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AMERICA



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NEVER ENOUGH OF LIVING

LÉONIE ADAMS

Never, my heart, is there enough of living,
Since only in thee is loveliness so sweet pain;
Only for thee the willows will be giving
Their quiet fringes to the dreaming river;
Only for thee so the light grasses ever
Are hollowed by the print of windy feet,
And breathe hill weather on the misty plain;
And were no rapture of them in thy beat,
For every hour of sky
Stillborn in gladness would the waters wear
Colors of air translucently,
And the stars sleep there.

Gently, my heart, nor let one moment ever
Be spilled from the brief fullness of thine urn.
Plunge in its exultation star and star,
Sea and plumed sea in turn.
O still, my heart, nor spill this moment ever.

THE DAYS TO COME

MEDORA C. ADDISON

Now shall I store my soul with silent beauty,
 Beauty of drifting clouds and mountain heights,
Beauty of sun-splashed hills and shadowed forests,
 Beauty of dawn and dusk and star-swept nights.

Now shall I fill my heart with quiet music,
 Song of the wind across the pine-clad hill,
Song of the rain and, fairer than all music,
 Call of the thrush when twilight woods are still.

So shall the days to come be filled with beauty,
 Bright with the promise caught from eastern skies;
So shall I see the stars when night is darkest,
 Still hear the thrush's song when music dies.

AFRICA

LEWIS GRANDISON ALEXANDER

Thou art not dead, although the spoiler's hand
Lies heavy as death upon thee; though the wrath
Of its accursed might is in thy path
And has usurped thy children of their land;
Though yet the scourges of a monstrous band
Roam on thy ruined fields, thy trampled lanes,
Thy ravaged homes and desolated fanes;
Thou art not dead, but sleeping,—Motherland.

A mighty country, valorous and free,
Thou shalt outlive this terror and this pain;
Shall call thy scattered children back to thee,
Strong with the memory of their brothers slain;
And rise from out thy charnel house to be
Thine own immortal, brilliant self again!

TO MELODY

GEORGE LEONARD ALLEN

I think that man hath made no beauteous thing
More lovely than a glorious melody
That soars aloft in splendor, full and free,
And graceful as a swallow on the wing!
A melody that seems to move, and sing,
And quiver, in its radiant ecstasy,
That bends and rises like a slender tree
Which sways before the gentle winds of Spring!

Ah, men will ever love thee, holy art!
For thou, of all the blessings God hath given,
Canst best revive and cheer the wounded heart
And nearest bring the weary soul to Heaven!
Of all God's precious gifts, it seems to me,
The choicest is the gift of melody.

CALL OF THE NIGHT

DJUNA BARNES

Dark, and the wind-blurred pines,
 With a glimmer of light between.
Then I, entombed for an hourless night
 With the world of things unseen.

Mist, the dust of flowers,
 Leagues, heavy with promise of snow,
And a beckoning road 'twixt vale and hill,
 With the lure that all must know.

A light, my window's gleam,
 Soft, flaring its squares of red—
I loose the ache of the wilderness
 And long for the fire instead.

You too know, old fellow?
 Then, lift your head and bark.
It's just the call of the lonesome place,
 The winds and the housing dark.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

KATHERINE LEE BATES

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America!

May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

IF I HAD A MILLION

SAMUEL ALFRED BEADLE

If I had a million dollars I don't know what I'd do,
But I sometimes think I'd stroll around and squander a few;
Or, maybe I'd steel away to the country's quietude
And spend the rest of life among the simple and the rude.

I hardly think with the fashionable I'd be imbued,
And the society woman I swear I would elude;
Nor should the bosoms of my Sunday shirts be immaculate--
Even a million, I don't think, my cranium would inflate.

Because I'd like to slip a cog and go it with a bit,
With my soul aglow of passion for my brother in the pit;
Proud to be with the commoners, I'd rusticate awhile,
Nor would I care a cursed thing about the latest style.

"Brogan shoes and homespun socks?" The very things I need,
For too much dress and fashion would my lithe step impede;
A single gallus, friend, would hold my breeches on to me,
And I'd not care a snap about their bagging at the knee.

The doctrine of the broad-brimmed hat I'm sure I would not heed.
I believe in reducing things to what we really need;
Besides I've always been content under a brimless cap,

To go it with the urchins a-frolicking, jolly chap.

With them I'd like to take just now a little bit of ease,
A lounging where I used to, out under the apple trees,
A whittling and swapping jokes with Bill and Tom and Ned.
And let our mem'ries flit around the lore of the trundle-bed.

Aye, over and above it all, this is the simple truth:
If I'd it, and could, I would spend a million for my youth!
Then with my true love I would go a sparking it again,
And look the love upon her my tongue could never explain.

To lead her once again, my friend, through the old Virginia reel:
To salute her, to balance all; again, to fondly feel
The same old bliss I used to while swinging corners all
And stepping to the. Music of the jocund country ball.

Were worth millions of yellow pelf to a maimed old chap like me,
And I'd give it, if I could, with a zest of childish glee.
Oh! If I could but put away my gout and rhumatis',
And take an old-time outing from the pressure of my "biz,"

With a bonny girl and youth I'd go to the fair old sunny clime,
Down the sylvan haunts of Dixie, where the jessamines ever twine;
Where the lilies faint of sweetness, and ever blows the thyme;
Where the seasons all are summer and the climate is sublime!

Where the rose aflame of beauty, drops its petals on the sward,
Geraniums blush to scarlet; the passion flowers nod
And the breezy sweep of zephyrs brings on the metric chime
Of the winged minstrelsy in in the glory of their prime...

If you could take the silver from this old pate of mine,
Call back my youth a-gambling down yon vista way sublime,
And bring me back my true love, my long-lost love again,
Up from among the daisies where she so long hath lain,
The million dollars you might have and millions o'er and o'er
Again I'd take my love and youth and ask for nothing more.

THE CITY

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

To Robert H. Davis

I went forth to sing the city, today's city—

 The blank stone sphinx, the monster search-light-eyed,
The roaring mill where gods grind without pity,
 The falling torrent, the many-colored tide.

Granite and steel upflung became my fountains,
 Cunningly reared and held as by a spell.
Lost in colossal stone, my newer mountains,
 I wandered witlessly through miracle.

And snared in tiny toils both frail and idle
 I lost my wonder as I had lost my stars,
Though here a mammoth heaved no man might bridle,
 A terrible symphony rolled through crashing bars.

But small and obvious life fogged every wonder
 And itching needs and each small thirst and lust.
Over me and about me roared the thunder
 Of the city's heart; I trafficked with its dust.

Yet beyond Babylon its ways were regal;

Even Jerusalem its dreams outsoared.
Loins of the lion and splendor of the eagle,
Where swarming vermin hailed it god and lord;

Where hardly one could touch, save to defile it,
The dream phantasm it spread aloft at night;
Where men snared men, and made all men revile it,
Save in its moments of bewildering light.

Yet men had thought and raised and poised its splendor,
And fed the torrents of its living veins,
And had fallen prone before it in surrender,
Seeing its awful being repay their pains.

A living being, but blind, where all misprision
Flourished and fattened, and, lashed as by a scourge,
Flowed fear-struck crowds—yet dupes of some strange vision
As on the instant ready to emerge,

But ever foiled—and still forever trembling
Just past the reach of mind, the urge of will;
Sum of all jaded aims and drab dissembling,
Something unbuilt, to be builded still!

So once again, almost desire,
The appalling city unsealed the eyes she sealed,

Until her darkest streets ran weltering fire
For thought of love at point to be revealed.

So all their eyes are fixed on mine forever,
Eyes of dark pain, unfathomable will:
Something unbuilted, to be builded—never?
Something unbuilted, to be builded still!

THE NEW DECALOGUE

AMBROSE BIERCE

Have but one God: thy knees were sore
If bent in prayer to three or four.

Adore no images save those
The coinage of thy country shows.

Take not the Name in vain. Direct
Thy swearing unto some effect.

Thy hand from Sunday work be held—
Work not at all unless compelled.

Honor thy parents, and perchance
Their wills thy fortunes may advance.

Kill not—death liberates thy foe
From persecution's constant woe.

Kiss not thy neighbor's wife. Of course
There's no objection to divorce.

To steal were folly, for 'tis plain
In cheating there is greater gain.

Bear not false witness. Shake your head
And say that you have "heard it said."

Who stays to covet ne'er will catch
An opportunity to snatch.

THE STATESMEN

AMBROSE BIERCE

How blest the land that counts among
Her sons so many good and wise,
To execute great feats of tongue
When troubles rise.

Behold them mounting every stump,
By speech our liberty to guard.
Observe their courage—see them jump,
And come down hard!

“Walk up, walk up!” each cries aloud,
“And learn from me what you must do
To turn aside the thunder cloud,
The earthquake too.

“Beware the wiles of yonder quack
Who stuffs the ears of all that pass.
I—I alone can show that black
Is white as grass.”

They shout through all the day and break
The silence of the night as well.
They’d make—I wish they’d go and make—

Of Heaven a Hell.

A advocates free silver, B
Free trade and C free banking laws.
Free board, clothes, lodging would from me
Win warm applause.

Lo, D lifts up his voice: "You see
The single tax on land would fall
On all alike." More evenly
No tax at all.

"With paper money," bellows E,
"We'll all be rich as lords." No doubt—
And richest of the lot will be
The chap without.

As many "cures" as addle-wits
Who know not what the ailment is!
Meanwhile the patient foams and spits
Like a gin fizz.

Alas, poor Body Politic,
Your fate is all too clearly read:
To be not altogether quick,
Nor very dead.

You take your exercise in squirms,
Your rest in fainting fits between.
'Tis plain that your disorder's worms—
Worms fat and lean.

Worm Capital, Worm Labor dwell
Within your maw and muscle's scope.
Their quarrels make your life a Hell,
Your death a hope.

God send you find not such an end
To ills however sharp and huge!
God send you convalesce! God send
You vermifuge.

BEHIND STOWE

ELIZABETH BISHOP

I heard an elf go whistling by,
A whistle sleek as moonlit grass,
That drew me like a silver string
To where the dusty, pale moths fly,
And make a magic as they pass;
And there I heard a cricket sing.

His singing echoed through and through
The dark under a windy tree
Where glinted little insects' wings.
His singing split the sky in two.
The halves fell either side of me,
And I stood straight, bright with moon-rings.

AMERICA, A PROPHECY, PLATES 3 AND 4

WILLIAM BLAKE

[PLATE 3]

The Guardian Prince of Albion burns in his nightly tent,
Sullen fires across the Atlantic glow to America's shore:
Piercing the souls of warlike men, who rise in silent night,
Washington, Franklin, Paine & Warren, Gates, Hancock & Green;
Meet on the coast glowing with blood from Albion's fiery Prince.

Washington spoke; Friends of America look over the Atlantic sea;
A bended bow is lifted in heaven, & a heavy iron chain
Descends link by link from Albion's cliffs across the sea to bind
Brothers & sons of America, till our faces pale and yellow;
Heads deprest, voices weak, eyes downcast, hands work-bruis'd,
Feet bleeding on the sultry sands, and the furrows of the whip
Descend to generations that in future times forget.—

The strong voice ceas'd; for a terrible blast swept over the heaving sea;
The eastern cloud rent; on his cliffs stood Albion's wrathful Prince
A dragon form clashing his scales at midnight he arose,
And flam'd red meteors round the land of Albion beneath.
His voice, his locks, his awful shoulders, and his glowing eyes,

[PLATE 4]

Appear to the Americans upon the cloudy night.

Solemn heave the Atlantic waves between the gloomy nations,
Swelling, belching from its deeps red clouds & raging Fires!
Albion is sick. America faints! enrag'd the Zenith grew.
As human blood shooting its veins all round the orb'd heaven
Red rose the clouds from the Atlantic in vast wheels of blood
And in the red clouds rose a Wonder o'er the Atlantic sea;
Intense! naked! a Human fire fierce glowing, as the wedge
Of iron heated in the furnace; his terrible limbs were fire
With myriads of cloudy terrors banners dark & towers
Surrounded; heat but not light went thro' the murky atmosphere

The king of England looking westward trembles at the vision

A TALE

LOUISE BOGAN

This youth too long has heard the break
Of waters in a land of change.
He goes to see what suns can make
From soil more indurate and strange.

He cuts what holds his days together
And shuts him in, as lock on lock:
The arrowed vane announcing weather,
The tripping racket of a clock;

Seeking, I think, a light that waits
Still as a lamp upon a shelf,—
A land with hills like rocky gates
Where no sea leaps upon itself.

But he will find that nothing dares
To be enduring, save where, south
Of hidden deserts, torn fire glares
On beauty with a rusted mouth,—

Where something dreadful and another
Look quietly upon each other.

MEDUSA

LOUISE BOGAN

I had come to the house, in a cave of trees,
Facing a sheer sky.
Everything moved,—a bell hung ready to strike,
Sun and reflection wheeled by.

When the bare eyes were before me
And the hissing hair,
Held up at a window, seen through a door.
The stiff bald eyes, the serpents on the forehead
Formed in the air.

This is a dead scene forever now.
Nothing will ever stir.
The end will never brighten it more than this,
Nor the rain blur.

The water will always fall, and will not fall,
And the tipped bell make no sound.
The grass will always be growing for hay
Deep on the ground.

And I shall stand here like a shadow
Under the great balanced day,

My eyes on the yellow dust, that was lifting in the wind,
And does not drift away.

THE ALCHEMIST

LOUISE BOGAN

I burned my life, that I might find
A passion wholly of the mind,
Thought divorced from eye and bone,
Ecstasy come to breath alone.
I broke my life, to seek relief
From the flawed light of love and grief.

With mounting beat the utter fire
Charred existence and desire.
It died low, ceased its sudden thresh.
I found unmysterious flesh—
Not the mind's avid substance—still
Passionate beyond the will.

