that flow through Onimoo:
Oh, the leaves that rustle through Ponoo:
Oh, the roses that blossom in Tarma.
Come, and see the valley of Vina:
How sweet, how sweet, the Isles from Hina:
'Tis aye afternoon of the full, full moon,
And ever the season of fruit,
And ever the hour of flowers,
And never the time of rains and gales,
All in and about Marlena.
Soft sigh the boughs in the stilly air,
Soft lap the beach the billows there;
And in the woods or by the streams,
You needs must nod in the Land of Dreams.

INVOCATION

"Awake Rarni! awake Foloona!
Awake unnumbered deities!"

SMOKING SONG

Care is all stuff:—
Puff! Puff!
To puff is enough:—
Puff! Puff!

More musky than snuff,
And warm is a puff:—
Puff! Puff!
Here we sit mid our puffs,
Like old lords in their ruffs,
Snug as bears in their muffs:—
Puff! Puff!
Then puff, puff, puff,
For care is all stuff,
Puffed off in a puff.—
Puff! Puff!

FULL ROUND, FULL SOFT, HER DEWY ARMS

My lord nodded, and Yoomy sang: —

"Full round, full soft, her dewy arms,—
Sweet shelter from all Mardi's harms!"

"Whose arms?" cried Mohi.
Sang Yoomy:—

Diving deep in the sea,
She takes sunshine along:
Down flames in the sea,
As of dolphins a throng.

"What mermaid is this? cried Mohi.
Sang Yoomy:—

Her foot, a falling sound,
That all day long might bound.
Over the beach,
The soft sand beach,
And none would find
A trace behind.

A RAY OF THE MOON

A ray of the moon on the dancing waves
Is the step, light step of that beautiful maid:
Mardi, with music, her footfall paves,
And her voice, no voice, but a song in the glade.

SONG OF ARMS

Our clubs! our clubs!
The thousand clubs of Narvi!
Of the living trunk of the Palm-tree made;
Skull breakers! Brain spatterers!
Wielded right, and wielded left;
Life quenchers! Death dealers!
Causing live bodies to run headless!

Our bows! our bows!
The thousand bows of Narvi!
Ribs of Tara, god of War!
Fashioned from the light Tola their arrows;

Swift messengers! Heart piercers!
Barbed with sharp pearl shells;
Winged with white tail-plumes;
To wild death-chants, strung with the hair of wild maidens!

Our spears! our spears!
The thousand spears of Narvi!
Of the thunder-riven Moo-tree made:
Tall tree, couched on the long mountain Lana!
No staves for gray-beards! no rods for fishermen!
Tempered by fierce sea-winds,
Splintered into lances by lightnings,
Long arrows! Heart seekers!
Toughened by fire their sharp black points!

Our slings! our slings!
The thousand slings of Narvi!
All tasseled, and braided, and gaily bedecked.
In peace, our girdles; in war, our war-nets;
Wherewith catch we heads as fish from the deep!
The pebbles they hurl, have been hurled before,—
Hurled up on the beach by the stormy sea!
Pebbles, buried erewhile in the head of the shark:
To be buried erelong in the heads of our foes!
Home of hard blows, our pouches!
Nest of death-eggs! How quickly they hatch!

Uplift, and couch we our spears, men!
Ring hollow on the rocks our war clubs!
Bend we our bows, feel the points of our arrows:
Aloft, whirl in eddies our sling-nets;
To the fight, men of Narvi!
Sons of battle! Hunters of men!
Raise high your war-wood!
Shout Narvi! her groves in the storm!

QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!

Quack! Quack! Quack!
With a toorooloo whack;
Hack away, merry men, hack away.
Who would not die brave,
His ear smote by a stave?
Thwack away, merry men, thwack away!
'Tis glory that calls,
To each hero that falls,
Hack away, merry men, hack away!
Quack! Quack! Quack!
Quack! Quack!
Quack!

DEPARTED THE PRIDE, AND THE GLORY OF MARDI

Departed the pride, and the glory of Mardi:
The vaunt of her isles sleeps deep in the sea,
That rolls o'er his corse with a hush.
His warriors bend over their spears,
His sisters gaze upward and mourn.
Weep, weep, for Adondo is dead!
The sun has gone down in a shower;
Buried in clouds the face of the moon;
Tears stand in the eyes of the starry skies,
And stand in the eyes of the flowers;
And streams of tears are the trickling brooks,
Coursing adown the mountains.—
Departed the pride, and the glory of Mardi:
The vaunt of her isles sleeps deep in the sea.
Fast falls the small rain on its bosom that sobs,—
Not showers of rain, but the tears of Oro.

HER BOWER IS NOT OF THE VINE

Her bower is not of the vine,
But the wild, wild eglantine!
Not climbing a moldering arch,
But upheld by the fir-green larch.
Old ruins she flies:
To new valleys she hies;—
Not the hoar, moss-wood,
Ivied trees each a rood—
Not in Maramma she dwells,
Hollow with hermit cells.

'Tis a new, new isle!
An infant's its smile,
Soft-rocked by the sea.
Its bloom all in bud;
No tide at its flood,
In that fresh-born sea!

Spring! Spring where she dwells,
In her sycamore dells,
Where Mardi is young and new:
Its verdure all eyes with dew.
There, there! in the bright, balmy morns,
The young deer sprout their horns,
Deep-tangled in new-branching groves,
Where the Red-Rover Robin roves,—

Stooping his crest,
To his molting breast—
Rekindling the flambeau there!
Spring! Spring! where she dwells,
In her sycamore dells:—
Where, fulfilling their fates,
All creatures seek mates—
The thrush, the doe, and the hare!

HER SWEET, SWEET MOUTH!

Her sweet, sweet mouth!
The peach-pearl shell:—
Red edged its lips,
That softly swell,

Just oped to speak,
With blushing cheek,
That fisherman
With lonely spear
On the reef ken,
And lift to ear
Its voice to hear,—
Soft, sighing South!
Like this, like this,—
The rosy kiss!—
That maiden's mouth.
A shell! a shell!
A vocal shell!
Song-dreaming,
In its inmost dell!

Her bosom! Two buds half blown, they tell;
A little valley between perfuming;
That roves away,
Deserting the day,—
The day of her eyes illuming;—
That roves away, o'er slope and fell,
Till a soft, soft meadow becomes the dell.

We rovers bold,
To the land of Gold,
Over the bowling billows are gliding:
Eager to toil,
For the golden spoil,
And every hardship biding.
See! See!
Before our prows' resistless dashes
The gold-fish fly in golden flashes!
'Neath a sun of gold,
We rovers bold,
On the golden land are gaining;
And every night,
We steer aright,
By golden stars unwaning!
All fires burn a golden glare:
No locks so bright as golden hair!
All orange groves have golden gushings:
All mornings dawn with golden flushings!
In a shower of gold, say fables old,
A maiden was won by the god of gold!
In golden goblets wine is beaming:
On golden couches kings are dreaming!
The Golden Rule dries many tears!
The Golden Number rules the spheres!
Gold, gold it is, that sways the nations:
Gold! gold! the center of all rotations!
On golden axles worlds are turning:
With phosphorescence seas are burning!

All fire-flies flame with golden gleamings:
Gold-hunters' hearts with golden dreamings!
With golden arrows kings are slain:
With gold we'll buy a freeman's name!
In toilsome trades, for scanty earnings,
At home we've slaved, with stifled yearnings:
No light! no hope! Oh, heavy woe!
When nights fled fast, and days dragged slow.
But joyful now, with eager eye,
Fast to the Promised Land we fly:
Where in deep mines,
The treasure shines;
Or down in beds of golden streams,
The gold-flakes glance in golden gleams!
How we long to sift,
That yellow drift!
Rivers! Rivers! cease your going!
Sand-bars! rise, and stay the tide!
'Till we've gained the golden flowing;
And in the golden haven ride!

HALF-VEILED ABOVE THE HILLS, YET ROSY BRIGHT

Half-veiled above the hills, yet rosy bright,
Stands fresh, and fair, the meek and blushing morn!
So Yillah looks! her pensive eyes the stars,
That mildly beam from out her cheek's young dawn!

But the still meek Dawn,
Is not aye the form
Of Yillah nor Morn!
  Soon rises the sun,
  Day's race to run:
His rays abroad,
Flash each a sword,—
  And merrily forth they flare!
  Sun-music in the air!
So Yillah now rises and flashes!
Rays shooting from out her long lashes,—
  Sun-music in the air!

  Her laugh! How it bounds!
  Bright cascade of sounds!
Peal after peal, and ringing afar,—
Ringing of waters, that silvery jar,
  From basin to basin fast falling!
  Fast falling, and shining, and streaming:—
Yillah's bosom, the soft, heaving lake,
Where her laughs at last dimple, and flake!

Oh, beautiful Yillah! Thy step so free!—
  Fast fly the sea-ripples,
Revealing their dimples,
  When forth, thou hi'st to the frolicsome sea!

All the stars laugh,
  When upward she looks:
All the trees chat
  In their woody nooks:

All the brooks sing;
All the caves ring;
All the buds blossom;
  All the boughs bound;
All the birds carol;
  And leaves turn round,
  Where Yillah looks!

Light wells from her soul's deep sun
Causing many toward her to run!
Vines to climb, and flowers to spring;
And youths their love by hundred's bring!

MAD SONG

Stars laugh in the sky:
  Oh fugle-fi!
The waves dimple below:
  Oh fugle-fo!

THE ISLES HOLD THEE NOT, THOU DEPARTED!

The isles hold thee not, thou departed!
  From thy bower, now issues no lay:—
In vain we recall perished warblings:
  Spring birds, to far climes, wing their way!

PADDLER'S SONG

Ho! merrily ho! we paddlers sail!
Ho! over sea-dingle, and dale!—
All fire-flies flame with golden gleamings!
Our pulses fly,
Our hearts beat high,
Ho! merrily, merrily ho!

HAIL! VOYAGERS, HAIL!

Hail! voyagers, hail!
Whence e'er ye come, where'er ye rove,
No calmer strand,
No sweeter land,
Will e'er ye view, than the Land of Love!

Hail! voyagers, hail!
To these, our shores, soft gales invite:
The palm plumes wave,
The billows lave,
And hither point fix'd stars of light!

Hail! voyagers, hail!
Think not our groves wide brood with gloom;
In this, our isle,
Bright flowers smile:
Full urns, rose-heaped, these valleys bloom.

Hail! voyagers, hail!
Be not deceived; renounce vain things;
Ye may not find
A tranquil mind,
Though hence ye sail with swiftest wings.

Hail! voyagers, hail!
Time flies full fast; life soon is o'er;
And ye may mourn,
That hither borne,
Ye left behind our pleasant shore.

From *Moby-Dick*

JONAH'S SONG

The ribs and terrors in the whale,
Arched over me a dismal gloom,
While all God's sun-lit waves rolled by,
And lift me deepening down to doom.

I saw the opening maw of hell,
With endless pains and sorrows there;
Which none but they that feel can tell—
Oh, I was plunging to despair.

In black distress, I called my God,
When I could scarce believe him mine,
He bowed his ear to my complaints—

No more the whale did me confine.
With speed he flew to my relief,
As on a radiant dolphin borne;

Awful, yet bright, as lightning shone
The face of my Deliverer God.

My song for ever shall record
That terrible, that joyful hour;
I give the glory to my God,
His all the mercy and the power.

WE'LL DRINK TO-NIGHT

We'll drink to-night with hearts as light,
To love, as gay and fleeting
As bubbles that swim, on the beaker's brim,
And break on the lips while meeting.

From *"Under the Rose"*

"SPECKS, TINY SPECKS"

"Specks, tiny specks, in this translucent amber:
Your leave, bride-roses, may one pry and see?
How odd! a dainty little skeleton-chamber;
And — odder yet — sealed walls but windows be!
Death's open secret. — Well, we *are*;
And here comes the jolly angel with the jar!"

From *Piazza Tales*

OH, BROTHER JACK

Oh Brother Jack, as you pass by
As you are now, so once was I.
Just so game and just so gay,
But now, alack, they've stopped my pay.
No more I peep out of my blinkers,
Here I bee—tucked in with clinkers.

From *Billy Budd*

BILLY IN THE DARBIES

Good of the Chaplain to enter Lone Bay
And down on his marrow-bones here and pray
For the likes just o' me, Billy Budd.—But, look:
Through the port comes the moon-shine astray!
It tips the guard's cutlas and silvers this nook;
But 'twill die in the dawning of Billy's last day.
A jewel-block they'll make of me tomorrow,
Pendant pearl from the yard-arm-end
Like the ear-drop I gave to Bristol Molly—
O, 'tis me, not the sentence they'll suspend.
Ay, ay, all is up; and I must up too
Early in the morning, aloft from alow.
On an empty stomach now never it would do.
They'll give me a nibble-but o'buiscit ere I go.
Sure, a messmate will reach me the last parting cup;
But, turning heads away from the hoist and the belay,
Heaven knows who will have the running of me up!

No pipe to those halyards.—But aren't it all sham?
A blur's in my eyes; it is dreaming that I am.
A hatchet to my hawzer? all adrift to go?
The drum roll to grog and Billy never know?
But Danter he has promised to stand by the plank;
So I'll shake afriendly hand ere I sink.
But—no! It is dead then I'll be, come to think.—
I remember Taff the Welshman when he sank,
And his cheek it was like the budding pink.