A LETTER TO HER HUSBAND, ABSENT UPON PUBLICK EMPLOYMENT

ANNE BRADSTREET

My head, my heart, mine Eyes, my life, nay more,
My joy, my Magazine of earthly store,
If two be one, as surely thou and I,
How stayest thou there, whilst I at Ipswich lye?
So many steps, head from the heart to sever
If but a neck, soon should we be together:
I like the earth this season, mourn in black,
My Sun is gone so far in's Zodiack,
Whom whilst I 'joy'd, nor storms, nor frosts I felt,
His warmth such frigid colds did cause to melt.
My chilled limbs now nummed lye forlorn;
Return, return sweet Sol from Capricorn;
In this dead time, alas, what can I more
Then view those fruits which through thy heat I bore?
Which sweet contentment yield me for a space,
True living Pictures of their Fathers face.
O strange effect! now thou art Southward gone,
I weary grow, the tedious day so long;
But when thou Northward to me shalt return,
I wish my Sun may never set, but burn
Within the Cancer of my glowing breast,
The welcome house of him my dearest guest.
Where ever, ever stay, and go not thence,

Till natures sad decree shall call thee hence;
Flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone,
I here, thou there, yet both but one.

BEFORE THE BIRTH OF ONE OF HER CHILDREN

ANNE BRADSTREET

All things within this fading world hath end,
Adversity doth still our joyes attend;
No ties so strong, no friends so dear and sweet,
But with death's parting blow is sure to meet.
The sentence past is most irrevocable,
A common thing, yet oh inevitable.
How soon, my Dear, death may my steps attend,
How soon't may be thy Lot to lose thy friend,
We are both ignorant, yet love bids me
These farewell lines to recommend to thee,
That when that knot's untied that made us one,
I may seem thine, who in effect am none.
And if I see not half my dayes that's due,
What nature would, God grant to yours and you;
The many faults that well you know I have
Let be interr'd in my oblivious grave;
If any worth or virtue were in me,
Let that live freshly in thy memory
And when thou feel'st no grief, as I no harms,
Yet love thy dead, who long lay in thine arms.
And when thy loss shall be repaid with gains
Look to my little babes, my dear remains.
And if thou love thyself, or loved'st me,

These o protect from step Dames injury.
And if chance to thine eyes shall bring this verse,
With some sad sighs honour my absent Herse;
And kiss this paper for thy loves dear sake,
Who with salt tears this last Farewel did take.

THE AUTHOR TO HER BOOK

ANNE BRADSTREET

Thou ill-form'd offspring of my feeble brain,
Who after birth didst by my side remain,
Till snatched from thence by friends, less wise than true,
Who thee abroad, expos'd to publick view,
Made thee in raggs, halting to th' press to trudge,
Where errors were not lessened (all may judg).
At thy return my blushing was not small,
My rambling brat (in print) should mother call,
I cast thee by as one unfit for light,
Thy Visage was so irksome in my sight;
Yet being mine own, at length affection would
Thy blemishes amend, if so I could:
I wash'd thy face, but more defects I saw,
And rubbing off a spot, still made a flaw.
I stretched thy joynts to make thee even feet,
Yet still thou run'st more hobling then is meet;
In better dress to trim thee was my mind,
But nought save home-spun Cloth, i' th' house I find.
In this array 'mongst Vulgars mayst thou roam.
In Criticks hands, beware thou dost not come;
And take thy way where yet thou art not known,
If for thy Father askt, say, thou hadst none:
And for thy Mother, she alas is poor,

Which caus'd her thus to send thee out of door.

TO HER FATHER WITH SOME VERSES

ANNE BRADSTREET

Most truly honoured, and as truly dear,
If worth in me or ought I do appear,
Who can of right better demand the same
Than may your worthy self from whom it came?
The principal might yield a greater sum,
Yet handled ill, amounts but to this crumb;
My stock's so small I know not how to pay,
My bond remains in force unto this day;
Yet for part payment take this simple mite,
Where nothing's to be had, kings loose their right.
Such is my debt I may not say forgive,
But as I can, I'll pay it while I live;
Such is my bond, none can discharge but I,
Yet paying is not paid until I die.

TO MY DEAR AND LOVING HUSBAND

ANNE BRADSTREET

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold,
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee give recompense.
Thy love is such I can no way repay;
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.
Then while we live, in love let's so persevere,
That when we live no more we may live ever.

LONGINGS

NELLIE RATHBONE BRIGHT

I want to slay all the things just things
That they tell me I must do.
I would drown them all in the tears I weep
When each breathless day is through.
I want to flee to a cool sand dune
On a wind-swept beach where the humming tune
Of the wind, and the waves, and the heart of me
Drams in my ears, and my lips are wet with the tang of the sea.
I want to feel the rain on my cheek,
The thrill that comes from a lark's long note,
I want to see the sky at dawn thru the lacy green of a willow tree.
I want to look deep in a pool at night, and see the stars
Flash flame like the fire in black opals.

QUERY

NELLIE RATHBONE BRIGHT

Great wonder that my blood spurts ruby red
And not a green and slimy stream instead—
That all my tears are salt, not bitter gall,
That I still live, and love and laugh at all!
And that my teeth are lustrous, pearly white,
Instead of blue cold blades that clash at night.
Why do you stand aloof and bid me pray,
You who sow strife and pain upon my way?
How does my soul live on mauled by hate's rod?
You cannot know 'twas made by One called God.

THE HUNTER'S WOOING

RUTH MUSKRAT BRONSON

Come roam the wild hills, my Cherokee Rose,
Come roam the wild hills with me.
We'll follow the path where the Spavinaw flows,
Dashing wild on its way to the sea,
On its wearisome way to the sea.
We'll chase the fleet deer from its lair in the woods;
We'll follow the wolf to his den.
When the sun hides his face, we'll rest in the woods;
Hid away from the worry of men.
Hid away from the bother of men.
And then we'll go home, my Cherokee Rose,
Where the Senecas live in the heart of the hills
By the rippling Cowskin, where the Saulchana grows,
We'll go home to the Coyauga hills,
To the sheltering Coyauga hills.

THE RESURRECTION

JONATHAN HENDERSON BROOKS

His friends went off and left Him dead
In Joseph's subterranean bed,
Embalmed with myrrh and sweet aloes,
And wrapped in snow-white burial clothes.

Then shrewd men came and set a seal
Upon His grave, lest thieves should steal
His lifeless form away, and claim
For Him and undeserving fame.

"There is no use," the soldiers said,
"Of standing sentries by the dead."
Wherefore, they drew their cloaks around
Themselves, and fell upon the ground,
And slept like dead men, all night through,
In the pale moonlight and chilling dew.

A muffed whiff of sudden breath
Ruffled the passive air of death.

He woke, and raised Himself in bed;
Recalled how He was crucified;
Touched both hands' fingers to His head,

And lightly felt His fresh-healed side.

Then with a deep, triumphant sigh,
He coolly put His grave-clothes by—
Folded the sweet, white winding sheet,
 The toweling, the linen bands,
 The napkin, all with careful hands—
And left the borrowed chamber neat.

His steps were like the breaking day:
 So soft across the watch He stole,
 He did not wake a single soul,
Nor spill one dewdrop by the way.

Now Calvary was loveliness:
 Lilies that flowered thereupon
Pulled off the white moon's pallid dress,
 And put the morning's vesture on.

"Why seek the living among the dead?
He is not here," the angel said.

The early winds took up the words,
And bore them to the lilting birds,
The leafing trees, and everything
That breathed the living breath of spring.

TO A WATERFOWL

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Whither, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,

Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

THE HEART OF THE TREE

HENRY CUYLER BUNNER

What does he plant who plants a tree?

He plants a friend of sun and sky;

He plants the flag of breezes free;

The shaft of beauty, towering high;

He plants a home to heaven anigh;

For song and mother-croon of bird

In hushed and happy twilight heard—

The treble of heaven's harmony—

These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree?

He plants cool shade and tender rain,

And seed and bud of days to be,

And years that fade and flush again;

He plants the glory of the plain;

He plants the forest's heritage;

The harvest of a coming age;

The joy that unborn eyes shall see—

These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree?

He plants, in sap and leaf and wood,

In love of home and loyalty

And far-cast thought of civic good—
His blessings on the neighborhood,
Who in the hollow of His hand
Holds all the growth of all our land—
A nation's growth from sea to sea
Stirs in his heart who plants a tree.

THE PLAINS OF PEACE

OLIVIA WARD BUSH-BANKS

Again my fancy takes its flight,
And soars away on thoughtful wing,
Again my soul thrills with delight,
And this the fancied theme, I sing,
From Earthly scenes awhile, I find release,
And dwell upon the restful Plains of Peace.

The Plains of Peace are passing fair,
Where naught disturbs and naught can harm,
I find no sorrow, woe or care,
These all are lost in perfect calm,
Bright are the joys, and pleasures never cease,
For those who dwell on the Plains of Peace.

No scorching sun or blighting storm,
No burning sand or desert drear,
No fell disease or wasting form,
To mar the glowing beauty here.
Decay and ruin ever must decrease,
Here on the fertile, healthful Plains of Peace.

What rare companionship I find,
What hours of social joy I spend,

What restfulness pervades my mind,
Communing with congenial friend.
True happiness seems ever to increase,
While dwelling here upon the Plains of Peace.

Ambitions too, are realized,
And that which I have sought on earth,
I find at last idealized,
My longings ripen into worth,
My fondest hopes no longer fear decease,
But bloom forth brightly on the Plains of Peace.

'Tis by my fancy, yet 'tis true,
That somewhere having done with Earth,
We shall another course pursue,
According to our aim or worth,
Our souls from mortal things must find release,
And dwell immortal on the Plains of Peace.

THE SWIMMER

WITTER BYNNER

The reach of peace, the sky, the pines,
Leave me no more perplexed,
In which a memory divines
That bodies, buried, yet arise
Across the reach of all the skies,
Unburied and unvexed.
As arisen are the grass, the pines.
In upward-grown, delighted lines —
As a swimmer with one wave declines
And rises with the next.

THE WILD STAR

WITTER BYNNER

There is a star whose bite is certain death
While the moon but makes you mad —
So run from stars till you are out of breath
On a spring night, my lad,
Or slip among the shadows of a pine
And hide face down from the sky
And never stir and never make a sign,
Till the wild star goes by.

TO SOLITUDE

ALICE CARY

I am weary of the working,
 Weary of the long day's heat;
To thy comfortable bosom,
 Wilt thou take me, spirit sweet?

Weary of the long, blind struggle
 For a pathway bright and high,—
Weary of the dimly dying
 Hopes that never quite all die.

Weary searching a bad cipher
 For a good that must be meant;
Discontent with being weary,—
 Weary with my discontent.

I am weary of the trusting
 Where my trusts but torments prove;
Wilt thou keep faith with me? wilt thou
 Be my true and tender love?

I am weary drifting, driving
 Like a helmless bark at sea;
Kindly, comfortable spirit,

Wilt thou give thyself to me?

Give thy birds to sing me sonnets?

Give thy winds my cheeks to kiss?

And thy mossy rocks to stand for

The memorials of our bliss?

I in reverence will hold thee,

Never vexed with jealous ills,

Though thy wild and wimpling waters

Wind about a thousand hills.

JACOB

PHOEBE CARY

He dwelt among "apartments let,"
 About five stories high;
A man I thought that none would get,
 And very few would try.

A boulder, by a larger stone
 Half hidden in the mud,
Fair as a man when only one
 Is in the neighborhood.

He lived unknown, and few could tell
 When Jacob was not free;
But he has got a wife,—and O!
 The difference to me!

SUPPOSE

PHOEBE CARY

Suppose, my little lady,
 Your doll should break her head,
Could you make it whole by crying
 Till your eyes and nose are red?
And would n't it be pleasanter
 To treat it as a joke;
And say you 're glad "'T was Dolly's
 And not your head that broke?"

Suppose you 're dressed for walking,
 And the rain comes pouring down,
Will it clear off any sooner
 Because you scold and frown?
And would n't it be nicer
 For you to smile than pout,
And so make sunshine in the house
 When there is none without?

Suppose your task, my little man,
 Is very hard to get,
Will it make it any easier
 For you to sit and fret?
And wouldn't it be wiser

Than waiting like a dunce,
To go to work in earnest
And learn the thing at once?

Suppose that some boys have a horse,
And some a coach and pair,
Will it tire you less while walking
To say, "It is n't fair?"
And would n't it be nobler
To keep your temper sweet,
And in your heart be thankful
You can walk upon your feet?

And suppose the world don't please you,
Nor the way some people do,
Do you think the whole creation
Will be altered just for you?
And is n't it, my boy or girl,
The wisest, bravest plan,
Whatever comes, or does n't come,
To do the best you can?

EVENING SONG

WILLA CATHER

Dear love, what thing of all the things that be
Is ever worth one thought from you or me,

Save only Love,

Save only Love?

The days so short, the nights so quick to flee,
The world so wide, so deep and dark the sea,

So dark the sea;

So far the suns and every listless star,
Beyond their light—Ah! dear, who knows how far,

Who knows how far?

One thing of all dim things I know is true,
The heart within me knows, and tells it you,

And tells it you.

So blind is life, so long at last is sleep,
And none but Love to bid us laugh or weep,

And none but Love,

And none but Love.

I SOUGHT THE WOOD IN WINTER

WILLA CATHER

I sought the wood in summer

When every twig was green;

The rudest boughs were tender,

And buds were pink between.

Light-fingered aspens trembled

In fitful sun and shade,

And daffodils were golden

In every starry glade.

The brook sang like a robin—

My hand could check him where

The lissome maiden willows

Shook out their yellow hair.

“How frail a thing is Beauty,”

I said, “when every breath

She gives the vagrant summer

But swifter woos her death.

For this the star dust troubles,

For this have ages rolled:

To deck the wood for bridal

And slay her with the cold.”