But me they'll lash me in hammock, drop me deep
Fathoms down, fathoms down, how I'll dream fast asleep.
I feel it stealing now, Sentry, are you there?
Just ease this darbies at the wrist, and roll me over fair,
I am sleepy, and the oozy weeds about me twist.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS IN NOTES

ESM = Elizabeth Shaw Melville, wife of Herman Melville

HM = Herman Melville

T1 = First draft of *Timoleon,* in HM's hand with most of the corrections by ESM, probably at HM's dictation

T2 = Second and fair copy of *Timoleon,* written in ESM's hand

Melville MSS. = The indispensible collection of (a) letters to and from Melville (b) manuscripts for his prose sketches, especially *Billy Budd* (c) letters of the Melville family (d) publishing contracts and records of Melville's books, and (e) books owned by Herman Melville—all given to the Harvard College Library by Melville's granddaughter, Mrs. Henry Metcalf.

Journal up the Straits = *Journal up the Straits, October 11, 1856-May 5, 1857,* ed. by Raymond M. Weaver. New York: The Colophon, 1935.

Minnigerode = *Some Personal Letters of Herman Melville and a Bibliography,* by Meade Minnigerode. New York, New Haven, Princeton: The Brick Row Book Shop, Inc., 1922.

Paltsits = *Family Correspondence of Herman Melville, 1830-1904,* ed. by Victor Hugo Paltsits. New York: The New York Public Library, 1929.

Rebellion Record = *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrious Incidents, Poetry, etc.,* ed. by Frank Moore. New York, 1861-1869, 12 volumes

Thorp = *Herman Melville,* Representative selections, with introduction, bibliography, and notes. By Willard Thorp. New York, etc. American Book Company, ©1938.

Weaver = *Herman Melville Mariner and Mystic,* by Raymond M. Weaver, New York: George H. Doran Company, ©1921.

Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War was printed by Harper & Brothers in an edition of 1200 copies.[1] Its unsuccessful sale[2] may not have been a surprise to the Melvilles ("*poetry* is a comparatively uncalled for article in the market",[3] Mrs. Melville had written), but it was undoubtedly a keen disappointment. Five of the poems had appeared previously in numbers of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*.[4] To a note by "A.H.G.", June, 1866, suggesting that Melville be paid for the magazine publication of his poems, Melville wrote beneath: "I never got." The poems were "dedicated to the memory of the Three Hundred Thousand who in the war for the maintenance of the Union fell devotedly under the flag of their fathers."

There is probably much truth in Melville's prefatory words, which describe the dreamlike, possessed state in which the poems were written. The preface reads:

"With few exceptions, the Pieces in this volume originated in an impulse imparted by the fall of Richmond. They were composed without reference to collective arrangement, but, being brought together in review, naturally fall into the order assumed.

The events and incidents of the conflict—making up a whole, in varied amplitude, corresponding with the geographical area covered by the war—from these but a few themes have been taken, such as for any cause chanced to imprint themselves upon the mind.

The aspects which the strife as a memory assumes are as manifold as are the moods of involuntary meditation—moods variable, and at times widely at variance. Yielding instinctively, one after another, to feelings not inspired from any one source exclusively, and unmindful, without purposing to be, of consistency, I seem, in most of these verses, to have but placed a harp in a window, and noted the contrasted airs which wayward winds have played upon the strings."

4-6. The Conflict of Convictions

"The gloomy lull of the early part of the winter of 1860-1, seeming big with final disaster to our institutions, affected some minds that believed them to constitute one of the great hopes of mankind, much as the eclipse which came over the promise of the first French Revolution affected kindred natures, throwing them for the time into doubts and misgivings uni-

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[1] A bibliographical description may be found in Minnigerode, pp. 177-179. A more satisfactory Melville bibliography is being prepared by John Birss.

[2] An audit to Melville on February 13, 1868 shows that only 486 copies had been sold; and by August 1, 1876—ten years after publication—the sale had reached only 525 copies. (Melville MSS.)

[3] Minnigerode, p. 87.

[4] Not four poems, as Minnigerode says, p. 179. Minnigerode omitted "Sheridan at Cedar Creek," which had appeared under the title "Philip."

versal." (Melville's note)

7. 8 *And the Iron Dome*: After the 1851 fire in the Capitol Building in Washington, the Government decided to build a new dome of iron, the old dome having already been dwarfed by extensive additions to the building. The old wood and brick dome was accordingly torn down in 1855 and new construction begun. The outside was finished by 1863, but it was not until the next year that the dome was painted and the scaffolding removed.

10-11. The March into Virginia

On July 21, 1861, the Union Army under McDowell met with a crushing defeat on Manassas Plain in the battle usually referred to as the Battle of Bull Run. The loss of life was, for the times, heavy: 2984 Union dead and 1981 Confederate. The defeat endangered Washington itself, and the Northern people were struck with dismay. Lincoln drove to the battlefield and with remarkable leadership talked to groups of soldiers in a way to bolster their faltering faith. For the ordinary soldier Manassas was the first real bloodshed which most of them had experienced, and, as Melville indicates, the men had advanced to the field as though they were on a holiday. They were, indeed, Moloch's uninitiate.

It was at this battle that General Lee's cry to his retreating troops, "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall", gave Thomas J. Jackson his immortal nickname.

11-14. Lyon

Nathaniel Lyon (1818-August 10, 1861) became a national hero and martyr when he was killed while at the head of his troops at Wilson's Creek, a few miles south of Springfield, Missouri, after several hours of brave but desperate fighting. For this poem and for many others in *Battle Pieces* Melville was indebted to the documents and newspaper accounts reprinted in the *Rebellion Record,* published in twelve volumes, 1862-66. For the story of Lyon, Melville, as Thorp noted (p. 425), drew upon Volume II, pp. 511-519, where accounts of Lyon's fight are taken from the Missouri *Democrat* and the New York *Tribune.* The most important change made by Melville was in naming the horse Orion and the corporal Tryon so as to keep the Lyon rhyme ringing throughout the poem.

15. Dupont's Round Fight

During the Battle of Port Royal, South Carolina, the commander of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, came *down* Broad River to bombard Fort Walker, and then circled back upstream to bombard Fort Beauregard on the other side. For a map, which Melville probably examined, of this manouevre see *Rebellion Record,* III, D106.

16-17. The Stone Fleet

" 'The terrible Stone Fleet, on a mission as pitiless as the granite that freights it, sailed this morning from Port Royal, and before two days are past will have made Charleston an inland city. The ships are all old whalers, and cost the government from $2500 to $5000 each. Some of them were once famous ships.'—(From Newspaper Correspondence of the day)

Sixteen vessels were accordingly sunk on the bar at the river entrance. Their names were as follows: Amazon, America, American, Archer, Courier, Fortune, Herald, Kensington, Leonidas, Maria Theresa, Potomac, Rebecca Simms, L. C. Richmond, Robin Hood, Tenedos, [and] William Lee.

All accounts seem to agree that the object proposed was not accomplished. The channel is even said to have become ultimately benefitted by the means employed to obstruct it." (Melville's note) Melville probably took his newspaper quotation from the account in the *Rebellion Record*, IV, D 503-508, transcribed from the New York *Tribune*. Melville's quotation is a free adaptation of material from the first part of the *Tribune* account.

That Melville should have written this poem is only natural; it expresses the regret of an ex-whaleman at the useless destructions of his beloved whale ships. Excellent pictures of the Stone Fleet and of the captains of the Stone Fleet may be seen in George Francis Dow's *Whale Ships and Whaling, A Pictorial History of Whaling During Three Centuries* (Salem, Massachusetts: Marine Research Society, 1925) p. 217 (the ships), and Clifford W. Ashley's *The Yankee Whaler* (Garden City, New York: Halcyon House, 1942), n. p. (the captains).

17-33. Donelson

"I shall," telegraphed Grant to Halleck, "take and destroy Fort Donelson on the 8th." Bad weather kept Grant from fulfilling his promise according to calendar; sleet and snow (as in the poem) made bitter conditions for the Union forces, and matters became so bad that defeat seemed to stare the Northern army in the face. At this point Grant arrived, sized up the crisis, and with remarkable coolness ordered an attack the morning of February 16th. The Confederate forces inside the fort were worse off than the Union army, and observing the imminent attack, Buckner requested Grant's terms. Grant's reply is now a classic:

"Yours of this date, proposing armistice and appointment of commissioners to settle terms of capitulation, is just received. No terms except unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works." Not only was the reputation of Grant recovered at this great victory, but "judged by its moral and

strategical results, the capture of Fort Donelson was one of the turning points of the war." (John Codman Ropes, *The Story of the Civil War* (New York and London: G. P. Putman's Sons), II, 34).
Melville's bulletins throughout the poem are a recasting of selected details from The New York *Times* account of the battle as printed in the *Rebellion Record,* IV, 170-176.

34-35. The Cumberland

The blocking fleet in Hampton Roads were engaged on March 8, 1862, by the new iron ship of the south, the *Merrimac.* Passing by the *Congress,* the *Merrimac,* her iron sides discarding the Union shot as her prow the water, bore on the *Cumberland,* ramming her so that she sank. Then the *Merrimac* turned and destroyed the already surrendered *Congress.* The consternation of the North at the news of this naval disaster may readily be imagined. The victory of the *Merrimac* was the call of Taps for the old wooden fighting ship, as an ex-sailor like Melville well realized. As early as July 1, 1861 Melville, with E. Duyckinck, visited the Navy Yard to see the ships *Savannah* and *Iroquois.*
This poem first appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine,* XXXII (March 1866), 474.

35-37. In the Turret

To retaliate for the defeat suffered at the hands of the *Merrimac* (see above) the recently completed ironclad, Ericsson's *Monitor,* was towed to Hampton Roads to engage the enemy. Commanded by Lieutenant John L. Worden, the *Monitor* in one of the classic battles of navy history, since it showed beyond refute that wooden ships were outdated, badly damaged the *Merrimac* and forced her retreat. Worden's eyes were injured by the explosion of a shell near the look-out chink in his turret. See the poems immediately following for further Melville comment on the *Monitor.*

37-39. The Temeraire

"The *Temeraire,* that storied ship of the old English fleet, and the subject of the well known painting by Turner, commends itself to the mind seeking for some one craft to stand for the poetic ideal of those great historic wooden warships, whose gradual displacement is lamented by none more than by regularly educated navy officers, and of all nations." (Melville's note)
On May 1, 1857, Melville had seen Turner's painting in London (*Journal up the Straits,* p. 172).
38. 4. "Some of the cannon of old times, especially the brass ones, unlike the more effective ordnance of the present day, were cast in shapes which Cellini might have designed, were gracefully enchased, generally with the

arms of the country. A few of them—field pieces—captured in our earlier wars, are preserved in arsenals and navy yards." (Melville's note)

41. Shiloh

The Confederate Victory at Shiloh, a Pyrrhic victory almost, culminating in the bloodshed of Sunday, April 10, 1862, brought scathing denunciation of Grant for the enormous Union losses; in two days time the Union forces lost 13,047 men, the Confederate, 10,694.

42-44. The Battle for the Mississippi

Seventy-five miles above New Orleans were two strong fortifications, St. Philip and Jackson, on opposite sides of the river, which Gustavus V. Fox, the assistant Secretary of the Navy, proposed should be "passed" by the Union fleet, for having done so they would have the city of New Orleans at their mercy. Farragut was elected to do the job. The bombardment on the forts on April 18; "At about five minutes of 2 o'clock A. M. April 24 signal was made to get under way," wrote Farragut. "We had a tough time of it," Farragut told Porter in a masterpiece of understatement, but he was able to send this dispatch to Secretary of the Navy Welles: "Our flag waves over both Forts Jackson and St. Philip and at New Orleans over the custom-house."

42. 1. *"When Israel camped by Migdol hoar . . ."* See *Exodus* 14^2 and *Numbers* 33^7.

44-45. Malvern Hill

July 1, 1862, the culminating battle of the "Seven Days' Battles" was fought at Malvern Hill. Despite greater losses over the campaign, Lee could claim the victory, for he kept McClellan from going on to Richmond.

45-47. The Victor of Antietam

On September 17, 1862, General McClellan defeated Lee in the battle of Antietam, forcing him to retreat across the Potamac into Virginia. Lee, it should be pointed out, was outnumbered, but handled his troops with such consummate skill that his was the greater military accomplishment.

"Whatever just military criticism, favorable or otherwise, has at any time been made upon General McClellan's campaigns, will stand. But if, during the excitement of the conflict, aught was spread abroad tending to unmerited disparagement of the man, it must necessarily die out, though not perhaps without leaving some traces, which may or may not prove enduring. Some there are whose votes aided in the re-election of Abraham Lincoln, who yet believed, and retain the belief, that General McClellan, to say the least, always proved himself a patriotic and honorable soldier.

The feeling which surviving comrades entertain for their late commander is one which, from its passion, is suceptible of versified representation, and such it receives." (Melville's note)

47. 14. *They shook dread Stonewall's spell*: "At Antietam Stonewall Jackson led one wing of Lee's army, consequently sharing that day in whatever may be deemed to have been the fortunes of his superior." (Melville's note)

48-49. Battle of Stone River, Tennessee

Rosecrans' victory at Stone River, where he defeated the Confederates under Bragg, gave new hope to the Northern cause, depressed because of the disaster at Fredericksburg. The battle took place at Murfreesborough, Tennessee, not far from Nashville.

49-52. Running the Batteries

On the night of April 16, 1863, under the command of acting-Admiral Porter, the gunboats and other Union craft ran past the Confederate batteries at Vicksburg, and again on the 22d with twelve provision barges, in order to supply Grant's forces to the south.

52. 15. "Admiral Porter is a son of the late Commodore Porter, commander of the frigate Essex on that Pacific cruise which ended in the desperate fight off Valparaiso with the English frigates Cherub and Phoebe, in the year 1814." (Melville's note)

52-54. Stonewall Jackson

Riding through the night, Jackson was accidently fired on and mortally wounded by Confederate troops, May 10, 1863.

56. Gettysburg. This poem first appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine,* XXXIII (July, 1866), 209.

56. 23. *The warrior monument crashed in fight:*

"Among numerous head-stones or monuments on Cemetery Hill, marred or destroyed by the enemy's concentrated fire, was one, somewhat conspicious, of a Federal officer killed before Richmond in 1862.

On the 4th of July, 1865, the Gettysburg National Cemetery, on the same height with the original burial-ground, was consecrated, and the corner-stone laid of a commemorative pile." (Melville's note)

57. The House-Top

This powerful poem grew out of the famous New York Draft Riots, July 11-13, 1863, when the angry mobs roamed the city plundering and looting in protest against the Conscription Act, designed to increase the Union army. Unfortunately, the Act had included a clause permitting anyone to buy his freedom from the draft by a payment of $300.00, thus

putting the burden of fighting the war on the poor. The assult on the Draft headquarters, corner of Third Avenue and Forty-sixth street, which touched off the three days of rioting, was led by workingmen from many New York manufactories. On the third day, order was restored by a notice that the draft law had been suspended and by the arrival of militia regiments in the city.

"'I dare not write the horrible and inconceivable atrocities committed'; says Froissart, in alluding to the remarkable sedition in France during his time. The like may be hinted of some proceedings of the draft-rioters." (Melville's note)

58. Look-Out Mountain

This and the following poem retell the action of three days, November 23, 24, 25, 1863, when Grant repaired the faltering efforts of Rosecrans and brought about the capture of Chattanooga, a conflict which culminated in the famous battle of Missionary Ridge. On the afternoon of November 25, the Union forces, among them Sheridan's, irresistibly rushed the ridge, the Confederates in panic before them. As Rhodes says, the victory "made possible the first genuine Thanksgiving since the outbreak of the Civil War." (James Ford Rhodes, *History of the Civil War, 1861-1865* (New York, 1917), p. 299)

59-61. Chattanooga

59. "Although the month was November, the day was in character an October one—cool, clear, bright, intoxicatingly invigorating; one of those days peculiar to the ripest hours of our American autumn. The weather must have had much to do with the spontaneous enthusiasm which seized the troops—an enthusiasm aided, doubtless, by glad thoughts of the victory of Look-out Mountain won the day previous, and also by the elation attending the capture, after a fierce struggle, of the long ranges of rifle-pits at the mountain's base, where orders for the time should have stopped the advance. But there and then it was that the army took the bit between its teeth, and ran away with the generals to the victory commemorated. General Grant, at Culpepper, a few weeks prior to crossing the Rapidan for the Wilderness, expressed to a visitor his impression of the impulse and the spectacle: Said he, 'I never saw any thing like it:' language which seems curiously undertoned, considering its application; but from the tactiturn Commander it was equivalent to a superlative or hyperbole from the talkative.

The height of the Ridge, according to the account at hand, varies along its length from six to seven hundred feet above the plain; it

slopes at an angle of about forty-five degrees." (Melville's note)
The poem first appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine,* XXXIII (June, 1866), 44.

61-69. The Armies of the Wilderness

Near the Rapidan River, Grant and Lee met in the jungle known as the Wilderness in two days of bloody combat, May 5-6, 1864. The tremendous loss of Union life, the indecisiveness of the battle and subsequent campaign, all helped to tarnish the brightness of Grant's reputation at the time of his appointment as Commander of the Union forces, March 10, 1864.

70-72. The Swamp Angel

"The great Parrott gun, planted in the marshes of James Island, and employed in the prolonged, though at times intermitted bombardment of Charleston, was known among our soldiers as the Swamp Angel.

St. Michael's, characterized by its venerable tower, was the historic and aristocratic church of the town." (Melville's note)

72-76. The Battle for the Bay

The Battle of Mobile Bay was fought and won by Farragut, August 5, 1864, in one of the hardest victories of his career. By capturing the bay, Farragut was able to strangle the Confederate blockade-running and to isolate the South.

76-77. Sheridan at Cedar Creek

The dramatic arrival of Sheridan at a time when Early's Confederate troops were winning against the Union forces, turned the tide so that victory was snatched from defeat. The more famous but inferior poem on the same subject by Thomas Buchanan Reade instantly rises to mind. Melville's poem was first published under the title "Philip" in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine,* XXXII (April, 1866), 640. Thorp says (p. 526) that it was later reprinted in the New York *Leader,* December 8, 1866, and in the Pittsfield *Sun,* January 17, 1867, and elsewhere.

80-81. The Eagle of the Blue

"Among the Northwestern regiments there would seem to have been more than one which carried a living eagle as an added ensign. The bird commemorated here was, according to the account, borne aloft on a perch beside the standard; went through successive battles and campaigns; was more than once under the surgeon's hands; and at the close of the contest found honorable repose in the capital of Wisconsin, from which state he had gone to the wars." (Melville's note.)

81-82. A Dirge for McPherson

"The late Major General McPherson, commanding the Army of the Tennessee, a native of Ohio and a West Pointer, was one of the foremost spirits of the war. Young, though a veteran; hardy, intrepid, sensitive in honor, full of engaging qualities, with manly beauty; possessed of genius, a favorite with the army, and with Grant and Sherman. Both Generals have generously acknowledged their professional obligations to the able engineer and admirable soldier, their subordinate and junior.

In an informal account written by the Achilles to this Sarpedon, he says:

'On that day we avenged his death. Near twenty-two hundred of the enemy's dead remained on the ground when night closed upon the scene of action.'

It is significant of the scale on which the war was waged, that the engagement thus written of goes solely (so far as can be learned) under the vague designation of one of the battles before Atlanta." (Melville's note.)

82-83. At the Cannon's Mouth

With their naval activities frustrated by the southern ram *Albermarle,* the North in desperation accepted Lieutenant W. B. Cushing's daring plan to rig up a launch with a torpedo and go in and sink the *Albermarle* at Plymouth, North Carolina. Cushing with thirteen brave associates attacked the *Albermarle* on the night of October 27, 1864, successfully planting a torpedo beneath her bow so that she sank. In doing so, however, they were hit by a shell from the *Albermarle* which destroyed their launch. Lieutenant Cushing and one other were the only ones to escape death or capture in the raid.

84-87. The March to the Sea

The bold and brilliant campaign which is the basis for this poem is familiar to, if not popular with, every American. By his daring march, Sherman cut the Confederacy in two and greatly hastened the downfall of the South. Melville's line, "Fighting was but frolic" as well as other passages in the poem are an echo of Sherman's words: "There was a 'devil-may-care' feeling pervading officers and men."

The description of a careful historian corroborates Melville's account: "The weather was perfect. Once for a day or two there were snow flurries and a cold, sharp wind. But otherwise only bright, Indian-summer days, with just enough frost to make the air bracing. . . . Life in the open air was exhilarating. And so the men endured the work, without a murmur or complaint. They exhibited a spirit of hilarity more indicative of a

festive excursion than a military campaign." (W. G. Shotwell, *The Civil War in America* (London, New York, etc., Longman, Green and Co., 1923, II, 309.)

The poem was first published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXXII (February 1866), 366-367.

87. 7. "*Was the havoc, retribution?*: Printed as "It was Treason's retribution", this line was rewritten by Melville in his copy of *Battle-Pieces*, a purely private gesture of placation towards the South on Melville's part since it was obvious that his book would not go into a second printing. Parallel in temper to this change was Melville's cancellation of the title "The Martyr" to his poem on the death of Lincoln.

87-88. The Frenzy in the Wake

"This piece was written while yet the reports were coming North of Sherman's homeward advance from Savannah. It is needless to point out its purely dramatic character.

Though the sentiment ascribed in the beginning of the second stanza must, in the present reading, suggest the historic tragedy of the 14th of April, nevertheless, as intimated, it was written prior to that event, and without any distinct application in the writer's mind. After consideration, it is allowed to remain.

Few need be reminded that, by the less intelligent classes of the South, Abraham Lincoln, by nature the most kindly of men, was regarded as a monster wantonly warring upon liberty. He stood for the personification of tyrannic power. Each Union soldier was called a Lincolnite.

Undoubtedly Sherman, in the desolation he inflicted after leaving Atlanta, acted not in contravention of orders; and all, in a military point of view, is by military judges deemed to have been expedient, and nothing can abate General Sherman's shining renown; his claims to it rest on no single campaign. Still, there are those who can not but contrast some of the scenes enacted in Georgia and the Carolinas, and also in the Shenandoah, with a circumstance in a great Civil War of heathen antiquity. Plutarch relates that in a military council held by Pompey and the chiefs of that party which stood for the Commonwealth, it was decided that under no plea should any city be sacked that was subject to the people of Rome. There was this difference, however, between the Roman civil conflict and the American one. The war of Pompey and Caesar divided the Roman people promiscuously; that of the North and South ran a frontier line between what for the time were distinct communities or nations. In this circumstance, possibly, and some others, may be found both the cause and the justification of some of the sweeping measures adopted." (Melville's note.)

88-89. The Fall of Richmond

With the surrender of Richmond on April 3, 1865, it became clear that the end of the war was only a matter of weeks, hence the elation of the Union supporters.

89-90. The Surrender of Appomattox

General Robert E. Lee realized after the fall of Richmond that further resistance was useless and surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia, April 9, 1865.

93. The Martyr

Melville drew a line through the title of this poem in his copy of *Battle Pieces,* probably feeling that is was inflammatory and provocative. And the note which Melville added for line 21, *The Avenger takes his place,* shows again Melville's desire for harmony and tolerance:

"At this period of excitement the thought was by some passionately welcomed that the Presidential successor had been raised up by heaven to wreak vengeance on the South. The idea originated in the remembrance that Andrew Jackson by birth belonged to that class of Southern whites who never cherished love for the dominant one; that he was a citizen of Tennessee, where the contest at times and in places had been close and bitter as a Middle-Age feud; that himself and family had been hardly treated by the Secessionists.

But the expectations built hereon (if, indeed, ever soberly entertained), happily for the country, have not been verified.

Likewise the feeling which would have held the entire South chargeable with the crime of one exceptional assassin, this too has died away with the natural excitement of the hour." (Melville's note)

94. The Coming Storm

The closing stanza of this poem with its penetrating criticism of Shakespeare is ample justification, should any be needed, for the painting by Robert Swain Gifford which inspired Melville's poem. Born December 23,1840, in Gosnold, Massachusetts, Gifford attended art school in Boston, and taught art classes at Cooper Union in New York City for over thirty years, dying in that city January 15, 1905. Undoubtedly the resemblance between Gifford's style and that of the Dutch painters of which Melville was so fond, attracted his attention to Gifford's canvas.

95-96. Rebel Color-Bearers of Shiloh

"The incident on which this piece is based is narrated in a newspaper account of the battle to be found in the 'Rebellion Record.' During the disaster to the national forces on the first day, a brigade on the extreme

left found itself isolated. The perils it encountered are given in detail. Among others, the following sentences occur:

'Under cover of the fire from the bluffs, the rebels rushed down, crossed the ford, and in a moment were seen forming this side the creek in open fields, and within close musket-range. Their color-bearers stepped defiantly to the front as the engagement opened furiously; the rebels pouring in sharp, quick volleys of musketry, and their batteries above continuing to support them with a destructive fire. Our sharpshooters wanted to pick off the audacious rebel color-bearers, but Colonel Stuart interposed: 'No, no, they're too brave fellows to be killed.' " (Melville's note)

96-97. The Muster

"According to a report of the Secretary of War, there were on the first day of March, 1865, 965,000 men on the army pay-rolls. Of these, some 200,000—artillery, cavalry, and infantry—made up from the larger portion of the veterans of Grant and Sherman, marched by the President, The total number of Union troops enlisted during the war was 2,668,000." (Melville's note)

99-100. The Released Rebel Prisioner

"For a month of two after the completion of peace, some thousands of released captives from the military prisons of the North, natives of all parts of the South, passed through the city of New York, sometimes waiting farther transportation for days, during which interval they wandered penniless about the streets, or lay in their worn and patched gray uniforms under the trees of the Battery, near the barracks where they were lodged and fed. They were transported and provided for at the charge of government." (Melville's note)

100-101. A Grave Near Petersburg, Virginia

"Shortly prior to the evacuation of Petersburg, the enemy, with a view to ultimate repossession, interred some of his heavy guns in the same field with his dead, and with every circumstance calculated to deceive. Subsequently the negroes exposed the stratagem." (Melville's note)

101. "Formerly a Slave"

The orgin of this painting is described by Elihu Vedder in his entertaining *The Digressions of V. Written for his own Fun and that of his Friends* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1890), pp. 236-237: "At the time I had my studio in the old Gibson building on Broadway; I used to pass frequently a near corner, where an old negro woman sold peanuts. Her meekly bowed head and a look of patient endurance and resignation touched my heart and we became friends.

She had been a slave down South, and had at that time a son, a fine tall fellow, she said, fighting in the Union Army. I finally persuaded her to sit to me and made a drawing of her head and also had her photograph taken. Having been elected associate of the National Academy, according to custom I had to send in a painting to add to the permanent collection, so I sent in this study of her head and called it simply by her name—which was Jane Jackson. Time went on and I found myself in a mood. As I always try to embody my moods in some picture, this mood found its resting-place in the picture of "The Cumean Sibyl." Thus this fly—or rather this bee from my bonnet—was finally preserved in amber-varnish, and thus Jane Jackson became the Cumean Sibyl."