I sought the wood in winter

When every leaf was dead;
Behind the wind-whipped branches
The winter sun set red.
The coldest star was rising
To greet that bitter air,
The oaks were writhen giants;
Nor bud nor bloom was there.
The birches, white and slender,
In deathless marble stood,
The brook, a white immortal,
Slept silent in the wood.

"How sure a thing is Beauty,"
I cried. "No bolt can slay,
No wave nor shock despoil her,
No ravishers dismay.
Her warriors are the angels
That cherish from afar,
Her warders people Heaven
And watch from every star.
The granite hills are slighter,
The sea more like to fail;
Behind the rose the planet,
The Law behind the veil."

PRAIRIE DAWN

WILLA CATHER

A crimson fire that vanquishes the stars;
A pungent odor from the dusty sage;
A sudden stirring of the huddled herds;
A breaking of the distant table-lands
Through purple mists ascending, and the flare
Of water ditches silver in the light;
A swift, bright lance hurled low across the world;
A sudden sickness for the hills of home.

PRAIRIE SPRING

WILLA CATHER

Evening and the flat land,
Rich and sombre and always silent;
The miles of fresh-plowed soil,
Heavy and black, full of strength and harshness;
The growing wheat, the growing weeds,
The toiling horses, the tired men;
The long empty roads,
Sullen fires of sunset, fading,
The eternal, unresponsive sky.
Against all this, Youth,
Flaming like the wild roses,
Singing like the larks over the plowed fields,
Flashing like a star out of the twilight;
Youth with its insupportable sweetness,
Its fierce necessity,
Its sharp desire,
Singing and singing,
Out of the lips of silence,
Out of the earthy dusk.

THANKSGIVING DAY

LYDIA MARIA CHILD

Over the river, and through the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh
Through the white and drifted snow.

Over the river, and through the wood—
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes
And bites the nose
As over the ground we go.

Over the river, and through the wood,
To have a first-rate play.
Hear the bells ring
"Ting-a-ling-ding",
Hurrah for Thanksgiving Day!

Over the river, and through the wood
Trot fast, my dapple-gray!
Spring over the ground,
Like a hunting-hound!
For this is Thanksgiving Day.

Over the river, and through the wood,
And straight through the barn-yard gate.

We seem to go
Extremely slow,—
It is so hard to wait!

Over the river and through the wood—

Now grandmother's cap I spy!

Hurrah for the fun!

Is the pudding done?

Hurrah for the pumpkin-pie!

AN ADIEU

FLORENCE EARLE COATES

Sorrow, quit me for a while!

Wintry days are over;

Hope again, with April smile,

Violets sows and clover.

Pleasure follows in her path,

Love itself flies after,

And the brook a music hath

Sweet as childhood's laughter.

Not a bird upon the bough

Can repress its rapture,

Not a bud that blossoms now

But doth beauty capture.

Sorrow, thou art Winter's mate,

Spring cannot regret thee;

Yet, ah, yet—my friend of late—

I shall not forget thee!

A PRAYER

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER JR.

As I lie in bed,
Flat on my back;
There passes across my ceiling
An endless panorama of things—
Quick steps of gay-voiced children,
Adolescence in its wondering silences,
Maid and man on moonlit summer's eve,
Women in the holy glow of Motherhood,
Old men gazing silently thru the twilight
Into the beyond.
O God, give me words to make my dream-children live.

RAIN MUSIC

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER JR.

On the dusty earth-drum
 Beats the falling rain;
Now a whispered murmur,
 Now a louder strain.

Slender, silvery drumsticks,
 On an ancient drum,
Beat the mellow music
 Bidding life to come.

Chords of earth awakened,
 Notes of greening spring,
Rise and fall triumphant
 Over every thing.

Slender, silvery drumsticks
 Beat the long tattoo—
God, the Great Musician,
 Calling life anew.

THE BAND OF GIDEON

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER JR.

The band of Gideon roam the sky,
The howling wind is their war-cry,
The thunder's roll is their trump's peal,
And the lightning's flash their vengeful steel.

Each black cloud
Is a fiery steed.
And they cry aloud
With each strong deed,
"The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

And men below rear temples high
And mock their God with reasons why,
And live in arrogance, sin and shame,
And rape their souls for the world's good name.

Each black cloud
Is a fiery steed.
And they cry aloud
With each strong deed,
"The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

The band of Gideon roam the sky
And view the earth with baleful eye;
In holy wrath they scourge the land

With earthquake, storm and burning brand.

Each black cloud

Is a fiery steed.

And they cry aloud

With each strong deed,

"The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

The lightnings flash and the thunders roll,

And "Lord have mercy on my soul,"

Cry men as they fall on the stricken sod,

In agony searching for their God.

Each black cloud

Is a fiery steed.

And they cry aloud

With each strong deed,

"The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

And men repent and then forget

That heavenly wrath they ever met,

The band of Gideon yet will come

And strike their tongues of blasphemy dumb.

Each black cloud

Is a fiery steed.

And they cry aloud

With each strong deed,

"The sword of the Lord and Gideon."

DR. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON TO THE NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER SR.

'Tis strange indeed to hear us plead
For selling and for buying
When yesterday we said: "Away
With all good things but dying."

The world's ago, and we're agog
To have our first brief inning;
So let's away through surge and fog
However slight the winning.

What deeds have sprung from plow and pick!
What bank-rolls from tomatoes!
No dainty crop of rhetoric
Can match one of potatoes.

Ye orators of point and pith,
Who force the world to heed you,
What skeletons you'll journey with
Ere it is forced to feed you.

A little gold won't mar our grace,
A little ease our glory.

This world's a better biding place
When money clinks its story.

MY SONG

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER SR.

I sang me a song, a tiny song,
A song that was sweet to my soul,
And set it a-float on the sea of chance
In search of a happy goal.

I said to my song: "Go on, go on
And lodge in a tender spot
Of some human soul where the fires of hate
And selfishness are not."

My song went on but a little space
And hied it back to me;
And fell at my feet in a sorry plight—
The victim of cruelty.

I gazed a moment and quickly saw
Just how it had come about,
A cruel critic had caught my song
And probed the soul of it out.

O, poor indeed is the human mind
(And why was it ever wrought?)
That can thrive on husk in the form of words,

And not on a sturdy thought.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S LOVE LETTERS

HART CRANE

There are no stars tonight
But those of memory.
Yet how much room for memory there is
In the loose girdle of soft rain.

There is even room enough
For the letters of my mother's mother,
Elizabeth,
That have been pressed so long
Into a corner of the roof
That they are brown and soft,
And liable to melt as snow.

Over the greatness of such space
Steps must be gentle.
It is all hung by an invisible white hair.
It trembles as birch limbs webbing the air.

And I ask myself:

"Are your fingers long enough to play
Old keys that are but echoes:
Is the silence strong enough

To carry back the music to its source
And back to you again
As though to her?"

Yet I would lead my grandmother by the hand
Through much of what she would not understand;
And so I stumble. And the rain continues on the roof
With such a sound of gently pitying laughter.

IN HEAVEN

STEPHEN CRANE

XVIII

In Heaven,
Some little blades of grass
Stood before God.
"What did you do?"
Then all save one of the little blades
Began eagerly to relate
The merits of their lives.
This one stayed a small way behind
Ashamed.
Presently God said:
"And what did you do?"
The little blade answered: "Oh, my lord,
"Memory is bitter to me
"For if I did good deeds
"I know not of them."
Then God in all His splendor
Arose from His throne.
"Oh, best little blade of grass," He said.

IN THE DESERT

STEPHEN CRANE

In the desert

I saw a creature, naked, bestial,
Who, squatting upon the ground,
Held his heart in his hands,
And ate of it.

I said, "Is it good, friend?"

"It is bitter—bitter," he answered;

"But I like it

"Because it is bitter,

"And because it is my heart."

FRUIT OF THE FLOWER

COUNTEE CULLEN

My father is a quiet man

With sober, steady ways;

For simile, a folded fan;

His nights are like his days.

My mother's life is puritan,

No hint of cavalier,

A pool so calm you're sure it can

Have little depth to fear.

And yet my father's eyes can boast

How full his life has been;

There haunts them yet the languid ghost

Of some still sacred sin.

And though my mother chants of God,

And of the mystic river,

I've seen a bit of checkered sod

Set all her flesh aquiver.

Why should he deem it pure mischance

A son of his is fain

To do a naked tribal dance

Each time he hears the rain?

Why should she think it devil's art

That all my songs should be
Of love and lovers, broken heart,
And wild sweet agony?

Who plants a seed begets a bud,

Extract of that same root;
Why marvel at the hectic blood
That flushes this wild fruit?

SATURDAY'S CHILD

COUNTEE CULLEN

Some are teathed on a silver spoon,
 With the stars strung for a rattle;
I cut my teeth as the black raccoon—
 For implements of battle.

Some are swaddled in silk and down,
 And heralded by a star;
They swathed my limbs in a sackcloth gown
 On a night that was black as tar.

For some, godfather and goddame
 The opulent fairies be;
Dame Poverty gave me my name,
 And Pain godfathered me.

For I was born on Saturday—
 “Bad time for planting a seed,”
Was all my father had to say,
 And, “One mouth more to feed.”

Death cut the strings that gave me life,
 And handed me to Sorrow,
The only kind of middle wife

My folks could beg or borrow.

SHE OF THE DANCING FEET SINGS

COUNTEE CULLEN

And what would I do in heaven, pray,
 Me with my dancing feet,
And limbs like apple boughs that sway
 When the gusty rain winds beat?

And how would I thrive in a perfect place
 Where dancing would be sin,
With not a man to love my face,
 Nor an arm to hold me in?

The seraphs and the cherubim
 Would be too proud to bend
To sing the feary tunes that brim
 My heart from end to end.

The wistful angels down in hell
 Will smile to see my face,
And understand, because they fell
 From that all-perfect place.

TO JOHN KEATS, POET. AT SPRING TIME*
COUNTEE CULLEN

(For Carl Van Vechten)

I cannot hold my peace, John Keats;
There never was a spring like this;
It is an echo, that repeats
My last year's song and next year's bliss.
I know, in spite of all men say
Of Beauty, you have felt her most.
Yea, even in your grave her way
Is laid. Poor, troubled, lyric ghost,
Spring never was so fair and dear
As Beauty makes her seem this year.

I cannot hold my peace, John Keats,
I am as helpless in the toil
Of Spring as any lamb that bleats
To feel the solid earth recoil
Beneath his puny legs. Spring beats
Her tocsin call to those who love her,
And lo! the dogwood petals cover

Her breast with drifts of snow, and sleek
White gulls fly screaming to her, and hover

About her shoulders, and kiss her cheek,
While white and purple lilacs muster
A strength that bears them to a cluster
Of color and odor; for her sake
All things that slept are now awake.

And you and I, shall we lie still,
John Keats, while Beauty summons us?
Somehow I feel your sensitive will
Is pulsing up some tremulous
Sap road of a maple tree, whose leaves
Grow music as they grow, since your
Wild voice is in them, a harp that grieves
For life that opens death's dark door.
Though dust, your fingers still can push
The Vision Splendid to a birth,
Though now they work as grass in the hush
Of the night on the broad sweet page of the earth.

"John Keats is dead," they say, but I
Who hear your full insistent cry
In bud and blossom, leaf and tree,
Know John Keats still writes poetry.

And while my head is earthward bowed
To read new life sprung from your shroud,

Folks seeing me must think it strange
That merely spring should so derange
My mind. They do not know that you,
John Keats, keep revel with me, too.

*Spring, 1924

TWO WHO CROSSED A LINE

COUNTEE CULLEN

(He Crosses)

He rode across like a cavalier,
 Spurs clicking hard and loud;
And where he tarried dropped his tear
 On heads he left low-bowed.

But, "Even Stephen," he cried, and struck
 His steed an urgent blow;
He swore by youth he was a buck
 With savage oats to sow.

To even up some standing scores,
 From every flower bed
He passed, he plucked by threes and fours
 Till wheels whirled in his head.

But long before the drug could tell,
 He took his anodyne;
With scornful grace, he bowed farewell
 And retraversed the line.

[LITTLE TREE]

E. E. CUMMINGS

little tree

little silent Christmas tree

you are so little

you are more like a flower

who found you in the green forest

and were you very sorry to come away?

see i will comfort you

because you smell so sweetly

i will kiss your cool bark

and hug you safe and tight

just as your mother would,

only don't be afraid

look the spangles

that sleep all the year in a dark box

dreaming of being taken out and allowed to shine,

the balls the chains red and gold the fluffy threads,

put up your little arms

and i'll give them all to you to hold.

every finger shall have its ring

and there won't be a single place dark or unhappy

then when you're quite dressed

you'll stand in the window for everyone to see

and how they'll stare!

oh but you'll be very proud

and my little sister and i will take hands

and looking up at our beautiful tree

we'll dance and sing

"Noel Noel"

SONGS (IV)

E. E. CUMMINGS

All in green went my love riding
on a great horse of gold
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
the merry deer ran before.

Fleeter be they than dappled dreams
the swift sweet deer
the red rare deer.

Four red roebuck at a white water
the cruel bugle sang before.

Horn at hip went my love riding
riding the echo down
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
the level meadows ran before.

Softer be they than slippered sleep
the lean lithe deer

the fleet flown deer.

Four fleet does at a gold valley
the famished arrow sang before.

Bow at belt went my love riding
riding the mountain down
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
the sheer peaks ran before.

Paler be they than daunting death
the sleek slim deer
the tall tense deer.

Four tall stags at a green mountain
the lucky hunter sang before.

All in green went my love riding
on a great horse of gold
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
my heart fell dead before.

SONGS (VIII)

E. E. CUMMINGS

in the rain-
darkness, the sunset
being sheathed i sit and
think of you

the holy
city which is your face
your little cheeks the streets
of smiles

your eyes half-
thrush
half-angel and your drowsy
lips where float flowers of kiss

and
there is the sweet shy pirouette
your hair
and then

your dancesong
soul. rarely-beloved
a single star is

uttered,and i

think

of you

SUNSET

E. E. CUMMINGS

Great carnal mountains crouching in the cloud
That marrieth the young earth with a ring,
Yet still its thoughts builds heavenward, whence spring
Wee villages of vapor, sunset-proud.—
And to the meanest door hastes one pure-browed
White-fingered star, a little, childish thing,
The busy needle of her light to bring,
And stitch, and stitch, upon the dead day's shroud.
Poises the sun upon his west, a spark
Superlative,—and dives beneath the world;
From the day's fillets Night shakes out her locks;
List! One pure trembling drop of cadence purled—
"Summer!"—a meek thrush whispers to the dark.
Hark! the cold ripple sneering on the rocks!

A TRIVIALITY

WARING CUNEY

Not to dance with her
Was such a trivial thing

There were girls more fair than she,--

To-day
Ten girls dressed in white.
Each had a white rose wreath.

They made a dead man's arch
And ten strong men
Carried a body through.

Not to dance with her
Was a trivial thing.

TO EDISON

DOMINGO DE VIVERO

translated from the Spanish by Agnes Blake Poor

In thee, the spirit of thy native soil

Draws breath and stirs with potent fruitful life.

Thou, from the field of elemental strife,

Seizest the guerdon of thy noble toil.

Franklin before, along the slender coil

Called down the fiery sparks in heaven rife.

Traced the quick ray, like sharp dividing knife;

And to the earth brought down the lightning's spoil.

And thou, the living glory of thy race,

Preservest for all time the spoken word;

Defying ignorance's numbing trace;

Despising falsehood's deadly withering breath.

The immortal tree of life thy hand conferred,

Even on the edge of the abyss of death.

THE RUBINSTEIN STACCATO ETUDE

R. NATHANIEL DETT

Staccato! Staccato!

Leggier agitato!

In and out does the melody twist—

Unique proposition

Is this composition.

(Alas! for the player who hasn't the wrist!)

Now in the dominant

Theme ringing prominent,

Bass still repeating its one monotone,

Double notes crying,

Up keyboard go flying,

The change to the minor comes in like a groan.

Without a cessation

A chaste modulation

Hastens adown to subdominant key,

Where melody mellow-like

Singing so 'cello-like

Rises and falls in a wild ecstasy.

Scarce is this finished

When chords all diminished

Break loose in a patter that comes down like rain;

A pedal-point wonder

Rivalling thunder,

Now all is mad agitation again.
Like laughter jolly
Begins the finale;
Again does the 'cello its tones seem to lend
Diminuendo ad molto crescendo.
Ah! Rubinstein only could make such an end!

HIBERNAL

BABETTE DEUTSCH

The park is winter-plucked. The sky
and the grey pavement show a sheeted face:
the covered stare of one who had to die.
Now, when men sweat,
shoveling muddy snow or heaving ice,
they know the helpless sweat that will not wet them twice,
they know the staggering heart, the smothered breath
that stand between this knowing and the end.
Though they must drag a net of heavy hours
about their straining limbs,
though they behold
love like a pillar of cloud, a pillar of fire—
this net will break before they tire,
this cloud, this flame will vanish and be cold.
Men think of this who limp against the wind
that freezes hate and sucks at their desire.
Winter is on us now, and will return:
soiled snows will choke the city streets again,
bleak twilights dull the windows as before,
dark hurrying crowds push towards lit rooms in vain.
One day we shall not kiss or quarrel any more.

SILENCE

BABETTE DEUTSCH

Silence with you is like the faint delicious
Smile of a child asleep, in dreams unguessed:
Only the hinted wonder of its dreaming,
The soft, slow-breathing miracle of rest.
Silence with you is like a kind departure
From iron clangor and the engulfing crowd
Into a wide and greenly barren meadow,
Under the bloom of some blue-bosomed cloud;
Or like one held upon the sands at evening,
When the drawn tide rolls out, and the mixed light
Of sea and sky enshrouds the far, wind-bellowed
Sails that move darkly on the edge of night.

A THANKSGIVING POEM

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

The sun hath shed its kindly light,
Our harvesting is gladly o'er
Our fields have felt no killing blight,
Our bins are filled with goodly store.

From pestilence, fire, flood, and sword
We have been spared by thy decree,
And now with humble hearts, O Lord,
We come to pay our thanks to thee.

We feel that had our merits been
The measure of thy gifts to us,
We erring children, born of sin,
Might not now be rejoicing thus.

No deed of our hath brought us grace;
When thou were nigh our sight was dull,
We hid in trembling from thy face,
But thou, O God, wert merciful.

Thy mighty hand o'er all the land
Hath still been open to bestow
Those blessings which our wants demand

From heaven, whence all blessings flow.

Thou hast, with ever watchful eye,
Looked down on us with holy care,
And from thy storehouse in the sky
Hast scattered plenty everywhere.

Then lift we up our songs of praise
To thee, O Father, good and kind;
To thee we consecrate our days;
Be thine the temple of each mind.

With incense sweet our thanks ascend;
Before thy works our powers pall;
Though we should strive years without end,
We could not thank thee for them all.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Ring out, ye bells!
All Nature swells
With gladness at the wondrous story,—
The world was lorn,
But Christ is born
To change our sadness into glory.

Sing, earthlings, sing!
To-night a King
Hath come from heaven's high throne to bless us.
The outstretched hand
O'er all the land
Is raised in pity to caress us.

Come at his call;
Be joyful all;
Away with mourning and with sadness!
The heavenly choir
With holy fire
Their voices raise in songs of gladness.

The darkness breaks
And Dawn awakes,

Her cheeks suffused with youthful blushes.

The rocks and stones

In holy tones

Are singing sweeter than the thrushes.

Then why should we

In silence be,

When Nature lends her voice to praises;

When heaven and earth

Proclaim the truth

Of Him for whom that lone star blazes?

No, be not still,

But with a will

Strike all your harps and set them ringing;

On hill and heath

Let every breath

Throw all its power into singing!

INVITATION TO LOVE

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Come when the nights are bright with stars
Or come when the moon is mellow;
Come when the sun his golden bars
Drops on the hay-field yellow.
Come in the twilight soft and gray,
Come in the night or come in the day,
Come, O love, whene'er you may,
And you are welcome, welcome.

You are sweet, O Love, dear Love,
You are soft as the nesting dove.
Come to my heart and bring it to rest
As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.

Come when my heart is full of grief
Or when my heart is merry;
Come with the falling of the leaf
Or with the redd'ning cherry.
Come when the year's first blossom blows,
Come when the summer gleams and glows,
Come with the winter's drifting snows,
And you are welcome, welcome.

NIGHT OF LOVE

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

The moon has left the sky, love,
 The stars are hiding now,
And frowning on the world, love,
 Night bares her sable brow.
The snow is on the ground, love,
 And cold and keen the air is.
I'm singing here to you, love;
 You're dreaming there in Paris.

But this is Nature's law, love,
 Though just it may not seem,
That men should wake to sing, love;
 While maidens sleep and dream.
Them care may not molest, love,
 Nor stir them from their slumbers,
Though midnight find the swain, love.
 Still halting o'er his numbers.

I watch the rosy dawn, love,
 Come stealing up the east,
While all things round rejoice, love,
 That Night her reign has ceased.
The lark will soon be heard, love,

And on his way be winging;
When Nature's poets wake, love,
Why should a man be singing?

NOT THEY WHO SOAR

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Not they who soar, but they who plod
Their rugged way, unhelped, to God
Are heroes; they who higher fare,
And, flying, fan the upper air,
Miss all the toil that hugs the sod.
'Tis they whose backs have felt the rod,
Whose feet have pressed the path unshod,
May smile upon defeated care,
 Not they who soar.

High up there are no thorns to prod,
Nor boulders lurking 'neath the clod
To turn the keenness of the share,
For flight is ever free and rare;
But heroes they the soil who've trod,
 Not they who soar!

ODE FOR MEMORIAL DAY

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Done are the toils and the wearisome marches,
 Done is the summons of bugle and drum.
Softly and sweetly the sky overarches,
 Shelt'ring a land where Rebellion is dumb.
Dark were the days of the country's derangement,
 Sad were the hours when the conflict was on,
But through the gloom of fraternal estrangement
 God sent his light, and we welcome the dawn.
O'er the expanse of our mighty dominions,
 Sweeping away to the uttermost parts,
Peace, the wide-flying, on untiring pinions,
 Bringeth her message of joy to our hearts.

Ah, but this joy which our minds cannot measure,
 What did it cost for our fathers to gain!
Bought at the price of the heart's dearest treasure,
 Born out of travail and sorrow and pain;
Born in the battle where fleet Death was flying,
 Slaying with sabre-stroke bloody and fell;
Born where the heroes and martyrs were dying,
 Torn by the fury of bullet and shell.
Ah, but the day is past: silent the rattle,
 And the confusion that followed the fight.

Peace to the heroes who died in the battle,
Martyrs to truth and the crowning of Right!

Out of the blood of a conflict fraternal,
Out of the dust and the dimness of death,
Burst into blossoms of glory eternal
Flowers that sweeten the world with their breath.
Flowers of charity, peace, and devotion
Bloom in the hearts that are empty of strife;
Love that is boundless and broad as the ocean
Leaps into beauty and fullness of life.
So, with the singing of paeans and chorals,
And with the flag flashing high in the sun,
Place on the graves of our heroes the laurels
Which their unfaltering valor has won!

SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Out in the sky the great dark clouds are massing;
I look far out into the pregnant night,
Where I can hear a solemn booming gun
And catch the gleaming of a random light,
That tells me that the ship I seek is passing, passing.

My tearful eyes my soul's deep hurt are glassing;
For I would hail and check that ship of ships.
I stretch my hands imploring, cry aloud,
My voice falls dead a foot from mine own lips,
And but its ghost doth reach that vessel, passing, passing.

O Earth, O Sky, O Ocean, both surpassing,
O heart of mine, O soul that dreads the dark!
Is there no hope for me? Is there no way
That I may sight and check that speeding bark
Which out of sight and sound is passing, passing?

THE DEBT

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

This is the debt I pay
Just for one riotous day,
Years of regret and grief,
Sorrow without relief.

Pay it I will to the end —
Until the grave, my friend,
Gives me a true release —
Gives me the clasp of peace.

Slight was the thing I bought,
Small was the debt I thought,
Poor was the loan at best —
God! but the interest!

THE DILETTANTE: A MODERN TYPE

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

He scribbles some in prose and verse,
 And now and then he prints it;
He paints a little, — gathers some
 Of Nature's gold and mints it.

He plays a little, sings a song,
 Acts tragic roles, or funny;
He does, because his love is strong,
 But not, oh, not for money!

He studies almost everything
 From social art to science;
A thirsty mind, a flowing spring,
 Demand and swift compliance.

He looms above the sordid crowd—
 At least through friendly lenses;
While his mamma looks pleased and proud,
 And kindly pays expenses.

THE PARADOX

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

I am the mother of sorrows,
 I am the ender of grief;
I am the bud and the blossom,
 I am the late-falling leaf.

I am thy priest and thy poet,
 I am thy serf and thy king;
I cure the tears of the heartsick,
 When I come near they shall sing.

White are my hands as the snowdrop;
 Swart are my fingers as clay;
Dark is my frown as the midnight,
 Fair is my brow as the day.

Battle and war are my minions,
 Doing my will as divine;
I am the calmer of passions,
 Peace is a nursling of mine.

Speak to me gently or curse me,
 Seek me or fly from my sight;
I am thy fool in the morning,

Thou art my slave in the night.

Down to the grave will I take thee,
Out from the noise of the strife;
Then shalt thou see me and know me—
Death, then, no longer, but life.

Then shalt thou sing at my coming,
Kiss me with passionate breath,
Clasp me and smile to have thought me
Aught save the foeman of Death.

Come to me, brother, when weary,
Come when thy lonely heart swells;
I'll guide thy footsteps and lead thee
Down where the Dream Woman dwells.

THOU ART MY LUTE

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Thou art my lute, by thee I sing,—

My being is attuned to thee.

Thou settest all my words a-wing,

And meltest me to melody.

Thou art my life, by thee I live,

From thee proceed the joys I know;

Sweetheart, thy hand has power to give

The meed of love—the cup of woe.

Thou art my love, by thee I lead

My soul the paths of light along,

From vale to vale, from mead to mead,

And home it in the hills of song.

My song, my soul, my life, my all,

Why need I pray or make my plea,

Since my petition cannot fall;

For I'm already one with thee!

WE WEAR THE MASK

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
 We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
 We wear the mask!

WITH THE LARK

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Night is for sorrow and dawn is for joy,
Chasing the troubles that fret and annoy;
Darkness for sighing and daylight for song,—
Cheery and chaste the strain, heartfelt and strong.
All the night through, though I moan in the dark,
I wake in the morning to sing with the lark.

Deep in the midnight the rain whips the leaves,
Softly and sadly the wood-spirit grieves.
But when the first hue of dawn tints the sky,
I shall shake out my wings like the birds and be dry;
And though, like the rain-drops, I grieved through the dark,
I shall wake in the morning to sing with the lark.

On the high hills of heaven, some morning to be,
Where the rain shall not grieve thro' the leaves of the tree,
There my heart will be glad for the pain I have known,
For my hand will be clasped in the hand of mine own;
And though life has been hard and death's pathway been dark,
I shall wake in the morning to sing with the lark.

IF I HAD KNOWN

ALICE MOORE DUNBAR-NELSON

If I had known

Two years ago how drear this life should be,
And crowd upon itself allstrangely sad,
Mayhap another song would burst from out my lips,
Overflowing with the happiness of future hopes;
Mayhap another throb than that of joy.
Have stirred my soul into its inmost depths,
If I had known.

If I had known,

Two years ago the impotence of love,
The vainness of a kiss, how barren a caress,
Mayhap my soul to higher things have soarn,
Nor clung to earthly loves and tender dreams,
But ever up aloft into the blue empyrean,
And there to master all the world of mind,
If I had known.