Elihu Vedder (February 23, 1836—January 29, 1923) was, like Melville, a New Yorker of Dutch ancestry. After 1867 he spent most of his life abroad. In his work he tended toward abstract ideas and manifold symbolism, which is probably why Melville was attracted to his art. Weaver says (p. 366) that Vedder and Melville never met or corresponded, that Vedder's acknowledgment of the dedication to him of Timoleon (1891) did not arrive until after Melville's death: "I may not have been very successful in a worldly way, but the knowledge that my art has gained me so many friends—even if unknown to me—makes ample amends."

105. On the Slain Collegians

"The records of Northern colleges attest what numbers of our noblest youth went from them to the battle-field. Southern members of the same classes arrayed themselves on the side of Secession; while Southern seminaries contributed large quotas. Of all these, what numbers marched who never returned except on the shield." (Melville's note)

113-114. On a Natural Monument

"Written prior to the founding of the National Cemetery at Andersonville, where 15,000 of the reinterred captives now sleep, each beneath his personal head-board, inscribed from records found in the prison hospital. Some hundreds rest apart and without name. A glance at the published pamphlet containing the list of the buried at Andersonville conveys a feeling mournfully impressive. Seventy-four large double-columned pages in fine print. Looking through them is like getting lost among the old turbaned head-stones and cypresses in the interminable Black Forest of Scutari, over against Constantinople." (Melville's note)

121. 3. "In one of Kilpatrick's earlier cavalry fights near Aldie, a Colonel who, being under arrest, had been temporarily deprived of his sword, nevertheless, unarmed, insisted upon charging at the head of his men, which he did, and the onset proved victorious." (Melville's note)

125. 14. "Certain of Mosby's followers, on the charge of being unlicensed foragers or fighters, being hung by order of a Union cavalry commander, The Partisan promptly retaliated in the woods. In turn, this also was retaliated, it is said. To what extent such deplorable proceedings were carried, it is not easy to learn.

South of the Potomac in Virginia, and within a gallop of the Long Bridge at Washington, is the confine of a country, in some places wild, which throughout the war it was unsafe for a Union man to traverse except with an armed escort. This was the chase of Mosby, the scene of many of his exploits or those of his men. In the heart of this region at least one fortified camp was maintained by our cavalry, and from time to time expeditions were made therefrom. Owing to the nature of the country and the embittered feeling of its inhabitants, many of these expeditions ended disastrously. Such results were helped by the exceeding cunning of the enemy, born of his wood-craft, and, in some instances, by undue confidence on the part of our men. A body of cavalry, starting from camp with the view of breaking up a nest of rangers, and absent say three days, would return with a number of their own forces killed and wounded (ambushed), without being able to retaliate farther than by foraging on the country, destroying a house of two reported to be haunts of the guerrillas, or capturing non-combatants accused of being secretly active in their behalf.

In the verse the name of Mosby is invested with some of those associations with which the popular mind is familiar. But facts do not warrant the belief that every clandestine attack of men who passed for Mosby's was made under his eye, or even by his knowledge.

In partisan warfare he proved himself shrewd, able, and enterprising, and always a wary fighter. He stood well in the confidence of his superior officers, and was employed by them at times in furtherance of important movements. To our wounded on more than one occasion he showed considerate kindness. Officers and civilians captured by forces under his immediate command were, so long as remaining under his orders, treated with civility. These things are well known to those personally familiar with the irregular fighting in Virginia." (Melville's note)

For an account of Mosby's activities see John S. Mosby, *Mosby's War Reminiscences and Stuart's Cavalry Companies,* (New York ©1887), and the recently printed *Ranger Mosby* by Virgil Parrington Jones (Chapel Hill, 1944). Melville visited the Mosby territory during the Civil War. His cousin, Colonel Henry Gansevoort, captured Mosby's camp, October 14, 1864. (Paltsits, p. 13.)

145-152. Lee in the Capitol

"Among those summoned during the spring just passed to appear before the Reconstruction Committee of Congress was Robert E. Lee. His testimony is deeply interesting, both in itself and as coming from him. After various questions had been put and briefly answered, these words were addressed to him:

'If there be any other matter about which you wish to speak on this occasion, do so freely.' Waiving this invitation, he responded by a short personal explanation of some point in a previous answer, and, after a few more brief questions and replies, the interview closed.

In the verse a poetical liberty has been ventured. Lee is not only represented as responding to the invitation, but also as at last renouncing his cold reserve, doubtless the cloak to feelings more or less poignant. If for such freedom warrant be necessary, the speeches in ancient histories, not to speak of those in Shakespeare's historic plays, may not unfitly perhaps be cited.

The character of the original measures proposed about this time in the National Legislature for the treatment of the (as yet) Congressionally excluded South, and the spirit in which those measures were advocated—these are circumstances which it is fairly supposable would have deeply influenced the thoughts, whether spoken or withheld, of a Southerner placed in the position of Lee before the Reconstruction Committee." (Melville's note)

152. 12. *Forbear to wreak the ill you reprobate*: This is Melville's softening correction, in his own copy of *Battle Pieces,* of the line which was printed as: *"Avoid the tyranny you reprobate."*

155. Melville in *Battle-Pieces* followed the poems with a Prose supplement. Written in a spirit of profound compassion and humane tolerance —much in the spirit and nobility of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address —it is an explicit statement of the message which is implicit in the series of poems preceding it. No doubt the document, having suffered the usual neglect of Melville's writing, will eventually be much better known—perhaps to assume its rightful place among the "American Scriptures."

SUPPLEMENT

Were I fastidiously anxious for the symmetry of this book, it would close with the notes. But the times are such that patriotism—not free from solicitude—urges a claim overriding all literary scruples.

It is more than a year since the memorable surrender, but events have not yet rounded themselves into completion. Not justly can we complain of this. There has been an upheaval affecting the basis of things; to altered circumstances complicated adaptations are to be made; there are difficulties great and novel. But is Reason still waiting for Passion to spend itself? We have sung of the soldiers and sailors, but who shall hymn the politicians?

In view of the infinite desirableness of Re-establishment, and considering that, so far as feeling is concerned, it depends not mainly on the temper in which the South regards the North, but rather conversely; one who never was a blind adherent feels constrained to submit some thoughts, counting on the indulgence of his countrymen.

And, first, it may be said that, if among the feelings and opinions growing immediately out of a great civil convulsion, there are any which time shall modify or do away, they are presumably those of a less temperate and charitable cast.

There seems no reason why patriotism and narrowness should go together, or why intellectual fairmindedness should be confounded with political trimming, or why serviceable truth should keep cloistered because not partisan. Yet the work of Reconstruction, if admitted to be feasible at all, demands little but common sense and Christian charity. Little but these? These are much.

Some of us are concerned because as yet the South shows no penitence. But what exactly do we mean by this? Since down to the close of the war she never confessed any for braving it, the only penitence now left her is that which springs solely from the sense of discomfiture; and since this evidently would be a contrition hypocritical, it would be unworthy in us to demand it. Certain it is that penitence, in the sense of voluntary humiliation, will never be displayed. Nor does this afford just ground for unreserved condemnation. It is enough, for all practical purposes, if the South have been taught by the terrors of civil war to feel that Secession, like Slavery, is against Destiny; that both now lie buried in one grave; that her fate is linked with ours; and that together we comprise the Nation.

The clouds of heroes who battled for the Union it is needless to eulogize here. But how of the soldiers on the other side? And when of a free community we name the soldiers, we thereby name the people. It was in subserviency to the slave-interest that Secession was plotted; but it was under the plea, plausibly urged, that certain inestimable rights guaranteed by the Constitution were directly menaced, that the people of the South were cajoled into revolution. Through the arts of the

conspirators and the perversity of fortune, the most sensitive love of liberty was entrapped into the support of a war whose implied end was the erecting in our advanced century of an Anglo-American empire based upon the systematic degradation of man.

Spite this clinging reproach, however, signal military virtues and achievements have conferred upon the Confederate arms historic fame, and upon certain of the commanders a renown extending beyond the sea—a renown which we of the North could not suppress, even if we would. In personal character, also, not a few of the military leaders of the South enforce forbearance; the memory of others the North refrains from disparaging; and some, with more or less of reluctance, she can respect. Posterity, sympathizing with our convictions, but removed from our passions, may perhaps go farther here. If George IV could, out of the graceful instinct of a gentleman,[1] raise an honorable monument in the great fane of Christendom over the remains of the enemy of his dynasty, Charles Edward, the invader of England and victor in the rout of Preston Pans—upon whose head the king's ancestor but one reign removed had set a price—is it probable that the grandchildren of General Grant will pursue with rancor, or slur by sour neglect, the memory of Stonewall Jackson?

But the South herself is not wanting in recent histories and biographies which record the deeds of her chieftains—writings freely published at the North by loyal houses, widely read here, and with a deep though saddened interest. By students of the war such works are hailed as welcome accessories, and tending to the completeness of the record.

Supposing a happy issue out of present perplexities, then, in the generation next to come, Southerners there will be yielding allegiance to the Union, feeling all their interests bound up in it, and yet cherishing unrebuked that kind of feeling for the memory of the soldiers of the fallen Confederacy that Burns, Scott, and the Ettrick Shepherd felt for the memory of the gallant clansmen ruined through their fidelity to the Stuarts—a feeling whose passion was tempered by the poetry imbuing it, and which in no wise affected their loyalty to the Georges, and which, it may be added, indirectly contributed excellent things to literature. But, setting this view aside, dishonorable would it be in the South were she willing to abandon to shame the memory of brave men who with signal personal disinterestedness warred in her behalf, though from motives, as we believe, so deplorably astray.

Patriotism is not baseness, neither is it inhumanity. The mourners who this summer bear flowers to the mounds of the Virginian and Georgian

[1] "out of . . . gentlemen" is marked out in HM's copy.

dead are, in their domestic bereavement and proud affection, as sacred in the eye of Heaven as are those who go with similar offerings of tender grief and love into the cemeteries of our Northern Martyrs. And yet, in one aspect, how needless to point the contrast.

Cherishing such sentiments, it will hardly occasion surprise that, in looking over the battle-pieces in the foregoing collection, I have been tempted to withdraw or modify some of them, fearful lest in presenting, though but dramatically and by way of poetic record, the passions and epithets of civil war, I might be contributing to a bitterness which every sensible American must wish at an end. So, too, with the emotion of victory as reproduced on some pages, and particularly toward the close. It should not be construed into an exultation misapplied—an exultation as ungenerous as unwise, and made to minister, however indirectly, to that kind of censoriousness too apt to be produced in certain natures by success after trying reverses. Zeal is not of necessity religion, neither is it always of the same essence with poetry or patriotism.

There were excesses which marked the conflict, most of which are perhaps inseparable from a civil strife so intense and prolonged, and involving warfare in some border countries new and imperfectly civilized. Barbarities also there were, for which the Southern people collectively can hardly be held responsible, though perpetrated by ruffians in their name. But surely other qualities—exalted ones—courage and fortitude matchless, were likewise displayed, and largely; and justly may these be held the characteristic traits, and not the former.

In this view, what Northern writer, however patriotic, but must revolt from acting on paper a part any way akin to that of the live dog to the dead lion; and yet it is right to rejoice for our triumphs, so far as it may justly imply an advance for our whole country and for humanity.

Let it be held no reproach to any one that he pleads for reasonable consideration for our late enemies, now stricken down and unavoidably debarred, for the time, from speaking through authorized agencies for themselves. Nothing has been urged here in the foolish hope of conciliating those men—few in number, we trust— who have resolved never to be reconciled to the Union. On such hearts every thing is thrown away except it be religious commiseration, and the sincerest. Yet let them call to mind that unhappy Secessionist, not a military man, who with impious alacrity fired the first shot of the Civil War at Sumter, and a little more than four years afterwards fired the last one into his heart at Richmond.

Noble was the gesture into which patriotic passion surprised the people in a utilitarian time and country; yet the glory of the war falls short of its pathos—a pathos which now at last ought to disarm all animosity.

How many and earnest thoughts still rise, and how hard to repress them. We feel what past years have been, and years, unretarded years, shall come. May we all have moderation; may we all show candor. Though, perhaps, nothing could ultimately have averted the strife, and though to treat of human actions it to deal wholly with second causes, nevertheless, let us not cover up or try to extenuate what, humanly speaking, is the truth—namely, that those unfraternal denunciations, continued through years, and which at last inflamed to deeds that ended in bloodshed, were reciprocal; and that, had the preponderating strength and the prospect of its unlimited increase lain on the other side, on ours might have lain those actions which now in our late opponents we stigmatize under the name of Rebellion. As frankly let us own—what it would be unbecoming to parade were foreigners concerned—that our triumph was won not more by skill and bravery than by superior resources and crushing numbers; that it was a triumph, too, over a people for years politically misled by designing men, and also by some honestly-erring men, who from their position could not have been otherwise than broadly influential; a people who, though, indeed, they sought to perpetuate the curse of slavery, and even extend it, were not the authors of it, but (less fortunate, not less righteous than we) were the fated inheritors; a people who, having a like origin with ourselves, share essentially in whatever worthy qualities we may posesss. No one can add to the lasting reproach which hopeless defeat has now cast upon Secession by withholding the recognition of these verities.

Surely we ought to take it to heart that that kind of pacification, based upon principles operating equally all over the land, which lovers of their country yearn for, and which our arms, though signally triumphant, did not bring about, and which law-making, however anxious, or energetic, or repressive, never by itself can achieve, may yet be largely aided by generosity of sentiment public and private. Some revisionary legislation and adaptive is indispensable; but with this should harmoniously work another kind of prudence, not unallied with entire magnanimity. Benevolence and policy—Christianity and Machiavelli—dissuade from penal severities toward the subdued. Abstinence here is as obligatory as considerate care for our unfortunate fellowmen late in bonds, and, if observed, would equally prove to be wise forecast. The great qualities of the South, those attested in the War, we can perilously alienate, or we may make them nationally available at need.