THE IDLER

ALICE MOORE DUNBAR-NELSON

An idle lingerer on the wayside's road,
He gathers up his work and yawns away;
A little longer, ere the tiresome load
Shall be reduced to ashes or to clay.

No matter if the world has marched along,
And scorned his slowness as it quickly passed;
No matter, if amid the busy throng,
He greets some face, infantile at the last.

His mission? Well, there is but one,
And if it is a mission he knows it, nay,
To be a happy idler, to lounge and sun,
And dreaming, pass his long-drawn days away.

So dreams he on, his happy life to pass
Content, without ambitions painful sighs,
Until the sands run down into the glass;
He smiles—content—unmoved and dies.

And yet, with all the pity that you feel
For this poor mothling of that flame, the world;
Are you the better for your desperate deal,

When you, like him, into infinitude are hurled?

TO MADAME CURIE

ALICE MOORE DUNBAR-NELSON

Oft have I thrilled at deeds of high emprise,
And yearned to venture into realms unknown,
Thrice blessed she, I deemed, whom God had shown
How to achieve great deeds in woman's guise.
Yet what discov'ry by expectant eyes
Of foreign shores, could vision half the throne
Full gained by her, whose power fully grown
Exceeds the conquerors of th' uncharted skies?
So would I be this woman whom the world
Avows its benefactor; nobler far,
Than Sybil, Joan, Sappho, or Egypt's queen.
In the alembic forged her shafts and hurled
At pain, diseases, waging a humane war;
Greater than this achievement, none, I ween.

BRAHMA

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt;
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven,
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

CONCORD HYMN

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument, July 4, 1837

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
 Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
 And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
 Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
 Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
 We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
 When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
 To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
 The shaft we raise to them and thee.

FABLE

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel;
And the former called the latter 'Little Prig.'
Bun replied,
'You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut.'

GIVE ALL TO LOVE

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'T is a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent:
But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending,

It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,

Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

THE SNOW-STORM

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and, at the gate,
A tapering turret overtops the work.

And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

A NATION'S STRENGTH

WILLIAM RALPH EMERSON

What makes a nation's pillars high
And its foundations strong?
What makes it mighty to defy
The foes that round it throng?

It is not gold. Its kingdoms grand
Go down in battle shock;
Its shafts are laid on sinking sand,
Not on abiding rock.

Is it the sword? Ask the red dust
Of empires passed away;
The blood has turned their stones to rust,
Their glory to decay.

And is it pride? Ah, that bright crown
Has seemed to nations sweet;
But God has struck its luster down
In ashes at his feet.

Not gold but only men can make
A people great and strong;
Men who for truth and honor's sake

Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep,

Who dare while others fly...

They build a nation's pillars deep

And lift them to the sky.

MILITANTS TO CERTAIN OTHER WOMEN

KATHARINE ROLSTON FISHER

You who pass coldly by when the police rush upon us,
When they wrench away our banners,
(Beautiful banners whose colors cry a demand for liberty)
You who criticize or condemn
(Declaring you "believe in suffrage,
Worked for it in your state, and your mother
knew Susan B. Anthony")
Can you think in terms of a nation?
Could you die, (or face ridicule) for your belief?
For the freedom of women, for your freedom,
we are fighting;
For your safety we face danger, bear torture;
For your honor endure untellable insult.
To win democracy for you we defend the banners of democracy
Till our banners and our bodies
Are flung together on the pavement,
Waiting at the gates of government,
We have made of our weariness a symbol
Of women's long wait for justice.
We have borne the hunger and hardship of prison,
To open people's eyes
To men's determination to imprison the power of women.

You women who pass coldly by,
Do you imagine your freedom is coming
As a summer wind blows over fields?
Slowly it has advanced by a sixty-years' war,
(Those who have fought in it have not forgotten)
And that war is not won.
Strongly entrenched, the foe sits plotting.
Close to his lines our banners fly,
Signalling where to direct the fire,
Greater forces are needed, reserves and recruits.
Are you for winning or for waiting,
Women who watch the banners go down?
Women who say, "Suffrage is coming,"
While suffrage goes by you into Prussia?
Case to be content with applauding speeches, and praising politicians.
Patience is shameful.
Awake, rise, and act.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

KATHARINE ROLSTON FISHER

Her life is a luminous banner borne ever ahead of her era, in
 lead of the forces of freedom,
 Where wrongs for justice call.
High-hearted, far-sighted, she pressed with noble intrepid impatience,
 one race and the half of another
 To liberate from thrall.

If now in its freedom her spirit mingle with ours and find us
 toiling at dusk to finish
 The task of her long day,
On ground hard held to the last, gaining her goal for women,
 if for her word we hearken,
 May we not hear her say:

“Comrades and daughters exultant, let my goal for you be a mile-
 stone. Too late have you won it to linger.
 Victory flies ahead.
Though women march millions abreast on a widening way to free-
 dom, trails there are still for women
 Fearless to break and tread.

“Keep watch on power as it passes, on liberty’s torch as it
 travels, lest woman be left with a symbol,

No flame in her lamp alive.
In the mine, the mill and the mart where is bartered the bread of
your children, is forged the power you strove for,
For which you still must strive."

Her spirit like southern starlight at once is afar and around us;
her message an inward singing
Through all our life to run:
"Forward together, my daughters, till born of your faith with
each other and of brotherhood all the world over,
For all is freedom won."

THE EMPTY CUP

KATHARINE ROLSTON FISHER

Evening at Occoquan. Rain pelts the workhouse roof.

The prison matrons are sewing together for the Red Cross

The women prisoners are going to bed in two long rows.

Some of the suffrage pickets lie reading in the dim light.

Through the dark, above the rain, rings out a cry.

We listen at the windows. (Oh, those cries from punishment cells!)

A voice calls one of us by name.

"Miss Burns! Miss Burns! Will you see that I have a drink of water?"

Lucy Burns arises; slips on the coarse blue prison gown.

Over it her swinging hair, red-gold, throws a regal mantle.

She begs the night-watch to give the girl water.

One of the matrons leaves her war-bandages; we see her hasten to the cell.

The light in it goes out.

The voice despairing cries:

"She has taken away the cup and she will not bring me water."

Rain pours on the roof. The suffragists lie awake.

The matrons work busily for the Red Cross.

THOUGHTS IN JAIL

KATHARINE ROLSTON FISHER

Prisoners are we,
American citizens imprisoned
For daring in the name of Democracy
To protest against the continued denial
Of the right of self-government
To twenty millions of the American people.

We lie in a dungeon
Long ago abandoned and condemned,
Just as politically we are held
Imprisoned in a subjection
Abandoned and condemned
By every other nation of English speech and spirit.

Painfully raising my head,
I look down the long row
Of gray-blanketed heaps.
Under every heap a woman,
Weak, sick, but determined,
Twenty gray fortresses of determination.

COME LET US BE FRIENDS

SARAH LEE BROWN FLEMING

Come, let us be friends, you and I,
E'en though the world doth hate at this hour;
Let's bask in the sunlight of a love so high
That war cannot dim it with all its armed power.

Come, let us be friends, you and I,
The world hath her surplus of hatred today;
She needeth more love, see, she droops with a sigh,
Where her axis doth slant in the sky far away.

Come, let us be friends, you and I,
And love each other so deep and so well,
That the world may grow steady and forward fly,
Lest she wander towards chaos and drop into hell.

A DISTANT SONG

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

Whether awake or sleeping,
 I cannot rest for long:
By my casement comes creeping
 A distant song.

A song like the chiming of silver
 Bells which the breezes play,
Seeming to float for ever
 Towards an unseen day:

A song that is weary with sorrow,
 Yet knows not any defeat:
Through the past, through to-day, through to-morrow,
 It echoes on life's long street.

Could I but make words of its power,
 Bring it from the future here,
Men's souls would be waking, that hour,
 To the victory against fear.

But the vague sweet stanza befools me
 With its calm joy, time after time,
And no failure here ever schools me

To cease from an idle rhyme.

That music afar, unspoken,

'Tis I have done it wrong:

I caught, and I have broken,

A distant song.

FOR WHO?

MARY WESTON FORDHAM

When the heavens with stars are gleaming
 Like a diadem of light,
And the moon's pale rays are streaming,
 Decking earth with radiance bright;
When the autumn's winds are sighing,
 O'er the hill and o'er the lea,
When the summer time is dying,
 Wanderer, wilt thou think of me?

When thy life is crowned with gladness,
 And thy home with love is blest,
Not one brow o'er cast with sadness,
 Not one bosom of unrest—
When at eventide reclining,
 At thy hearthstone gay and free,
Think of one whose life is pining,
 Breathe thou, love, a prayer for me.

Should dark sorrows make thee languish,
 Cause thy cheek to lose its hue,
In the hour of deepest anguish,
 Darling, then I'll grieve with you.
Though the night be dark and dreary,

And it seemeth long to thee,
I would whisper, "be not weary;"
I would pray love, then, for thee.

Well I know that in the future,
I may cherish naught of earth;
Well I know that love needs nurture,
And it is of heavenly birth.
But though ocean waves may sever
I from thee, and thee from me,
Still this constant heart will never,
Never cease to think of thee.

SERENADE

MARY WESTON FORDHAM

Sleep, love sleep,
The night winds sigh,
In soft lullaby.
The Lark is at rest
With the dew on her breast.
So close those dear eyes,
That borrowed their hue
From the heavens so blue,
Sleep, love sleep.

Sleep, love sleep,
The pale moon looks down
On the valleys around,
The Glow Moth is flying,
The South wind is sighing,
And I am low lying,
With lute deftly strung,
To pour out my song,
Sleep, love sleep.

THE COMING WOMAN

MARY WESTON FORDHAM

Just look, 'tis quarter past six, love—
And not even the fires are caught;
Well, you know I must be at the office—
But, as usual, the breakfast 'll be late.

Now hurry and wake up the children;
And dress them as fast as you can;
'Poor dearies,' I know they'll be tardy,
Dear me, 'what a slow, poky man!'

Have the tenderloin broiled nice and juicy—
Have the toast browned and buttered all right;
And be sure you settle the coffee:
Be sure that the silver is bright.

When ready, just run up and call me—
At eight, to the office I go,
Lest poverty, grim, should o'ertake us—
'Tis bread and butter,' you know.

The bottom from stocks may fall out,
My bonds may get below par;
Then surely, I seldom could spare you

A nickel, to buy a cigar.

All ready? Now, while I am eating,
Just bring up my wheel to the door;
Then wash up the dishes; and, mind now,
Have dinner promptly at four;

For tonight is our Woman's Convention,
And I am to speak first, you know—
The men veto us in private,
But in public they shout, 'That's so.'

So 'by-by' – In case of a rap, love,
Before opening the door, you must look;
O! how could a civilized woman
Exist, without a man cook.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

TIMOTHY THOMAS FORTUNE

I know not why, but it is true—it may,
In some way, be because he was a child
Of the fierce sun where I first wept and smiled—
I love the dark-browed Poe. His feverish day
Was spent in dreams inspired, that him beguiled,
When not along his path shone forth one ray
Of light, of hope, to guide him on the way,
That to earth's cares he might be reconciled.
Not one of all Columbia's tuneful choir
Has pitched his notes to such a matchless key
As Poe—the wizard of the Orphic lyre!
Not one has dreamed, has sung, such songs as he,
Who, like an echo came, an echo went,
Singing, back to his mother element.

SWEET SINGER

JAMES T. FRANKLIN

Reign did silence o'er the stage
 As night passed on
And destiny fraught with laurels sat,
 Sweet laurels never won,
Till was read aloud her name
 And forth the sweet voiced singer came.
While grim old night worn out with age,
 Listening to the vibrating stage,
Wept because he must pass on.

 But hark! they do applaud her so:
She bows, she smiles and then looks round,
 She opens her lips and lo!
Bursts forth a trembling sea of sound:
 A sea voluptuous in its swell.
The waves rose high and then they fell;
 While beat the etherial shores, the tide,
And ebbing then the waves subside
 To music's gentler flow.

O'er the vast and blue expanse
 Leaped the merry music on:
Around the universe, the flow

Of that angelic tone;
Till heaven's shores, the tidelets lashed
And wavelets o'er the portals dashed.
The billowy waves break forth the sounds
Reach the great white throne and rebound
Echoing the song of home.

JEFFERY, OR, THE SOLDIER'S PROGRESS

PHILIP FRENEAU

Lur'd by some Captain's smooth address,
His scarlet coat and roguish face,
One Half-A-Joe on drum-head laid,
A tavern-treat—and reckoning paid;
See yonder simple lad consign'd
To slavery of the basest kind.

With only skill to drive a plough
a musquet he must handle now;
Must twirl there and twirl it there
Now on the ground, no in the air:
Its every motion by some rule
Of practice, taught in Frederick's school, *
Must be directed—nicely true—
Or he be beaten black—and blue.

A sergeant, rais'd from cleaning shoes
May now this country lad abuse:—
On meager fare grown poor and lean,
He treats him like a mere machine,
Directs his look, directs his step,
And kicks him into decent shape,
From aukward habit frees the clown,

Erects his head—or knocks him down,

Last Friday week to Battery-Green

The sergeant came with this Machine—

One motion of the firelock miss'd—

The Tutor thump'd him with his fist:

I saw him lift his hickory cane,

I heard poor Jeffery's head complain!—

Yet this—and more—'s forc'd to bear;

And this goes on from year to year,

'Till desperate grown at such a lot,

He drinks—deserts—and so is shot!

°The Prussian manual exercise.

ON THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BIDDLE

PHILIP FRENEAU

Commander of the Randolph Frigate, Blown up near Barbadoes, 1776

What distant thunders rend the skies,
What clouds of smoke in columns rise,
 What means this dreadful roar?
Is from his base Vesuvius thrown,
Is sky-topt Atlas tumbled down,
 Or Etna's self no more!

Shock after shock torments my ear;
And lo!—two hostile ships appear,
 Red lightnings round them glow:
The Yarmouth boasts of sixty-four,
The Randolph thirty-two—no more—
 And will she fight this foe!

The Randolph soon on Stygian streams
Shall coast along the land of dreams,
 The islands of the dead!
But Fate, that parts them on the deep,
May save the Briton yet to weep
 His days of victory fled.

Say, who commands that dismal blaze,
Where yonder starry streamer plays?

Does Mars with Jove engage!
'Tis Biddle wings those angry fires,
Biddle, whose bosom Jove inspires,
With more than mortal rage.

Tremendous flash!—and hark, the ball
Drives through old Yarmouth, flames and all;
Her bravest sons expire;
Did Mars himself approach so nigh,
Even Mars, without disgrace, might fly
The Randolph's fiercer fire.

The Briton views his mangled crew,
"And shall we strike to thirty-two?—
(Said Hector, stained with gore)
"Shall Britain's flag to these descend—
"Rise, and the glorious conflict end,
"Britons, I ask no more!"

He spoke—they charged their cannon round,
Again the vaulted heavens resound,
The Randolph bore it all,
Then fixed her pointed cannons true—
Away the unwieldy vengeance flew;

Britain, thy warriors fall.

The Yarmouth saw, with dire dismay,
Her wounded hull, shrouds shot away,
Her boldest heroes dead—
She saw amidst her floating slain
The conquering Randolph stem the main—
She saw, she turned—and fled!

That hour, blest chief, had she been thine,
Dear Biddle, had the powers divine
Been kind as thou wert brave;
But Fate, who doomed thee to expire,
Prepared an arrow, tipt with fire,
And marked a watery grave.

And in that hour, when conquest came,
Winged at his ship a pointed flame,
That not even he could shun—
The battle ceased, the Yarmouth fled,
The bursting Randolph ruin spread,
And left her task undone!

ON THE DEATH OF DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

PHILIP FRENEAU

Thus, some tall tree that long hath stood
The glory of its native wood,
By storms destroyed, or length of years,
Demands the tribute of our tears.

The pile, that took long time to raise,
To dust returns by slow decays:
But, when its destined years are o'er,
We must regret the loss the more.

So long accustomed to your aid,
The world laments your exit made;
So long befriended by your art,
Philosopher, 'tis hard to part!—

When monarchs tumble to the ground,
Successors easily are found:
But, matchless Franklin! what a few
Can hope to rival such as you,
Who seized from kings their sceptred pride,
And turned the lightning's darts aside!

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

PHILIP FRENEAU

A Picture from the Life

To serve with love,

And shed your blood,

Approved may be above,

But here below

(Example shew,)

'Tis dangerous to be good.

—Lord Oxford

Deep in a vale, a stranger now to arms,
Too poor to shine in courts, too proud to beg,
He, who once warred on *Saratoga's* plains,
Sits musing o'er his scars, and wooden leg.

Remembering still the toil of former days,
To *other* hands he sees his earnings paid;—
They share the due reward—he feeds on praise.
Lost in the abyss of want, misfortune's shade.

Far, far from domes where splendid tapers glare,
'Tis his from dear bought *peace* no wealth to win,
Removed alike from courtly cringing 'squires,

The great-man's *Levee*, and the proud man's grin.

Sold are those arms which once on Britons blaz'd,
When, flushed with conquest, to the charge they came;
That power repell'd, and *Freedom's* fabrick rais'd,
She leaves her soldier—*famine* and a *name*!

TO LORD CORNWALLIS

PHILIP FRENEAU

At York, Virginia

Hail, great destroyer (equalled yet by none)
Of countries not your master's, nor your own;
Hatched by some demon on a stormy day,
Satan's best substitute to burn and slay;
Confined at last, hemmed in by land and sea,
Burgoyne himself was but a type of thee!

Like his, to freedom was your deadly hate,
Like his your baseness, and be his your fate:
To you, like him, no prospect Nature yields,
But ruined wastes and desolated fields
In vain you raise the interposing wall,
And hoist those standards that, like you, must fall,
In you conclude the glories of your race,
Complete your monarch's and your own disgrace.

What has your lordship's pilfering arms attained?—
Vast stores of plunder, but no State regained—
That may return, though you perhaps may groan,
Restore it, Charley, for 'tis not your own—
Then, lord and soldier, headlong to the brine
Rush down at once—the devil and the swine.

Wouldst thou at last with Washington engage,

Sad object of his pity, not his rage?
See, round thy posts how terribly advance
The chiefs, the armies, and the fleets of France;
Fight while you can, for warlike Rochambeau
Aims at your head his last decisive blow,
Unnumbered ghosts from earth untimely sped,
Can take no rest till you, like them, are dead—
Then die, my Lord; that only chance remains
To wipe away dishonourable stains,
For small advantage would your capture bring,
The plundering servant of a bankrupt king.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE AMERICANS

PHILIP FRENEAU

*Under General Greene, in South Carolina, who fell in the action of
September 8, 1781*

At Eutaw Springs the valiant died;
Their limbs with dust are covered o'er—
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite your gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast,
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sigh for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear;
'Tis not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear.—

They saw their injured country's woe;

The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the shield.

Led by thy conquering genius, Greene,
The Britons they compelled to fly;
None distant viewed the fatal plain,
None grieved, in such a cause to die—

But, like the Parthian, famed of old.
Who, flying, still their arrows threw,
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

Now rest in peace, our patriot band;
Though far from nature's limits thrown,
We trust they find a happier land,
A brighter sunshine of their own.

A LINE-STORM SONG

ROBERT FROST

The line-storm clouds fly tattered and swift,
The road is forlorn all day,
Where a myriad snowy quartz stones lift,
And the hoof-prints vanish away.
The roadside flowers, too wet for the bee,
Expend their bloom in vain.
Come over the hills and far with me,
And be my love in the rain.

The birds have less to say for themselves
In the wood-world's torn despair
Than now these numberless years the elves,
Although they are no less there:
All song of the woods is crushed like some
Wild, easily shattered rose.
Come, be my love in the wet woods; come,
Where the boughs rain when it blows.

There is the gale to urge behind
And bruit our singing down,
And the shallow waters aflutter with wind
From which to gather your gown.
What matter if we go clear to the west,

And come not through dry-shod?
For wilding brooch shall wet your breast
The rain-fresh goldenrod.

Oh, never this whelming east wind swells
But it seems like the sea's return
To the ancient lands where it left the shells
Before the age of the fern;
And it seems like the time when after doubt
Our love came back amain.
Oh, come forth into the storm and rout
And be my love in the rain.

A TIME TO TALK

ROBERT FROST

When a friend calls to me from the road
And slows his horse to a meaning walk,
I don't stand still and look around
On all the hills I haven't hoed,
And shout from where I am, What is it?
No, not as there is a time to talk.
I thrust my hoe in the mellow ground,
Blade-end up and five feet tall,
And plod: I go up to the stone wall
For a friendly visit.

AFTER APPLE-PICKING

ROBERT FROST

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.
But I am done with apple-picking now.
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight
I got from looking through a pane of glass
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough
And held against the world of hoary grass.
It melted, and I let it fall and break.
But I was well
Upon my way to sleep before it fell,
And I could tell
What form my dreaming was about to take.
Magnified apples appear and disappear,
Stem end and blossom end,
And every fleck of russet showing clear.
My instep arch not only keeps the ache,
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.

And I keep hearing from the cellar bin
The rumbling sound
Of load on load of apples coming in.
For I have had too much
Of apple-picking: I am overtired
Of the great harvest I myself desired.
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.
For all
That struck the earth,
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
Went surely to the cider-apple heap
As of no worth.
One can see what will trouble
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.
Were he not gone,
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.

FIRE AND ICE

ROBERT FROST

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.

But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To know that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

IN EQUAL SACRIFICE

ROBERT FROST

Thus of old the Douglas did:
He left his land as he was bid
With the royal heart of Robert the Bruce
In a golden case with a golden lid,

To carry the same to the Holy Land;
By which we see and understand
That that was the place to carry a heart
At loyalty and love's command,

And that was the case to carry it in.
The Douglas had not far to win
Before he came to the land of Spain,
Where long a holy war had been

Against the too-victorious Moor;
And there his courage could not endure
Not to strike a blow for God
Before he made his errand sure.

And ever it was intended so,
That a man for God should strike a blow,
No matter the heart he has in charge

For the Holy Land where hearts should go.

But when in battle the foe were met,
The Douglas found him sore beset,
With only strength of the fighting arm
For one more battle passage yet—

And that as vain to save the day
As bring his body safe away—
Only a signal deed to do
And a last sounding word to say.

The heart he wore in a golden chain
He swung and flung forth into the plain,
And followed it crying 'Heart or death!'
And fighting over it perished fain.

So may another do of right,
Give a heart to the hopeless fight,
The more of right the more he loves;
So may another redouble might

For a few swift gleams of the angry brand,
Scorning greatly not to demand
In equal sacrifice with his
The heart he bore to the Holy Land.

PAN WITH US

ROBERT FROST

Pan came out of the woods one day,—
His skin and his hair and his eyes were gray,
The gray of the moss of walls were they,—
 And stood in the sun and looked his fill
 At wooded valley and wooded hill.

He stood in the zephyr, pipes in hand,
On a height of naked pasture land;
In all the country he did command
 He saw no smoke and he saw no roof.
 That was well! And he stamped a hoof.

He heart knew peace, for none came here
To this lean feeding save once a year
Someone to salt the half-wild steer,
 Or homespun children with clicking pails
 Who see so little they tell no tales.

He tossed his pipes, too hard to teach
A new-world song, far out of reach,
For a sylvan sign that the blue jay's screech
 And the whimper of hawks beside the sun
 Were music enough for him, for one.

Times were changed from what they were:
Such pipes kept less of power to stir
The fruited bough of the juniper
 And the fragile bluets clustered there
 Than the merest aimless breath of air.

They were pipes of pagan mirth,
And the world had found new terms of worth.
He laid him down on the sun-burned earth
 And ravelled a flower and looked away—
 Play? Play?—What should he play?

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

ROBERT FROST

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

THE AIM WAS SONG

ROBERT FROST

Before man came to blow it right

 The wind once blew itself untaught,
And did its loudest day and night
 In any rough place where it caught.

Man came to tell it what was wrong:

 It hadn't found the place to blow;
It blew too hard—the aim was song.
 And listen—how it ought to go!

He took a little in his mouth,

 And held it long enough for north
To be converted into south,
 And then by measure blew it forth.

By measure. It was word and note,

 The wind the wind had meant to be—
A little through the lips and throat.
 The aim was song—the wind could see.

FLAXMAN

MARGARET FULLER

We deemed the secret lost, the spirit gone,
Which spake in Greek simplicity of thought,
And in the forms of gods and heroes wrought
Eternal beauty from the sculptured stone,—
A higher charm than modern culture won
With all the wealth of metaphysic lore,
Gifted to analyze, dissect, explore.
A many-colored light flows from one sun;
Art, 'neath its beams, a motley thread has spun;
The prism modifies the perfect day;
But thou hast known such mediums to shun,
And cast once more on life a pure, white ray.
Absorbed in the creations of thy mind,
Forgetting daily self, my truest self I find.

ON THE MISSISSIPPI

HAMLIN GARLAND

Through wild and tangled forests

 The broad, unhasting river flows--

 Spotted with rain-drops, gray with night;

 Upon its curving breast there goes

A lonely steamboat's larboard light,

 A blood-red star against the shadowy oaks;

Noiseless as a ghost, through greenish gleam

Of fire-flies, before the boat's wild scream--

 A heron flaps away

 Like silence taking flight.

ON CHILDREN

KAHLIL GIBRAN

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of Children.

And he said:

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,

And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

ON HOUSES

KAHLIL GIBRAN

Then a mason came forth and said, Speak to us of Houses.

And he answered and said:

Build of your imaginings a bower in the wilderness ere you build a house within the city walls.

For even as you have home-comings in your twilight, so has the wanderer in you, the ever distant and alone.

Your house is your larger body.

It grows in the sun and sleeps in the stillness of the night; and it is not dreamless.

Does not your house dream? and dreaming, leave the city for a grove or hill-top?

Would that I could gather your houses into my hand, and like a sower scatter them in forest and meadow.

Would the valleys were your streets, and the green paths your alleys, that you might seek one another through vineyards, and come

with the fragrance of the earth in your garments.

But these things are not yet to be.

In their fear your forefathers gathered you too near together. And that fear shall endure a little longer. A little longer shall your city

walls separate your hearths from your fields.

And tell me, people of Orphalese, what have you in these houses? And what is it you guard with fastened doors?

Have you peace, the quiet urge that reveals your power?

Have you remembrances, the glimmering arches that span the summits of the mind?

Have you beauty, that leads the heart from things fashioned of wood and stone to the holy mountain?

Tell me, have you these in your houses?

Or have you only comfort, and the lust for comfort, that stealthy thing that enters the house a guest, and then becomes a host, and

then a master?

Ay, and it becomes a tamer, and with hook and scourge makes puppets of your larger desires.

Though its hands are silken, its heart is of iron.

It lulls you to sleep only to stand by your bed and jeer at the dignity of the flesh.

It makes mock of your sound senses, and lays them in thistledown like fragile vessels.

Verily the lust for comfort murders the passion of the soul, and then walks grinning in the funeral.

But you, children of space, you restless in rest, you shall not be trapped nor tamed.

Your house shall be not an anchor but a mast.

It shall not be a glistening film that covers a wound, but an eyelid that guards the eye.

You shall not fold your wings that you may pass through doors, nor bend your heads that they strike not against a ceiling, nor fear

to breathe lest walls should crack and fall down.

You shall not dwell in tombs made by the dead for the living.

And though of magnificence and splendour, your house shall not hold your secret nor shelter your longing.

For that which is boundless in you abides in the mansion of the sky,
whose door is the morning mist, and whose windows are the
songs and the silences of night.

ON PAIN

KAHLIL GIBRAN

And a woman spoke, saying, Tell us of Pain.