The blacks, in their infant pupilage to freedom, appeal to the sympathies of every humane mind. The paternal guardianship which for the interval government exercises over them was prompted equally by duty

and benevolence. Yet such kindliness should not be allowed to exclude kindliness to communities who stand nearer to us in nature. For the future of the freed slaves we may well be concerned; but the future of the whole country, involving the future of the blacks, urges a paramount claim upon our anxiety. Effective benignity, like the Nile, is not narrow in its bounty, and true policy is always broad. To be sure, it is vain to seek to glide, with moulded words, over the difficulties of the situation. And for them who are neither partisans, nor enthusiasts, nor theorists, nor cynics, there are some doubts not readily to be solved. And there are fears. Why is not the cessation of war now at length attended with the settled calm of peace? Wherefore in a clear sky do we still turn our eyes toward the South as the Neapolitan, months after the eruption, turns his toward Vesuvius? Do we dread lest the repose may be deceptive? In the recent convulsion has the crater but shifted? Let us revere that sacred uncertainty which forever impends over men and nations. Those of us who always abhorred slavery as an atheistical iniquity, gladly we join in the exulting chorus of humanity over its downfall. But we should remember that emancipation was accomplished not by deliberate legislation; only through agonized violence could so mighty a result be effected. In our natural solicitude to confirm the benefit of liberty to the blacks, let us forbear from measures of dubious constitutional rightfulness toward our white countrymen—measures of a nature to provoke, among other of the last evils, exterminating hatred of race toward race. In imagination let us place ourselves in the unprecedented position of the Southerners—their position as regards the millions of ignorant manumitted slaves in their midst, for whom some of us now claim the suffrage. Let us be Christians toward our fellow-whites, as well as philanthropists toward the blacks, our fellow-men. In all things, and toward all, we are enjoined to do as we would be done by. Nor should we forget that benevolent desires, after passing a certain point, can not undertake their own fulfillment without incurring the risk of evils beyond those sought to be remedied. Something may well be left to the graduated care of future legislation, and to heaven. In one point of view the co-existence of the two races in the South—whether the negro be bond or free—seems (even as it did to Abraham Lincoln) a grave evil. Emancipation has ridded the country of the reproach, but not wholly of the calamity. Especially in the present transition period for both races in the South, more or less of trouble may not unreasonably be anticipated; but let us not hereafter be too swift to charge the blame exclusively in any one quarter. With certain evils men must be more or less patient. Our institutions have a potent digestion, and may in time convert and assimilate to good all elements thrown in, however originally alien.

But, so far as immediate measures looking toward permanent Re-establishment are concerned, no consideration should tempt us to pervert the national victory into oppression for the vanquished. Should plausible promise of eventual good, or a deceptive or spurious sense of duty, lead us to essay this, count we must on serious consequences, not the least of which would be divisions among the Northern adherents of the Union. Assuredly, if any honest Catos there be who thus far have gone with us, no longer will they do so, but oppose us, and as resolutely as hitherto they have supported. But this path of thought leads toward those waters of bitterness from which one can only turn aside and be silent.

But supposing Re-establishment so far advanced that the Southern seats in Congress are occupied, and by men qualified in accordance with those cardinal principles of representative government which hitherto have prevailed in the land—what then? Why, the Congressmen elected by the people of the South will—represent the people of the South. This may seem a flat conclusion; but, in view of the last five years, may there not be latent significance in it? What will be the temper of those Southern members? and, confronted by them, what will be the mood of our own representatives? In private life true reconciliation seldom follows a violent quarrel; but, if subsequent intercourse be unavoidable, nice observances and mutual are indispensable to the prevention of a new rupture. Amity itself can only be maintained by reciprocal respect, and true friends are punctilious equals. On the floor of Congress North and South are to come together after a passionate duel, in which the South, though proving her valor, has been made to bite the dust. Upon differences in debate shall acrimonious recriminations be exchanged? shall censorious superiority assumed by one section provoke defiant self-assertion on the other? shall Manassas and Chickamauga be retorted for Chattanooga and Richmond? Under the supposition that the full Congress will be composed of gentlemen, all this is impossible. Yet, if otherwise, it needs no prophet of Israel to foretell the end. The maintenance of Congressional decency in the future will rest mainly with the North. Rightly will more forbearance be required from the North than the South, for the North is victor.

But some there are who may deem these latter thoughts inapplicable, and for this reason: Since the test-oath operatively excludes from Congress all who in any way participated in Secession, therefore none but Southerners wholly in harmony with the North are eligible to seats. This is true for the time being. But the oath is alterable; and in the wonted fluctuations of parties not improbably it will undergo alteration, assuming such a form, perhaps, as not to bar the admission into the National Legislature of men who represent the populations lately in revolt. Such a

result would involve no violation of the principles of democratic government. Not readily can one perceive how the political existence of the millions of late Secessionists can permanently be ignored by this Republic. The years of the war tried our devotion to the Union; the time of peace may test the sincerity of our faith in democracy.

In no spirit of opposition, not by way of challenge, is any thing here thrown out. These thoughts are sincere ones; they seem natural—inevitable. Here and there they must have suggested themselves to many thoughtful patriots. And, if they be just thoughts, ere long they must have that weight with the public which already they have had with individuals.

For that heroic band—those children of the furnace who, in regions like Texas and Tennessee, maintained their fidelity through terrible trials—we of the North felt for them, and profoundly we honor them. Yet passionate sympathy, with resentments so close as to be almost domestic in their bitterness, would hardly in the present juncture tend to discreet legislation. Were the Unionists and Secessionists but as Guelphs and Ghibellines? If not, then far be it from a great nation now to act in the spirit that animated a triumphant town-faction in the Middle Ages. But crowding thoughts must at last be checked; and, in times like the present, one who desires to be impartially just in the expression of his views, moves as among sword-points presented on every side.

Let us pray that the great historic tragedy of our time may not have been enacted without instructing our whole beloved country through terror and pity; and may fulfillment verify in the end those expectations which kindle the bards of Progress and Humanity.

157-206. *John Marr and Other Sailors*

The poems in these pages were originally published by Melville in 1888. The slim volume was printed by the De Vinne press in an edition of twenty-five copies for distribution by Melville among his friends.[1] The book was dedicated to W[illiam] C[lark] R[ussell] with an epistolary inscription which was the appreciative admiration of one great novelist of the sea for the achievement of another marine writer.

Russell was born in New York City, February 24, 1844, but was educated in England and lived all his life there, dying in Bath on November 8, 1911. His most famous novel, *The Wreck of the Grosvenor,* is highly praised by Melville in the dedicatory epistle. Russell, an enthusiastic admirer of Melville's work, dedicated his novel *An Ocean Tragedy* to Herman Melville. For further details about their friendship see Weaver, pp. 365-

[1] A bibliographical description of *John Marr* may be found in Minnigerode, pp. 183-184.

366. The Melville collection in the Harvard College Library includes the galley and proof-sheets of *John Marr* as well as the manuscript.

The prefatory epistle follows:

"Inscription Epistolary to W. C. R.

Health and Content:

Hilary, my companionable acquaintance, during an afternoon stroll under the trees along the higher bluffs of our Riverside Park last June, entertained me with one of those clever little theories, for the originating and formulating whereof he has a singular aptitude. He had but recently generalized it—so, at least, I inferred—from certain subtler particulars which, in the instances of sundry individuals, he flattered himself his perspicacity had enabled him to discern.

Let me communicate to you this theory; not that I imagine you will hail it as a rare intellectual acquisition; hardly that, but because I am much mistaken if it do not attract your personal interest, however little it may otherwise, and with other people, win consideration or regard.

Briefly put, it is this. Letting alone less familiar nationalities, an American born in England, or an Englishman born in America, each in his natural make-up retains through life, and will some way evince, an intangible something imbibed with his mother's milk from the soil of his nativity.

But for a signal illustration hereof, whom, think you, he cites? Well, look into any mirror at hand and you will see the gentleman. Yes, Hilary thinks he perceives in the nautical novels of W. C. R. an occasional flavor as if the honest mid-sea brine, their main constituent, were impregnated with a dash of the New World's alluvium—such, say, as is discharged by our Father of Waters into the Gulf of Mexico. "Natural enough," he observes; "for, though a countryman of the Queen,—his parentage, home, and allegiance all English,—this writer, I am credibly informed, is in his birthplace a New-Worlder; ay, first looked out upon life from a window here of our island of Manhattan, nor very far from the site of my place in Broadway, by Jove!"

Now, Hilary is that rare bird, a man at once genial and acute. Genial, I mean, without sharing much in mere gregariousness, which, with some, passes for a sort of geniality; and acute, though lacking more or less in cautionary self-skepticism. No wonder then that, however pleasant and instructive be Hilary's companionship, and much as I value the man, yet as touching more than one of his shrewder speculations I have been reluctantly led to distrust a little that penetrative perspicacity of his, a quality immoderately developed in him, and, perhaps (who knows?), developed by his business; for he is an optician, daily having to do with

the microscope, telescope, and other inventions for sharpening and extending our natural sight, thus enabling us mortals (as I once heard an eccentric put it) liberally to enlarge the field of our original and essential ignorance.

In a word, my excellent friend's private little theory, while, like many a big and bruited one, not without a fancifully plausible aspect commending it to the easy belief, is yet, in my humble judgment,—though I would not hint as much to him for the world,—made up in no small part of one element inadmissible in sound philosophy—namely, moonshine.

As to his claim of finding signal evidence for it in the novels aforementioned, that is another matter. That, I am inclined to think, is little else than the amiable illusion of a zealous patriot eager to appropriate anything that in any department may tend to reflect luster upon his beloved country.

But, dismissing theory, let me come to a fact, and put it fact-wise; that is to say, a bit bluntly: By the suffrages of seamen and landsmen alike, *The Wreck of the Grosvenor* entitles the author to the naval crown in current literature. That book led the series of kindred ones by the same hand; it is the flag-ship, and to name it implies the fleet.

Upon the *Grosvenor's* first appearance—in these waters, I was going to say—all competent judges exclaimed, each after his own fashion, something to this effect: The very spit of the brine in our faces! What writer, so thoroughly as this one, knows the sea, and the blue water of it; the sailor and the heart of him; the ship, too, and the sailing and handling of a ship? Besides, to his knowledge he adds invention. And, withal, in his broader humane quality he shares the spirit of Richard H. Dana, a true poet's son, our own admirable *"Man before the Mast."*

Well, in view of those unanimous verdicts summed up in the foregoing condensed delivery, with what conscientious satisfaction did I but just now, in the heading of this inscription, salute you, W. C. R., by running up your colors at my fore. Would that the craft thus embravened were one of some tonnage, so that the flag might be carried on a loftier spar, commanding an ampler horizon of your recognizing friends.

But the pleasure I take in penning these lines is such that, did a literary inscription imply aught akin to any bestowment, say, or benefit,—which it is so very far indeed from implying,—then, sinner though I am, I should be tempted to repeat that divine apothegm which, were it repeated forever, would never stale: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And tho' by the world at large so unwordly a maxim receives a more hospitable welcome at the ear than in the heart,—and no wonder, considering the persistent deceptiveness of so many things mundane,—nevertheless, in

one province,—and I mean no other than literature,—not every individual, I think, at least not every one whose years ought to discharge him from the minor illusions, will dispute it, who has had experience alike in receiving and giving, in one suggestive form or other, sincere contemporary praise. And what, essentially, is such praise? Little else indeed than a less ineloquent form of recognition.

That these thoughts are no spurious ones, never mind from whomsoever proceeding, one naturally appeals to the author of *The Wreck of the Grosvenor,* who, in his duality as a commended novelist and liberal critic in his more especial department, may rightly be deemed an authority well qualified to determine.

Thus far as to matters which may be put into type. For personal feeling —the printed page is hardly the place for reiterating that. So I close here as I began, wishing you from my heart the most precious things I know of in this world—Health and Content."

168. 26 Dainty Dave is apparently a reference to Lieutenant Guert Ganesvoort, Melville's first cousin, who had served in the Mexican war. Another reference to the same cousin has been traced by Anderson in the character of Tom Tight (**174.** 20ff.): "There was an inside story of the *Somers* mutiny that explained much, and cousin Guert Gansevoort knew all about it. Though he was tight-lipped toward the inquisitive, he may have told Melville enough about the character of Commander Mackenzie to furnish a living model for the sadistic Claggart [of *Billy Budd*]." ("The Genesis of *Billy Budd," American Literature,* XII (November, 1940), 338.)

The arch-mutineer of line 25, about which Tom Tight was silent, was Philip Spencer, a midshipman executed, perhaps unjustly, aboard the brig *Somers* for alleged mutinous conspiracy.

The entire poem of "Bridegroom Dick" is, in a sense, a companion piece to Melville's novel *White Jacket* (1850). Characters and events of that novel which were drawn from Melville's own naval experiences aboard the *United States* from August 1843 to October 1844, undoubtedly appear in the poem.

176. 2 The "Kentuckian colossal" was James Armstrong, Captain of the *United States* during Melville's service on that ship; while the "commodore" of the poem was probably Thomas ap Catesby Jones, Commodore of the Pacific Squadron during the same period.

176. 6 The rebellious Finn is derived from Melville's memory of the flogging of William Hoff, August, 1943, for disrespectful conduct to his superiors.