And he said:

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.

Even as the stone of the fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so must you know pain.

And could you keep your heart in wonder at the daily miracles of your life your pain would not seem less wondrous than your joy;

And you would accept the seasons of your heart, even as you have always accepted the seasons that pass over your fields.

And you would watch with serenity through the winters of your grief.

Much of your pain is self-chosen.

It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self.

Therefore trust the physician, and drink his remedy in silence and tranquility:

For his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen,

And the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of the clay which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears.

ON PRAYER

KAHLIL GIBRAN

Then the priestess said, Speak to us of Prayer.

And he answered, saying:

You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance.

For what is prayer but the expansion of yourself into the living ether?

And if it is for your comfort to pour your darkness into space, it is also for your delight to pour forth the dawning of your heart.

And if you cannot but weep when your soul summons you to prayer, she should spur you again and yet again, though weeping, until you shall come laughing.

When you pray you rise to meet in the air those who are praying at that very hour, and whom save in prayer you may not meet.

Therefore let your visit to that temple invisible be for naught but ecstasy and sweet communion.

For if you should enter the temple for no other purpose than asking you shall not receive:

And if you should enter into it to humble yourself you shall not be lifted:

Or even if you should enter into it to beg for the good of others you shall not be heard.

It is enough that you enter the temple invisible.

I cannot teach you how to pray in words.

God listens not to your words save when He Himself utters them through your lips.

And I cannot teach you the prayer of the seas and the forests and the mountains.

But you who are born of the mountains and the forests and the seas can find their prayer in your heart,

And if you but listen in the stillness of the night you shall hear them saying in silence,

“Our God, who are our winged self, it is thy will in us that willeth.

It is thy desire in us that desireth.

It is thy urge in us that would turn our nights, which are thine, into days which are thine also.

We cannot ask thee for aught, for thou knowest our needs before they are born in us:

Thou art our need; and in giving us more of thyself thou givest us all.”

ON RELIGION

KAHLIL GIBRAN

And an old priest said, Speak to us of Religion.

And he said:

Have I spoken this day of aught else?

Is not religion all deeds and all reflection,

And that which is neither deed nor reflection, but a wonder and a surprise ever springing in the soul, even while the hand hew the stone or tend the loom?

Who can separate his faith from his actions, or his belief from his occupations?

Who can spread his hours before him, saying, "This for God and this for myself' This for my soul, and this other for my body?"

All your hours are wings that beat through space from self to self.

He who wears his morality but as his best garment were better naked.

The wind and the sun will tear no holes in his skin.

And he who defines his conduct by ethics imprisons his song-bird in a cage.

The freest song comes not through bars and wires.

And he to whom worshipping is a window, to open but also to shut, has not yet visited the house of his soul whose windows are from dawn to dawn.

Your daily life is your temple and your religion.

Whenever you enter into it take with you your all.

Take the plough and the forge and the mallet and the lute,

The things you have fashioned in necessity or for delight.

For in revery you cannot rise above your achievements nor fall lower than your failures.

And take with you all men:

For in adoration you cannot fly higher than their hopes nor humble yourself lower than their despair.

And if you would know God be not therefore a solver of riddles.

Rather look about you and you shall see Him playing with your children.

And look into space; you shall see Him walking in the cloud, outstretching His arms in the lightning and descending in rain.

You shall see Him smiling in flowers, then rising and waving His hands in trees.

TO A YOUNG DANCING GIRL

ELSA GIDLOW

Golden-eyed girl, do you see what I see?

Do you see behind the veil that Life

laughs through?

Golden-eyed girl, I would like to laugh

with you.

But my veil is torn, and I see things pass

Like shadows in the depths of a crystal glass.

Golden-eyed girl, you are young as springtime,

Your great eyes are dreamful, your rare

lips sweet.

Shadows matter little to youth with dancing feet

All of Life's skeletons wear gay dresses

And youth is deceived by even Death's caresses.

Golden-eyed girl, you have years to dance and

wonder

Before your Life's curtain will wear into holes

And let you see the hopelessness hidden in souls.

You have many moons of laughter, many

years to go

Before you'll learn how heavy dancing feet

can grow.

SHE WALKETH VEILED AND SLEEPING

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

She walketh veiled and sleeping,
For she knoweth not her power;
She obeyeth but the pleading
Of her heart, and the high leading
Of her soul, unto this hour.
Slow advancing, halting, creeping,
Comes the Woman to the hour!—
She walketh veiled and sleeping,
For she knoweth not her power.

CHARLES SUMNER

CHARLOTTE L. FORTEN GRIMKÉ

On seeing some pictures of the interior of his house, Washington, D.C.

Only the casket left, the jewel gone
Whose noble presence filled these stately rooms,
And made this spot a shrine where pilgrims came—
Stranger and friend—to bend in reverence
Before the great, pure soul that knew no guile;
To listen to the wise and gracious words
That fell from lips whose rare, exquisite smile
Gave tender beauty to the grand, grave face.

Upon these pictured walls we see thy peers,—
Poet, and saint, and sage, painter, and king,—
A glorious band;—they shine upon us still;
Still gleam in marble the enchanting forms
Whereupon thy artist eye delighted dwelt;
Thy favorite Psyche droops her matchless face,
Listening, methinks, for the beloved voice
Which nevermore on earth shall sound her praise.

All these remain,—the beautiful, the brave,
The gifted, silent ones; but thou art gone!
Fair is the world that smiles upon us now;

Blue are the skies of June, balmy the air
That soothes with touches soft the weary brow;
And perfect days glide into perfect nights,—
Moonlit and calm; but still our grateful hearts
Are sad, and faint with fear,— for thou art gone!

Oh friend beloved, with longing, tear-filled eyes
We look up, up to the unclouded blue,
And seek in vain some answering sign from thee.
Look down upon us, guide and cheer us still
From the serene height where thou dwellest now;
Dark is the way without the beacon light
Which long and steadfastly thy hand upheld.
Oh, nerve with courage new the stricken hearts
Whose dearest hopes seem lost in losing thee.

FLUTE SONG

H.D.

Little scavenger away,
touch not the door,
beat not the portal down,
cross not the sill,
silent until
my song, bright and shrill,
breathes out its lay.
Little scavenger avaunt,
tempt me with jeer and taunt,
yet you will wait to-day;
for it were surely ill
to mock and shout and revel;
it were more fit to tell
with flutes and calathes,
your mother's praise.

GARDEN

H.D.

I

You are clear
O rose, cut in rock,
hard as the descent of hail.

I could scrape the colour
from the petals
like spilt dye from a rock.

If I could break you
I could break a tree.

If I could stir
I could break a tree—
I could break you.

II

O wind, rend open the heat,
cut apart the heat,
rend it to tatters.

Fruit cannot drop
through this thick air—
fruit cannot fall into heat
that presses up and blunts
the points of pears
and rounds the grapes.

Cut the heat—
plough through it,
turning it on either side
of your path.

SEA POPPIES

H.D.

Amber husk
fluted with gold,
fruit on the sand
marked with a rich grain,

treasure
spilled near the shrub-pines
to bleach on the boulders:

your stalk has caught root
among wet pebbles
and drift flung by the sea
and grated shells
and split conch-shells.

Beautiful, wide-spread,
fire upon leaf,
what meadow yields
so fragrant a leaf
as your bright leaf?

SEA ROSE

H.D.

Rose, harsh rose,
marred and with stint of petals,
meagre flower, thin,
sparse of leaf,

more precious
than a wet rose
single on a stem—
you are caught in the drift.

Stunted, with small leaf,
you are flung on the sand,
you are lifted
in the crisp sand
that drives in the wind.

Can the spice-rose
drip such acrid fragrance
hardened in a leaf?

"THAT BLESSED HOPE"

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

Oh touch it not that hope so blest
Which cheers the fainting heart,
And points it to the coming rest
Where sorrow has no part.

Tear from heart each worldly prop,
Unbind each earthly string;
But to this blest and glorious hope,
Oh let my spirit cling.

It cheer'd amid the days of old
Each holy patriarch's breast,
It was an anchor to their souls,
Upon it let me rest.

When wand'ring in the dens and caves,
In goat and sheep skins drest,
Apeel'd and scatter'd people learn'd
To know this hope was blest.

Help me to love this blessed hope;
My heart's a fragile thing;
Will you not nerve and bear it up

Around this hope to cling.

Help amid this world of strife

To long for Christ to reign,

That when he brings the crown of life

I may that crown obtain.

HOME, SWEET HOME

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

Sharers of a common country,
They had met in deadly strife;
Men who should have been as brothers
Madly sought each other's life.

In the silence of the even,
When the cannon's lips were dumb,
Thoughts of home and all its loved ones
To the soldier's heart would come.

On the margin of a river,
'Mid the evening's dews and damps,
Could be heard the sounds of music
Rising from two hostile camps.

One was singing of its section
Down in Dixie, Dixie's land,
And the other of the banner
Waved too long from strand to strand.

In the lawn where Dixie's ensign
Floated o'er the hopeful slave,
Rose the song that freedom's banner,

Starry-lighted, long might wave.

From the fields of strife and carnage,
Gentle thoughts began to roam,
And a tender strain of music
Rose with words of "Home, Sweet Home."

Then the hearts of strong men melted,
For amid our grief and sin
Still remains that "touch of nature,"
Telling us we all are kin.

In one grand but gentle chorus,
Floating to the starry dome,
Came the words that brought them nearer,
Words that told of "Home, Sweet Home."

For awhile, all strife forgotten,
They were only brothers then,
Joining in the sweet old chorus,
Not as soldiers, but as men.

Men whose hearts would flow together,
Though apart their feet might roam,
Found a tie they could not sever,
In the mem'ry of each home.

Never may the steps of carnage
Shake our land from shore to shore,
But may mother, home and Heaven,
Be our watchwords evermore.

LEARNING TO READ

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

Very soon the Yankee teachers
Came down and set up school;
But, oh! how the Rebs did hate it,—
It was agin' their rule.

Our masters always tried to hide
Book learning from our eyes;
Knowledge did'nt agree with slavery—
'Twould make us all too wise.

But some of us would try to steal
A little from the book.
And put the words together,
And learn by hook or crook.

I remember Uncle Caldwell,
Who took pot liquor fat
And greased the pages of his book,
And hid it in his hat.

And had his master ever seen
The leaves upon his head,
He'd have thought them greasy papers,

But nothing to be read.

And there was Mr. Turner's Ben,
Who heard the children spell,
And picked the words right up by heart,
And learned to read 'em well.

Well, the Northern folks kept sending
The Yankee teachers down;
And they stood right up and helped us,
Though Rebs did sneer and frown.

And I longed to read my Bible,
For precious words it said;
But when I begun to learn it,
Folks just shook their heads,

And said there is no use trying,
Oh! Chloe, you're too late;
But as I was rising sixty,
I had no time to wait.

So I got a pair of glasses,
And straight to work I went,
And never stopped till I could read
The hymns and Testament.

Then I got a little cabin

A place to call my own—

And I felt independent

As the queen upon her throne.

LET THE LIGHT ENTER

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

The Dying Words of Goethe

"Light! more light! the shadows deepen,
And my life is ebbing low,
Throw the windows widely open:
Light! more light! before I go.

"Softly let the balmy sunshine
Play around my dying bed,
E'er the dimly lighted valley
I with lonely feet must tread.

"Light! more light! for Death is weaving
Shadows 'round my waning sight,
And I fain would gaze upon him
Through a stream of earthly light."

Not for greater gifts of genius;
Not for thoughts more grandly bright,
All the dying poet whispers
Is a prayer for light, more light.

Heeds he not the gathered laurels,

Fading slowly from his sight;
All the poet's aspirations
Centre in that prayer for light.

Gracious Saviour, when life's day-dreams
Melt and vanish from the sight,
May our dim and longing vision
Then be blessed with light, more light.

RENEWAL OF STRENGTH

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

The prison-house in which I live
Is falling to decay,
But God renews my spirit's strength
Within these walls of clay.

For me a dimness slowly creeps
Around earth's fairest light,
But heaven grows clearer to my view,
And fairer to my sight.

It may be earth's sweet harmonies
Are duller to my ear,
But music from my Father's house
Begins to float more near.

Then let the pillars of my home
Crumble and fall away;
Lo, God's dear love within my soul
Renews it day by day.

SONGS FOR THE PEOPLE

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

Let me make the songs for the people,
Songs for the old and young;
Songs to stir like a battle-cry
Wherever they are sung.

Not for the clashing of sabres,
For carnage nor for strife;
But songs to thrill the hearts of men
With more abundant life.

Let me make the songs for the weary,
Amid life's fever and fret,
Till hearts shall relax their tension,
And careworn brows forget.

Let me sing for little children,
Before their footsteps stray,
Sweet anthems of love and duty,
To float o'er life's highway.

I would sing for the poor and aged,
When shadows dim their sight;
Of the bright and restful mansions,

Where there shall be no night.

Our world, so worn and weary,
Needs music, pure and strong,
To hush the jangle and discords
Of sorrow, pain, and wrong.

Music to soothe all its sorrow,
Till war and crime shall cease;
And the hearts of men grown tender
Girdle the world with peace.

THE CONTRAST

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

They scorned her for her sinning,
 Spoke harshly of her fall,
Nor lent the hand of mercy
 To break her hated thrall.

The dews of meek repentance
 Stood in her downcast eye:
Would no one heed her anguish?
 All pass her coldly by?

From the cold, averted glances
 Of each reproachful eye,
She turned aside, heart-broken,
 And laid her down to die.

And where was he, who sullied
 Her once unspotted name;
Who lured her from life's brightness
 To agony and shame?

Who left her on life's billows,
 A wrecked and ruined thing;
Who brought the winter of despair

Upon Hope's blooming spring?

Through the halls of wealth and fashion

In gaiety and pride,

He was leading to the altar

A fair and lovely bride!