185-194. The Haglets

The manuscript of this poem is made up in good part of printed lines interspersed with the handwriting passages. The title is written in as a substitute for a cancelled printed title: "The Admiral of the White./By the author of "Omoo," "Typee," "Moby Dick," Etc./Copyright, 1885". Whether the poem was actually printed in some magazine, I have not been able to ascertain. There is another treatment of the same story as "The Haglets" in "The Admiral of the White" (pp. 404-406 of this volume) which has not previously been published.

The theme of both poems may be traced to a story told to Melville on his Near East trip, 1856-1857. Melville made the following note in his *Journal up the Straits,* December 7, 1856 (p. 15): "In the evening Captain told a story about the heat of arms affecting the compass." The next day he also recorded (p. 16): "Arms all taken down into the cabin after being discharged:—[written above in pencil] (Captain T's story of arms)." Melville also used the theme in *Clarel* (Constable ed., II, 58ff) in the Timoneer's story, where the three pursuing birds also appear.

194-196. The Aeolian Harp

The picture of the floating wreck is partially reminiscent of the brigantine discovered by Taji and Jarl in *Mardi* (Vol. I, Chapter XIX, *et seq.*), and more closely similar to the following picture from *Redburn* (Chapter XXII): "It was a dismantled, water-logged schooner, a most dismal sight, that must have been drifting about for several long weeks. The bulwarks were pretty much gone; and here and there the bare *stanchions,* or posts, were left standing, splitting in two the waves which broke clear over the deck, lying almost even with the sea. The foremast was snapt off less than four feet from its base; and the shattered and splintered remnant looked like the stump of a pine tree thrown over in the woods. Every time she rolled in the trough of the sea, her open main-hatchway yawned into view; but was as quickly filled, and submerged again, with a rushing, gurgling sound, as the water ran into it with the lee-roll."

196. To the Master of the "Meteor"

The Captain referred to is Thomas Melville (1830-1883), Herman's favorite brother. See also the poem "To Tom", p. 407.

197. Far Off-Shore *and* The Man-of-War Hawk

All readers of *Moby-Dick* will recall the sea-hawk fixed to the mast of the sinking *Pequod* by the hammer of Tashtego: "his whole captive form folded in the flag of Ahab . . . which, like Satan, would not sink to hell till she had dragged a living part of heaven along with her, and helmeted herself with it."

200. The Maldive Shark

There is an account of this shark and his attendants in the eighteenth chapter of *Mardi*: "There is a fish in the sea that ever more, like a surly lord, only goes abroad attended by his suite. It is the Shovel-nosed Shark. A clumsy, lethargic monster, unshapely as his name, and the last species of his kind, one would think, to be so bravely waited upon as he is. His suite is composed of those dainty little creatures called Pilot fish by sailors. But by night his retinue is frequently increased by the presence of several small luminous fish, running in advance, and flourishing their flambeaux like linkboys lighting the monster's way." etc.

200. To Ned

"Ned Bunn" is the poetic name for Melville's old companion among the "Marquesas and glenned isles that be/Authentic Edens in a Pagan sea"; Richard T. Greene, immortalised as "Toby" in Melville's novel, *Typee*.

202. Crossing the Tropics (From *"The Saya-y-Manto"*)

It is possible that Melville may have contemplated writing a long poem, or a series of poems, under the general title of "The Saya-y-Manto", and either abandoned the project from disinterest, or never finished it because of death. More probably, the "From" is merely a literary device, and Melville never really planned more than this one poem. The following description of the *Saya-y-Manto* is almost contemporary with Melville's visits to Peru (between 1841-1844):

"Saya-y-Manto, or walking-dress of the Limaian ladies! The lower part of this dress, or the *saya*, is, in fact, an elastic silk petticoat, laid in vertical folds or plaits, sitting close to the figure, the contour of which it gracefully exhibits at every step and movement. The *Manto* is a kind of hood of black silk, reaching low enough to conceal the top of the *saya*, and is drawn up from behind over the head and shoulders, concealing the elbows and arms, and all the face except one eye, which just peeps out as a sample. The fold in front is held in its place by one hand, while the other is extended across the bust, holding a rosary or a pocket handkerchief. In this dress the ladies go to mass at early dawn, and a shopping in the forenoon; indeed, it is the common walking-dress through the day, but not worn by the ladies at night." (J. N. Reynolds, *Voyage of the United States Frigate Potomac, under the Command of Commodore John Downes, during the Circumnavigation of the Globe, in the Years* 1831, 1832, 1833, *and* 1834 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1835), p. 439. Facing p. 438 is a picture of the costume.

204. The Enviable Isles (From *"Rammon."*).

Melville undoubtedly planned a longer poem under the title of *Rammon*

but did not finish it. This poem was the only one from the larger poem, which was published in Melville's lifetime. For the rest of *Rammon* as Melville left it in the manuscript, see pp. 417ff.

209-256. *Timoleon &c.*

The poems gathered under this title were printed in 1891 by the Caxton Press of New York in an edition limited to twenty-five copies for the author's own disposal.[1] Owing to this small printing and to its association with the author of *Moby Dick,* the volume is one of the rare and valued items in American bibliography. The volume was dedicated to the artist Elihu Vedder.[2] Careful consideration and analysis of the contents of *Timoleon* will show that it was the distillation of the matured thought and poetic art of Melville, who by 1891 had fairly overcome the technical tangles which had troubled him in the writing of much of his previous poetry. Melville, like his American Aloe, in *Timoleon,* put out an unexpected bloom of beauty. The poems are made up partly of poetry probably written after Melville's retirement (1885) from his job as Inspector of Customs, and partly of poetry written thirty years before as a result of his trip to the Near East—those poems not needed for the lyrics of *Clarel.* Five of the *Timoleon* poems ("Art," "Monody," "Night-March," "The Weaver," and "Lamia's Song") were published just after Melville's death by Arthur Stedman, in *Century Magazine,* N. S. XXII (May 1892), 104-105.

For his information about Timoleon, Melville drew upon the first part of Plutarch's "Life of Timoleon". But the problem of aloneness which haunts this and many of the other poems in the Timoleon group, is Melville's own contribution. Timoleon is also a study of conflicting loyalties. Shakespeare had explored the problem of duty *versus* love in the character of Brutus in Julius Caesar, and Melville's poem brings the greater work of art to mind.

209. 8 *Shall good in weak expire?:* Herman Melville wrote at the bottom of the first page of his first draft: "For a recent example, Louis Napoleon."

216-221. After the Pleasure Party

This rather difficult but beautiful poem has been generally misunderstood by readers. Lewis Mumford, for instance, in his excellent life of Melville, interpreted it as Melville's picture of an experience of his own in Italy, describing the reassertion, under the influence of wine perhaps, of the sexual impulse in Melville. The poem is really a dramatic monologue

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[1] A bibliographical description of *Timoleon &c* may be found in Minnigerode, pp. 185-186. Mr. Birss tells me that he has located sixteen of the copies.

[2] See p. 101 for another Melville allusion to Vedder.

in which the speaker is a woman—*not,* as Mumford reads it, a man—who has devoted her years of youth to scholarly and intellectual pursuits, denying the sensual pleasures, only to find that love will not be gainsaid, that the scorn of love has brought its own revenge in unfulfillment. Melville is treating the same theme manipulated by Tennyson (the verbosity and sentimentalities of *The Princess* are, it seems to me, far less satisfactory, poetically, than the economy and concentrated power of Melville's astringent lines), and by William Shakespeare in *Love's Labour Lost.* It is true that there may be submerged autobiography within the poem, but when Mumford mistakes the characters of the narrative grave doubts arise as to the worth of the autobiographical constructions he makes upon the verses.

225. The Garden of Metrodorus

Whether Melville alludes to Metrodorus of Chios, the radical skeptic and student of Democritus who is reported to have said: "We know nothing, no, not even whether we know or not"; or to Metrodorus of Lampsacus, the intimate friend of Epicurus, who died in 277 B. C. after an even more dogmatic pursuit of pleasure than his famous master, is not made clear in the poem. Either man would have interested Melville, who undoubtedly took his information about Metrodorus from Pierre Bayle's great *Dictionary Historical and Critical* (2d ed., Volume IV, London, 1736).

228-229. Monody

The allusion to the vine in the closing lines of this poem indicates that the poem is addressed to the memory of Nathaniel Hawthorne. For the argument—conclusive, it seems to me—which establishes this connection, see the analysis of the character of Vine in the excellent dissertation by Walter Everett Bezanson, *Herman Melville's Clarel,* Yale University Ph.D. Thesis, 1943, pp. 163 ff.

229-230. The Bench of Boors

Returning from his visit to the Holy Land, Melville stopped in Amsterdam, where he recorded in his *Journal up the Straits* for April 24, 1857 (p. 170), that he had seen paintings by Potter, Breughel, Rembrandt, and "Greasy looking fellows—Teniers."

In the first draft of *Timoleon* is a note by Melville: "Note. A particular picture is here referred to." The painting was probably the one by David Teniers the younger (1610-1690) described in the fifth edition of the *Notice des Tableaux du Musee d'Amsterdam.* (Amsterdam, 1872), pp. 157-158, under the descriptive title, *"L'heure du repos." "Un maçon très-corpulent est assis devant une petite table, habillé d'un bonnet blanc, veste*

jaune, culotte grise et tablier de cuir; il souffle la fumée de sa pipe, près de lui, deux ouvriers portant des bonnets noirs fument aussi et le regardent d'un air content; un troisième, accroupi et appuyé sur la petite table fume et regarde le premier comme les autres; derrière ce groupe se trouve une femme. Un pot à feu est placé sur un manteau à l'avant-plan, près de là un chien flairant à des outils de maçon. Au-dessus des figures, on distingue une planche sur laquelle se trouvent des fioles et de petits pots. Au coin d'une muraille en plâtre, on voit dans le fond une femme avec un pot à bière et un garçon assis auprès du foyer; un homme, tenant un verre à la main, se chauffe le dos; un paysan entre la porte du fond."

232. Buddha

For another demonstration of Melville's interest in Buddha see the *Rammon* fragment in this volume, pp. 417ff. The source of the quotation, IV James 14, is given in T1.

232. C————'s Lament

The identity of "C" is given in the manuscript: Coleridge. See p. 507.

234. Fragments of a Lost Gnostic poem.

The opening paragraph of Thoreau's chapter on "Reading" in *Walden* parallels, slightly, Melville's poem: "In accumulating property for ourselves or our posterity, in founding a family or a state, or acquiring fame even, we are mortal; but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident."

233. Shelley's Vision

Melville visited the Protestant Cemetery in Rome on February 27, 1857, recording in his *Journal up the Straits* (pp. 129-130): "After much trouble & sore travel without a guide managed to get to Protestant Burial Ground & pyramid of Cestius under walls. Read Keats' epitaph. Separated from the adjacent ground by trench.—Shelley in other ground. Plain stone.—(Went from Caracalla to Shelley's grave by natural process)."

235-236. The Age of the Antonines

Writing to his brother-in-law, John C. Hoadley, during Easter Week, 1877, Melville enclosed a copy of this poem with the following apologetic and cryptic remarks: "In return for your M.S. yarns I send you something I found the other day—came across it in a lot of papers. I remember that the lines were suggested by a passage in Gibbon (Decline & Fall) Have you a copy? Turn to *Antonine &c* in index. What the deuce the thing means I don't know; but here it is." (Paltsits, p. 48) Melville had his tongue in his cheek, for certainly the poem is not obscure. The chapter from Gibbon to which he referred is the first one in the *Decline and Fall*

of the Holy Roman Empire, and the entire chapter as well as Melville's poem elaborates Gibbon's opening words:

"In the second century of the christian era, the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle, but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: the Roman senate appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government. During a happy period of more than fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtues and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines."

236-238. Herba Santa

Mardi has frequent tributes to tobacco; and the references to smoking in the letters of Melville show Melville's great comfort from the act. It will be recalled that in *Moby Dick,* Ahab's throwing away of his pipe is symbolical of rejected peace and comfort.

238-239. Venice

This and the rest of the poems in the *Timoleon* group (pp. 238-255) are indeed "Fruit of Travel of Long Ago" in that they, along with the Marquis de Grandvin verses, probably are the poems which Melville unsuccessfully tried to have published in 1860. They were written between 1857 and 1860 following Melville's journey to the Near East. The *Journal up the Straits* records Melville's appreciative visit to Venice between April 1 and 6, 1857, during which he wrote (p. 157): "Rather be in Venice on rainy day, than in other capital on fine one.—"

239-240. In a Bye-Canal

Weaver has queried whether this poem is not based on a statement from his *Journal up the Straits,* Venice, April 5, 1857 (p. 156): "Walked to Rialto. Looked up & down G. Canal. Wandered further on. Numbers of beautiful women. The rich brown complexions of Titian's women drawn from Nature, after all. (Titian was a Venetian) The clear, rich, golden brown. The clear cut features, like cameo.—The vision from the window at end of long narrow passage."

240-241. Pisa's Leaning Tower

On March 23, 1857, at Pisa, Melville made the following entry in his *Journal up the Straits* (p. 145): "Campanile like pine poised just ere

snapping. You wait to hear crash. Like Wadsworth's [probably wrong transcription for Wordsworth's] moon cloud, it will move altogether if it move at all, for Pillars all lean with it. About 150 of 'em. There are houses in wake of fall."

241. In a Church of Padua

Melville's entry, made from Padua, in the *Journal up the Straits,* April 1, 1857 (p. 152), reads in part: "Got a grave dark guide & started with great-coat & umbrella to see the sights . . . . Church of St. Antony & Shrine. Superb. Crutches & pictures. Bronze bas-reliefs. Goliath & David, &c. Promenade."

242. Milan Cathedral

From Melville's *Journal up the Straits* (p. 160), at Milan, April 7, 1857: "To the cathedral. Glorious. More satisfactory to me than St. Peters. A wonderful grandure. Effect of burning window at end of aisle. Ascended,—Far below people in the turrets of open tracery look like flies caught in cobweb.—The groups of angels on points of pinnacles, & everywhere. Not the conception but execution. View from summit. Might . . . . [illegible phrase] host of heaven upon top of Milan Cathedral."

242-245. Pausilippo

The title is from the Greek, Παυσίλυπον meaning "easing pain". In the *Journal up the Straits* are three entries mentioning Pausilippo, the first for February 20, 1857: (p. 119) "Walked to Post Office with letters. Then took voiture for Eastern part of bay. Posilipo—beautiful promontory of villas—along the sea—new road—till came in sight of Pozzuoli." The second, February 21 (p. 126): "Wonderful old ruins palace at Pausilippo. Sea-palace.—The road. Villas, grottoes, summer-houses—ravines—bowers &c &c &c.

Such a profusion & intricacy of grotto, grove, gorge villa hill, that it takes some time and patience to disentangle such snarls of beauty.—Of the ride to Pausilippo.—"

The third, February 20 (p. 119): "At Posilipo found not the cessation which the name expresses."

246-247. The Parthenon

The pleasure which Melville derived from seeing the Parthenon is indicated in part by four entries in the *Journal up the Straits.*

February 8, 1857 (p. 110): "Tomorrow prepare for the Acropolis.—I saw it by moonlight from the road."

(p. 111)—"*Acropolis*—blocks of marble like sticks of Wenban [should read "Wenham"] ice—or like huge cakes of wax.—Parthenon elevated like

cross of Constantine. Strange contrast of rugged rock with polished temple. At Stirling—art & nature correspond. Not so at Acropolis. Imperceptible seams—frozen together—Bricks like cakes of snow.—"

February 10 (pp. 112-113): "Among the ruins—revisited them all. *Temple of Theseus* well preserved. Yellowish look—saffron—burnt in slow fire of Time. *Temple of Victory*—resurrection—figure of Victory tying her sandal—grace & loveliness of the whole conception.—Genoese tower incorporating columns of Peristyle.—Pavement of Parthenon—square—blocks of ice frozen together.—No mortar:—Delicacy of frostwork."

February 11 (p. 113): "Clear & beautiful day. Fine ride on box to Piræus. Acropolis in sight nearly whole way. Straight road. Fully relieved against the sky—Between Hymettos & Pentelicos. Pentelicos covered at top with snow—looking down on its child, the Parthenon:—Ruins of Parthenon like North River breaking up."

249-250. The Archipelago

Cp. *Journal up the Straits,* December 26, 1856 (p. 51): "Last night the Captain mildly celebrated the day with a glass of Champagne.—Contrast between the Greek isles & those of the Polynesian archipelago. The former have lost their virginity. The latter are fresh as at their first creation. The former look worn, and are meagre, like life after enthusiasm is gone. The aspect of all of them is sterile & dry. Even Delos whose flowers rose by miracle in the sea, is now a barren moor, & to look upon the bleak yellow of Patmos, who would think that a God had been there.—"

250-252. Syra

On his trip to the Near East in 1856-1857, Melville visited Syra both going and returning. On the first visit he recorded with interest the life of the island as he saw it, noting, among other things, that "Some old men looked like Pericles reduced to a chiffonier [*i.e.* a rag]—such a union of picturesqueness & poverty stricken." But it was the return visit which furnished him with most of the details transferred to the poem, and I quote this report almost in entirety, *Journal up the Straits,* December 23 (p. 49), and December 25 (pp. 49-51): December 23, 1856—"Entering Syra harbor, I was again struck by the appearance of the town on the hill. The houses seem clinging round its top, as if desperate for security, like shipwrecked men about a rock beaten by billows. A Greek on board tells me that, escaped from the massacres of Scio & Mytelene, certain Greeks escaped here in 1821, & founded the town. Syra is the most considerable place in the Archipelago, &, for commerce, perhaps in all Greece."

December 25—"Went ashore to renew my impressions of the previous visit. The Greek, of any class, seems a natural dandy. His dress, though a laborer, is that of a gentleman of leisure. This flowing, & graceful costume, with so much of pure ornament about it & so little fitted for labor, must needs have been devised in some Golden Age. But surviving in the present, is most picturesquely out of keeping with the utilities.—Some of the poorest sort present curious examples of what may be called the decayed picturesque. The Greeks have a great partiality for the tassel. This seems emblematic. You see one going about the quay displaying in every tempting mode, a long graceful tassel,—holding it up admiringly.—On the Custom House quay lie bales of tobacco, jars of oil, and what you would call rows of dead goats, but which prove to be goat skins, filled, not with the flesh of goats, but the blood of the grape.—In the cafes, much card playing, all through the day. Syra is the depot for the Archipelago. They export, sponges, raisins, tobacco, fruit, olive oil &c. Their imports are hardware, & cloths, all from England. They have quite a ship-yard here. Two Greek men-of-war lie here; little fellows, yawls-of-war one might call them.—One motive for building the old town on the hill was fear of pirates, & as a defence from them as well as the Turks. After things became more favorable, they descended, & built the new town along the water.—"

252. Disinterment of the Hermes

The discovery of Praxiteles' great statue at Olympia by the German Commission in 1881 was the climax of one of the most successful and sensational archaeological finds in history, serving, along with Schlieman's Troy excavations, to make archaeology a subject of wide attention.

In the Desert and The Great Pyramid

Practically all the ideas of the poems are to be found in the remarkable entry in *Journal up the Straits* for January 3, 1857 (pp. 57-58): "Looks larger midway than from top or bottom. Precipice on precipice, cliff on cliff. Nothing in Nature gives such an idea of vastness. A balloon to ascend them. View of persons ascending, Arab guides in flowing white mantles. Conducted by angels up to heaven. Guides so tender. Resting. Pain in the chest. Exhaustion. Must hurry. None but the phlegmatic go deliberately. Old man with the spirits of youth—long looked for this chance—tried the ascent, half way—failed—brought down. Tried to go into the interior—fainted—brought out—leaned against the pyramid by the entrance—pale as death. Nothing so pathetic. Too much for him; oppressed by the massiveness & mystery of the pyramids. I myself too. A feeling of awe & terror came over me. Dread of the Arabs. Offering to lead me into a side-hole.

The Dust. Long arched way,—then down as in a coal shaft. Then as in mines, under the sea. (At one moment seeming in the Mammoth Cave. Subterranean gorges, &c.) The stooping & doubling. I shudder at idea of ancient Egyptians. It was in these pyramids that was conceived the idea of Jehovah. Terrible mixture of the cunning and awful. Moses learned in all the lore of the Egyptians. The idea of Jehovah born here.—(When I was at top, thought it not so high—sat down on edge. Looked below—gradual nervousness & final giddiness & terror. (Entrance of pyramids like shoot for coal or timber. Horrible place for assassination. As long as earth endures some vestige will remain of the pyramids. Nought but earthquake or geological evolution can obliterate them. Only people who made their mark, both in their masonry & their religion (through Moses). (These the steps that Jacob lay at.) (*Color of pyramids same as desert.*) Some of the stone (but few) friable; most of them hard as ever. The climate favors them. Pyramids not in line. Between, like Notch of White Mountains. *No vestige of moss upon them. Not the least. Other ruins ivied . . . No speck of green.* Arabs climb them like goats, or any other animal. Down one & up the other. Pyramids still loom before me—something vast, indefinite, incomprehensible, and awful. Line of desert & verdure, plain as line between good & evil. An instant collision of alien elements. A long billow of desert forever hovers as in act of breaking, upon the verdure of Egypt. Grass near the pyramids, but will not touch them,—as if in fear or awe of them. Desert more fearful to look at than ocean. Theory of design of pyramids. Defense against desert. A line of them. Absurd. Might have been created with the creation."

There is another entry equally long and on similar lines in the *Journal up the Straits*, pp. 63-64.

259-293. Weeds and Wildings, with A Rose or Two

Late in life Herman Melville wrote this group of poems recalling life at Arrowhead, his old home near Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The poems were obviously intended for private publication but were not printed until the Constable edition in 1924. I have arranged the poems in the order indicated by what seems to me to be Melville's last draft of the table of contents for the projected book.

The freshness and vigor of the poetry, the "spontaneous after-growth", do much to refute the notion that the aged Melville was a tired, defeated man. The poems should also help to change the idea prevalent in some circles that Melville was not happily married. No one has ever questioned Lizzie's profound love for Herman, a love which deepened through stress and poverty; it is gratifying to have this unambiguous statement of his affection for her. The dedication "To Winnefred" carries in another hand

in the upper right hand corner of the first page of the manuscript the name "Lizzie", so that even the imperceptive may not question the identity of the "Madonna of the Trefoil".

The prefatory dedication reads:
To Winnefred

With you and me, Winnie, Red Clover has always been one of the dearest of the flowers of the field: an arrival—by the way—as you well ween, which implies no undelight to this ruddy young brother's demure little half-sister, White Clover. Our feeling for both sorts originates in no fanciful associations egotistic in kind. It is not, for example, because in any exceptional way we have verified in experience the aptness of that pleasant figure of speech, *Living-in-clover*—not in this do we so take to the Ruddy One, for all that we once dwelt annually surrounded by flushed acres of it. Neither have we, jointly or severally, so frequently lighted upon that rare four-leaved variety accounted of happy augury to the finder; though, to be sure, on my part, I yearly remind you of the coincidence in my chancing on such a specimen by the wayside on the early forenoon of the fourth day of a certain bridal month, now four years more than four times ten years ago.

But tell, do we not take to this flower—for flower it is, tho' with the florist hardly ranking with the florist clans—not alone that in itself it is a thing of freshness and beauty, but also that being no delicate foster-child of the nurseryman, but a hardy little creature of out-of-doors accessable [sic] and familiar to every one, no one can monopolise its charm Yes, we are communists here.

Sweet in the mouth of that brindled heifer whose breath you so loved to inhale, and doubtless pleasant to her nostril and eye; sweet as well to the like senses in ourselves; prized by that most practical of men, the farmer, to whom wild amaranths in a pasture, though emblems of immortality, are but weeds and anathema; finding favor even with so peevish a busybody as the bee; is it not the felicitous fortune of our favorite, to incur no creature's displeasure, but to enjoy, and without striving for it, the spontaneous good-will of all? Why is it that this little peasant of the flowers revels in so enviable an immunity and privilege, not in equal degree shared by any of us mortals however gifted and good; that indeed is something the reason whereof may not slumber very deep. But—*In pace:* always leave a sleeper to his repose.

How often at our adopted homestead or on the hill-side—now ours no more—the farm-house, long ago shorn by the urbane barbarian succeeding us in the proprietorishp—shorn of its gambrel roof and dormer windows, and when I last saw it indolently settling in serene contentment of natural

decay; how often, Winnie, did I come in from my ramble, early in the bright summer mornings of old, with a handful of these cheap little cheery roses of the meek, newly purloined from the fields to consecrate them on that bit of a maple-wood mantel—your altar, somebody called it—in the familiar room facing your beloved South! And in October most did I please myself in gathering them from the moist matted aftermath in an enriched little hollow near by, soon to be snowed upon and for consecutive months sheeted from view.

And once—you remember it—having culled them in a sunny little flurry of snow, winter's frolic skirmisher in advance, the genial warmth of your chamber melted the fleecy flakes into dew-drops rolling off from the ruddiness, "Tears of the happy," you said.

Well, and to whom but to thee, Madonna of the Trefoil, should I now dedicate these "Weeds and Wildings," thriftless children of quite another and yet later spontaneous after-growth, and bearing indications too apparent it may be, of that terminating season on which the offerer verges. But take them. And for aught suggestion of the "melting mood" that any may possibly betray, call to mind the dissolved snow flakes on the ruddy oblation of old, and remember your "tears of the happy".

Melville's pleasure in the amaranth and catnip is conveyed in two passages in *Pierre* (1851), from the famous "Enceladus" episode:

"Those hillside pastures be it said, were thickly sown with a small white amaranthine flower, which, being irreconcilably distasteful to the cattle, and wholly rejected by them, and yet, continually multiplying on every hand, did by no means contribute to the agricultural value of those elevated lands. Insomuch, that for this cause, the disheartened dairy tenants of that part of the manor, had petitioned their lady-landlord for some abatement in their annual tribute of upland grasses, in the Junyload; rolls of butter in the October crock; and steers and heifers on the October hoof; with turkeys in the Christmas sleigh.

'The small white flower, it is our bane!' the imploring tenants cried. 'The aspiring amaranth, every year it climbs and adds new terraces to its sway! The immortal amaranth, it will not die, but last year's flowers survive to this! The terraced pastures grow glittering white, and in warm June still show like banks of snow:—fit token of the sterileness the amaranth begets! Then free us from the amaranth, good lady, or be pleased to abate our rent!' " . . .

"the sweet aromaticness of clumps of catnip, that dear farm-house herb. Soon you would see the modest verdure of the plant itself; and wheresoever you say that sight, old foundation stones and rotting timbers of log-houses long extinct would also meet your eye; their desolation illy hid by

the green solicitudes of the unemigrating herb. Most fitly named the catnip; since, like the unrunagate cat, though all that's human forsake the place, that plant will long abide, long bask and bloom on the abandoned hearth. Illy hid; for every spring the amaranthine and celestial flower gained on the mortal household herb; for every autumn the catnip died, but never an autumn made the amaranth to wane. The catnip and the amaranth!—man's earthly household peace, and the ever-encroaching appetite for God."

It is interesting in the light of Melville's spiritual alienation from Thoreau and Emerson to read that Thoreau's attitude towards these charming weeds was not dissimilar to Melville's:

"He was the attorney of the indigenous plants, and owned to a preference of the weeds to the imported plants, as of the Indian to the civilized man, and noticed, with pleasure, that the willow bean-poles of his neighbor had grown more than his beans. "See these weeds," he said, "which have been hoed at by a million farmers all spring and summer, and yet have prevailed, and just now come out triumphant over all lanes, pastures, fields, and gardens, such is their vigor. We have insulted them with low names, too—as Pigweed, Wormwood, Chickweed, Shad-blossom." He says, "They have brave names, too—Ambrosia, Stellaria, Amelanchier, Amaranth, etc." (Emerson, "Thoreau").

259-260. The Loiterer

This poem has previously been published under the title "The Late-Comer", but since that was the title in the cancelled version, I have used the uncancelled title.

313-368. The Marquis de Grandvin

"At the Hostelry" and "An Afternoon in Naples" are two verse narratives which Melville undoubtedly planned for a larger volume of verse and prose, maybe the one which failed to find a publisher in 1860. Also among the Melville manuscripts were found prose sketches written in a playful style somewhat reminiscent of Steele, Addison, and Irving, describing a Club of Burgundians under the patronage of the Marquis de Grandvin (a personification of wine) and headed by their Dean, Major John Gentian, Esquire. The sketches were published in 1924 in the Constable edition of Melville's works.

The Melville manuscripts include sketches of title-pages for this volume, one of which was cancelled but reads: "Parthenope/An Afternoon in Old Naples:/In the Time of Bomba/with/A Salutatory/Touching/New Italy and Old Romance/&c/Painters and the Picturesque/and so forth/More or less versified by Herman Melville from the/original suggestions of the

noble/The Marquis de Grandvin." From one of the prose chapters I extract Melville's statement as to design and purpose:

"The prior Piece being an attempt to give suitable literary method and form to the erratic wit, intelligence, invention, and other gifts of the Marquis de Grandvin, a cosmopolitan and man of society no stranger to some fortunate Americans[.]

The latter Piece literally rendered from the desultory social narrative and song of Jack Gentian a cherished lover and disciple of the aforesaid genial Marquis. The whole being divided into parts and expository readings applied thereto.

A Genius of this sort in some instances dissipates his fine fancy and others not equally gifted catch upon & condense the light vapor into a tangible book; of all this the present volume is an illustration. Never could it have been, but for the noble De Grandvin who tho wittless of the fact, nevertheless inspired it. By him too was the Afternoon in Naples inspired tho at second hand, namely, thro one Jack Gentian a sort of disciple of De Grandvin. As to the "author"—but no, I have just named the true "author". As to myself then, the present writer, I shall in the pages to follow keep where I belong that is to say in the background, and I have sought so to contrive it that De Grandvin and Jack Gentian talk, sing, and speak exact as in his own proper person. But this shall not if I can help it prove a shield to the shortcomings of me the intermediator. Be it understood then that whatever is faulty in these Pieces I claim for mine own; but in whatever prove otherwise I have no proprietorship.

As the Caption to the first section of "At Delmonico," will be found to be instructive, one styled the Marquis is the teller of the story, if story it may be styled. Moreover, toward the close of the concluding section of the same Piece, the aforesaid Marquis introduces one Jack Gentian his friend as the narrator in the Piece following, *An Afternoon in Naples.*

Now it naturally belonged to the original design of this volume that some account of each of these Gentlemen should precede the Pieces respectively ascribed to them. That design, however, if carried out would overmuch enlarge the volume. And I relinquished [it]; And it is as well to bear in mind that tho good measure is not without praise in a huckster, not always is it commendable in an author.

And yet in the truest sense author am I none. For is he who is at the pains of working into literary form the sallies of an improvisator, suppressing his more flighty [—?—] and endeavoring to methodize into unity his detached inspirations declaimed at various times; can such a mere craftsman lay claim to authorship? Hardly, since that implies origination."

339-368. Naples in the Time of Bomba

The story of this poem is an enlargement and dramatization of Mel ville's memory of his visit to Naples in February 1857. The first part grew out of a jotting in the *Journal up the Straits* (p. 122), entry for Saturday, February 21:

"Went in voiture to Cathedral of St. Januarius. Very fine. Thence a promiscuous drive through the older & less elegant part of town. Long narrow lanes. Arches, crowds.—*Tumblers in narrow street.* Blocked way. Balconies with women. Cloth on ground. They gave way, after natural reluctance. Merriment. Turned round & gave the most . . . graceful bow I could. Handkerchiefs waved from balconies, good humored cries &c—Felt prouder than an Emperor. Shabby old hack, but good fellow, driver.— . . . Military continually about the streets." The entry in the journal (p. 118) responsible for the second half of the poem was for Thursday, February 19, 1857:

"Sallied out for walk by myself. Strada de Toledo. Noble street. Broadway. Vast crowds. Splendor of city. Palace—soldiers—music—clang of arms all over city. Burst of troops from archway. Cannon posted inwards." "Bomba" was King Ferdinand of Naples who ruled from the death of his father in 1830 until his overthrow through the sensational sweep of Garibaldi to power in 1860. Immediately on his accession to the throne on November 8, 1830, he had said: "We do not deny the existence of pro found evils which merit redress, and that our people look to us for the alleviation of the burdens which a troublous past has placed upon them." These encouraging remarks and a few half-hearted reforms were insufficient for the ardent and hungry liberals like Mazzini, Cavour, and Garibaldi. And besides, Ferdinand soon betrayed his own promise of granting constitutional government; his characteristic Bourbon absolutism created an intolerable political situation (*e.g.* the guns pointed in at the people) which interested the democratic Melville during his visit to Naples.

380-381. Camoens (Before) *and* Camoens (After)

Early in his literary life Melville had read, apparently, Mickle's trans lation of the great Portuguese epic by Camoens, *The Lusiad.* At least in *White-Jacket* (Chapters 4 and 93) Melville made the heroic and glorious Jack Chase refer with highest praise to Camoens. There is also a reference to Camoen's "Spirit of the Cape" in the sixth chapter of *Billy Budd,* written late in Melville's life.

381-382. Montaigne to his Kitten

That Melville wisely elected Montaigne for one of the authors of his old age is indicated by this poem and by his reference in *Billy Budd*

(Chapter VI) to "unconventional writers, who, free from cant and convention, like Montaigne, honestly, and in the spirit of common sense, philosophize upon realities."

382-383. Falstaff's Lament over Prince Hal become Henry V

Melville's fondness for the Henry IV plays was shown as early as 1849 in the rather clear borrowings from them in *White-Jacket*.

394-398. Pontoosuce

This, one of the most beautiful of Melville's poems, was named from a lake in western Massachusetts a few miles north of Pittsfield and Melville's home at Arrowhead. Sarah Morewood wrote from Pittsfield to Evert Duyckinck, October 8, 1851: "Mr. Herman Melville said that each time he came there [Pontoosuce] he found the place possessing more charm for him." J. E. A. Smith, Melville's friend, wrote that "the true Indian name was Schoon-keek-mon-keek." Mistakenly, all other editors give the poem the title which Melville rejected in his manuscript. See p. 534.

401-403. Epistle to Daniel Shepherd

The ms. of this poem, now owned by Mrs. Eleanor Melville Metcalf, is dated from Pittsfield, July 6, 1859. It was first printed by Thorp (pp. 346-348), with notes (pp. 424-425) to which I am indebted. Daniel Shepherd, also a friend of Allan Melville and Evert Duyckinck, was a New York lawyer who dabbled in literature, writing two novels: *The Bride of the Frontier* (1859) and *A Crusade of the Forest* (1860). He died in 1870.

401. 12-24 Thorp (p. 425) suggests that Melville is humorously referring to the Italian situation and that the bird of love signifies the Austrians, defeated by the French (the chanticleers) at Magenta June 4, 1859 and Malegnano June 8. I see no reason to reject this interpretation. The poem was obviously not intended for publication anywhere, much less in the 1860 volume which Melville planned, but like all the poems written for that projected book, this one reflects Melville's keen interest in countries and sights related to his trip to the Near East, 1856-1857.

404-406. The Admiral of the White

At the top of the ms. of this poem is the pencilled note: "Herman gave this to Tom—" (*i.e.* Thomas Melville, brother to Herman). See the note for "The Haglets", p. 498.

404. Inscription for the Slain at Fredericksburgh

This poem was first printed in *Autograph Leaves of our Country's Authors,* edited by Alexander Bliss and John P. Kennedy (New York,

1864), p. 189. Professor Thomas Ollive Mabbott was the first student to point out this publication, in *Notes and Queries* 149 (July 18, 1925), 42-43.

407. Suggested by the Ruins of a Mountain-Temple in Arcadia

This poem, "Puzzlement," "The Continents," "The Dust-Layers," and "A Rail Road Cutting near Alexandria in 1855" are among the Melville MSS. in a folder entitled "Travel Pieces/Egypt & Greek Pieces" with "Rejected" written below. In the upper right hand corner is written: "Looked over March 23 '90."

409. The Continents

Melville was rhapsodic in his enthusiasm over the beauty of the Straits on his arrival in and departure from Constantinople. During his stay in the city, December 16, he made an excursion which he recorded in his *Journal up the Straits* (p. 33-34): "At 8½ A. M. took steamer up the Bosphorus to Buyukdereh.—Magnificent! The whole scene one pomp of art & nature. Europe & Asia here show their best. A challenge of continents, whereby the successively alternate sweeps of the shores both sides seem to retire from every new proffer of beauty, again in some grand prudery to advance with a bolder bid, and thereupon again & again retiring, neither willing to retreat from the contest of beauty." And so he continued in this vein.

411. A Reasonable Constitution

The ms. of this hitherto unpublished quatrain carries a note in Melville's hand: "Observable in Sir Thomas More's 'Utopia' are First Its almost entire reasonableness. Second Its almost entire impracticability The remark applies to the Utopia's prototype 'Plato's Republic'."

411-416. Rammon

This unpublished sketch left in an unfinished state (the closing pages of the manuscript being almost unreadable), may have been the beginning of a special book of verse which Melville soon abandoned. He printed one of the poems in *John Marr* (see p. 204). Rammon is an important statement, coming late in his life, of Melville's philosphy, especially on the problem of Evil which so concerned him. I am indebted to Dr. F. Barron Freeman for his kindness in supplying several readings in the text.

417. Ditty of Aristippus

The manuscript of this poem, pointed out to me by Dr. John Birss, is owned by the Worcester Athenaeum. Aristippus was the founder of the Cyrenaic School of Philosophy (Hedonism).

418. In a Nutshell

Just as the *Poems* were ready to be printed, these verses were discovered in the New York Public Library on a page torn from a Thomas Madigan Autograph Catalogue, possibly for 1939. The ms. of the poem has not yet been located, so that the present text follows the catalogue copy. The poem is in the same spirit, and was possibly written at the same time, as those gathered under the general title of "Weeds and Wildings."

Poems from the Novels

Most of the poems which follow are from Melville's third novel, *Mardi,* and are taken from the two volumes of the first American edition. No manuscripts of any of the novels printed during Melville's life are known to have survived.

All of the titles except for "The Song" have been supplied by the editor.

From *Mardi*

We Fish (I, 179); Song of the Paddlers (I, [250]-251); Drinking Song (I, 299-300); Like the Fish (I, [309]); Royal is the Rose (I, 310); Be Merry (I, [345]); Sea Burial (1, 349); The Song (I, 359); Invocation (II, 34); Smoking Song (11, 72); Full Round, Full Soft, Her Dewy Arms (II, [90]-91); a Ray of the Moon (II, [112]); Song of Arms (II, 137-138); Quack! Quack! Quack! (II, 149); Departed the Pride and Glory of Mardi (II, 153); Her Bower is not of the Vine (II, [208]-209); Her Sweet, Sweet Mouth! (II, [218]-219); Gold-Hunters (II, [259]-260); Half-veiled above the Hills, Yet Rosy Bright (II, 275-276); Mad Song (II, 310); The Isles Hold Thee not, Thou Departed (II, [345]); Paddler's Song (II, 346); Hail! Voyagers, Hail! (II, 351-352);

440-441. From *Moby-Dick*

"Jonah's Song" (Chapter 9); "We'll drink To-night" (Chapter 39).

441. From "Under the Rose"

"Specks, tiny specks" is a song included in a prose sketch (Melville MSS.) by Melville, unpublished during his lifetime.

442. From *Piazza Tales,* "The Encantadas" (last page)

One might question the inclusion of this song since it is a reworking of an epitaph found on the Galapagos Islands by Captain David Porter. Melville has altered the original so considerably that he has made a new poem. Porter's version is:

Gentle reader, as you pass by,
As you are now, so once was I;
As now my body is in the dust,
I hope in heaven my soul to rest.

442-443. From *Billy Budd*

This poem appears at the end of the *Billy Budd* manuscript (completed April 19, 1891; printed 1924). In the story, Billy Budd has just been hanged at the main-yard of the *Indomitable* for the unintended murder of Claggart. The verses are introduced in the novel by the following words: "On the gun-decks of the *Indomitable* the general estimate of his nature and its unconscious simplicity eventually found rude utterance from another foretopman, one of his own watch, gifted as some sailors are with an artless poetic temperament. Those tarry hands made some lines which, after circulating among the shipboard crew for a while, finally were rudely printed at Portsmouth as a ballad. The title given to it was the sailor's own".

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INDEX OF TITLES AND FIRST LINES

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