None scorned him for his sinning,

Few saw it through his gold;

His crimes were only foibles,

And those were gently told.

* * * * *

Before him rose a vision,

A maid of beauty rare;

Then a pale, heart-broken woman,

The image of despair.

Next came a sad procession,

With many a sob and tear;

A widow'd, childless mother

Totter'd by an humble bier.

The vision quickly faded,

The sad, unwelcome sight;

But his lip forgot its laughter,
And his eye its careless light.

A moment, and the flood-gates
Of memory opened wide;
And remorseful recollection
Flowed like a lava tide.

That widow's wail of anguish
Seemed strangely blending there,
And mid the soft lights floated
That image of despair.

* * * * *

YEARNINGS FOR HOME

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER

Oh let me go I'm weary here
And fevers scorch my brain,
I long to feel my native air
Breathe o'er each burning vein.

I long once more to see
My home among the distant hills,
To breathe amid the melody
Of murmuring brooks and rills.

My home is where eternal snow
Round threat'ning craters sleep,
Where streamlets murmur soft and low
And playful cascades leap.

Tis where glad scenes shall meet
My weary, longing eye;
Where rocks and Alpine forests greet
The bright cerulean sky.

Your scenes are bright I know,
But there my mother pray'd,
Her cot is lowly, but I go

To die beneath its shade.

For, Oh I know she'll cling
'Round me her treasur'd long,
My sisters too will sing
Each lov'd familiar song.

They'll soothe my fever'd brow,
As in departed hours,
And spread around my dying couch
The brightest, fairest flowers.

Then let me go I'm weary here
And fevers scorch my brain,
I long to feel my native air,
Breathe o'er each burning vein.

DAWN-FLOWERS

SADAKICHI HARTMANN

to Maurice Maeterlinck

Weird phantoms rise in the dawn-winds blow,
In the land of shadows the dawn-flowers grow;
The night-worn moon yields her weary glow
To the morn-rays that over the dream-waste flow.

Oh, to know what the dawn-wind murmurs
In chapels of pines to the ashen moons;
What the forest-well whispers to dale and dell
With her singular, reticent runes;
To know the plaint of each falling leaf
As it whirls across the autumnal plain;
To know the dreams of the desolate shore
As sails, like ghosts, pass o'er the dawnlit main!
To know, oh, to know
Why all life's strains have the same refrain
As of rain,
Beating sadly against the window pane.

We do not know and we can not know,
And all that is left for us here below
(Since "songs and singers are out of date")

And the muses have met with a similar fate)
Is to flee to the land of shadows and dreams,
Where the dawn-flowers grow
And the dawn-winds blow,
As morn-rays over life's dream-waste of flow
To drown the moon in their ambient glow.

Envoy

Oh, gray dawn-poet of Flanders,
Though in this life we ne'er may meet,
I'll linger where thy dream-maids wander
To strew these dawn-flowers at their feet.

SWEET ARE THE DREAMS ON THE BREEZE-BLOWN STRAND

SADAKICHI HARTMANN

Sestine Enchainée

When autumn cloudlets fleck the sky
 Straying southward like birds o'er the sea,
 When the flickering sunlight on the dunes
 Is pale, as seagrasses kissed by the spray,
 Seagrasses that knew the summer of yesterday–
 Sweet are the dreams on the breeze-blown strand!

Sweet are the dreams on the breeze-blown strand!
When cloud skiffs skim athwart the sky
 And like a phantom of yesterday
 The light house shimmers out to sea
 Pale as the sand and the sea-worn spray
 And the straggling sunlight on the dunes.

Like straggling sunlight on the dunes,
Like opal surges that wash the strand
 With briny fragrance, adoom with the spray,
 Like wander-birds that career the sky
 To flowerlit isles of some Southern sea–
 Such are the dreams of yesterday!

Alas, our dreams of yesterday,
Frail as the fragrance of the dunes,
Vain as dark jewels of the sea
Cast up on some glimmering strand,
They vanish like cloud sails on the sky,
Pale as seagrasses frownsed by the spray.

Pale as seagrasses kissed by the spray,
Is all this life of yesterday,
All our longings for clear blue skies
For the low cool plash on autumn dunes,
All our musings on tide-left strands
While birds wing southward o'er the sea.

Like birds winging southward o'er the sea
Scattered in air-like wasteful spray,
Sea-fancies fading on lonesome strands
Weary of storm drifts of yesterday,
Thus our thoughts on the sea-scooped dunes
When autumn cloudlets fleck the sky.

Oh, autumn-sea under a cloud-flecked sky
As caressed are thy dunes with opal spray
So shimmer in dreams on the breeze-blown strand
Sweet long-lost summers of yesterday.

THE OCEAN

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

The Ocean has its silent caves,
Deep, quiet, and alone;
Though there be fury on the waves,
Beneath them there is none.

The awful spirits of the deep
Hold their communion there;
And there are those for whom we weep,
The young, the bright, the fair.
Calmly the wearied seamen rest
Beneath their own blue sea.
The ocean solitudes are blest,
For there is purity.

The earth has guilt, the earth has care,
Unquiet are its graves;
But peaceful sleep is ever there,
Beneath the dark blue waves.

THINE OWN

JOSEPHINE DELPHINE HENDERSON HEARD

To live and not be Thine Own,
Like Springtime is when birds are flown;
Or liberty in prison bars,
Or evening skies without the stars;
Like diamonds that are lusterless,
Or rest when there's no weariness;
Like lovely flower that have no scent,
Or music when the sound is spent.

A MOJAVE LULLABY

HEN-TOH (BERTRAND N. O. WALKER)

Sleep, my little man-child,
Dream-time to you has come.

In the closely matted branches
Of the mesquite tree,
The mother-bird has nestled
Her little ones; see
From the ghost-hills of your fathers,
Purpling shadows eastward crawl,
While beyond the western sky-tints pale
As twilight spreads its pall.

The eastern hills are lighted,
See their sharp peaks burn and glow,
With the colors the Great Sky-Chief
Gave your father for his bow.
Hush my man-child; be not frightened,
'Tis the father's step draws nigh.
O'er the trail along the river,
Where the arrow-weeds reach high
Above his dark head, see
He parts them with his strong hands,
As he steps forth into view.

He is coming home to mother,
Home to mother and to you.

Sleep my little man-child,
Daylight has gone.
There's no twitter in the branches,
Dream-time has come.

A WYANDOT CRADLE SONG

HEN-TOH (BERTRAND N. O. WALKER)

Hush thee and sleep, little one,

 The feathers on thy board sway to and fro;
The shadows reach far downward in the water
 The great old owl is waking, day will go.

Rest thee and fear not, little one,

 Flitting fireflies come to light you on your way
To the fair land of dreams, while in the grasses
 The happy cricket chirps his merry lay.

Tsa-du-meh watches always o'er her little one,

 The great owl cannot harm you, slumber on
'Till the pale light comes shooting from the eastward,
 And the twitter of the birds says night has gone.

DAWN

ELLA HIGGINSON

The soft-toned clock upon the stair chimed three—
Too sweet for sleep, too early yet to rise.
In restful peace I lay with half-closed eyes,
Watching the tender hours go dreamily;
The tide was flowing in; I heard the sea
Shivering along the sands; while yet the skies
Were dim, uncertain, as the light that lies
Beneath the fretwork of some wild-rose tree
Within the thicket gray. The chanticleer
Sent drowsy calls across the slumbrous air;
In solemn silence sweet it was to hear
My own heart beat . . . Then broad and deep and fair—
Trembling in its new birth from heaven's womb—
One crimson shaft of dawn sank thro' my room.

A FAR COUNTRY

LESLIE PINCKNEY HILL

Beyond the cities I have seen,
Beyond the wrack and din,
There is a wide and fair demesne
Where I have never been.

Away from desert wastes of greed,
Over the peaks of pride,
Across the seas of mortal need
Its citizens abide.

And through the distance though I see
How stern must be the fare,
My feet are ever fain to be
Upon the journey there.

In that far land the only school
The dwellers all attend
Is built upon the Golden Rule,
And man to man is friend.

No war is there nor war's distress,
But truth and love increase—
It is a realm of pleasantness,

And all her paths are peace.

DEPARTED DAYS

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Yes, dear departed, cherished days,
 Could Memory's hand restore
Your morning light, your evening rays
 From Time's gray urn once more,—
Then might this restless heart be still,
 This straining eye might close,
And Hope her fainting pinions fold,
 While the fair phantoms rose.

But, like a child in ocean's arms,
 We strive against the stream,
Each moment farther from the shore
 Where life's young fountains gleam;—
Each moment fainter wave the fields,
 And wider rolls the sea;
The mist grows dark,—the sun goes down,—
Day breaks,—and where are we?

OLD IRONSIDES

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,

Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

EARLY AFFECTION

GEORGE MOSES HORTON

I lov'd thee from the earliest dawn,
 When first I saw thy beauty's ray,
And will, until life's eve comes on,
 And beauty's blossom fades away;
And when all things go well with thee,
With smiles and tears remember me.

I'll love thee when thy morn is past,
 And wheedling gallantry is o'er,
When youth is lost in age's blast,
 And beauty can ascend no more,
And when life's journey ends with thee,
O, then look back and think of me.

I'll love thee with a smile or frown,
 'Mid sorrow's gloom or pleasure's light,
And when the chain of life runs down,
 Pursue thy last eternal flight,
When thou hast spread thy wing to flee,
Still, still, a moment wait for me.

I'll love thee for those sparkling eyes,
 To which my fondness was betray'd,

Bearing the tincture of the skies,
 To glow when other beauties fade,
And when they sink too low to see,
Reflect an azure beam on me.

GEORGE MOSES HORTON, MYSELF

GEORGE MOSES HORTON

I feel myself in need

Of the inspiring strains of ancient lore,
My heart to lift, my empty mind to feed,
And all the world explore.

I know that I am old

And never can recover what is past,
But for the future may some light unfold
And soar from ages blast.

I feel resolved to try,

My wish to prove, my calling to pursue,
Or mount up from the earth into the sky,
To show what Heaven can do.

My genius from a boy,

Has fluttered like a bird within my heart;
But could not thus confined her powers employ,
Impatient to depart.

She like a restless bird,

Would spread her wing, her power to be unfurl'd,
And let her songs be loudly heard,

And dart from world to world.

ON LIBERTY AND SLAVERY

GEORGE MOSES HORTON

Alas! and am I born for this,
To wear this slavish chain?
Deprived of all created bliss,
Through hardship, toil and pain!

How long have I in bondage lain,
And languished to be free!
Alas! and must I still complain—
Deprived of liberty.

Oh, Heaven! and is there no relief
This side the silent grave—
To soothe the pain—to quell the grief
And anguish of a slave?

Come Liberty, thou cheerful sound,
Roll through my ravished ears!
Come, let my grief in joys be drowned,
And drive away my fears.

Say unto foul oppression, Cease:
Ye tyrants rage no more,
And let the joyful trump of peace,

Now bid the vassal soar.

Soar on the pinions of that dove
Which long has cooed for thee,
And breathed her notes from Afric's grove,
The sound of Liberty.

Oh, Liberty! thou golden prize,
So often sought by blood—
We crave thy sacred sun to rise,
The gift of nature's God!

Bid Slavery hide her haggard face,
And barbarism fly:
I scorn to see the sad disgrace
In which enslaved I lie.

Dear Liberty! upon thy breast,
I languish to respire;
And like the Swan unto her nest,
I'd like to thy smiles retire.

Oh, blest asylum—heavenly balm!
Unto thy boughs I flee—
And in thy shades the storm shall calm,
With songs of Liberty!

ON SUMMER

GEORGE MOSES HORTON

Esteville begins to burn;
The auburn fields of harvest rise;
The torrid flames again return,
And thunders roll along the skies.

Perspiring Cancer lifts his head,
And roars terrific from on high;
Whose voice the timid creatures dread;
From which they strive with awe to fly.

The night-hawk ventures from his cell,
And starts his note in evening air;
He feels the heat his bosom swell,
Which drives away the gloom of fear.

Thou noisy insect, start thy drum;
Rise lamp-like bugs to light the train;
And bid sweet Philomela come,
And sound in front the nightly strain.

The bee begins her ceaseless hum,
And doth with sweet exertions rise;
And with delight she stores her comb,

And well her rising stock supplies.

Let sportive children well beware,
While sprightly frisking o'er the green;
And carefully avoid the snare,
Which lurks beneath the smiling scene.

The mistress bird assumes her nest,
And broods in silence on the tree,
Her note to cease, her wings at rest,
She patient waits her young to see.

THE GRADUATE LEAVING COLLEGE

GEORGE MOSES HORTON

What summons do I hear?

The morning peal, departure's knell;

My eyes let fall a friendly tear,

And bid this place farewell.

Attending servants come,

The carriage wheels like thunders roar,

To bear the pensive seniors home,

Here to be seen no more.

Pass one more transient night,

The morning sweeps the college clean;

The graduate takes his last long flight,

No more in college seen.

The bee, which courts the flower,

Must with some pain itself employ,

And then fly, at the day's last hour,

Home to its hive with joy.

AN APOLOGY

JULIA WARD HOWE

For A Warm Word Spoken

I spake, perhaps, too sharp a word
For one bred up in modesty,
But base injustice, trivial scorn
On honor heaped, had angered me.

The smile of courtesy forsook
These lips, so timid even for good,
While o'er the paleness of my brow
Flashed crimson, the indignant blood.

Nor could I to the contest bring
The trained weapon of the mind,
Snatching from Reason's armory
Such shafts as grief had left behind.

Grief for the faltering of the Age,
Grief for my country and my race,
Grief to sit here with Christian men,
That boast their want of Christian grace.

I say not that the man I praise

By that poor tribute stands more high,
I say not that the man I blame
Be not of purer worth than I;

But when I move reluctant lips
For holy Justice, human Right,
The sacred cause I strive to plead
Lends me its favor and its might.

And I must argue from the faith
Which gave the fervor of my youth,
Or keep such silence as yon stars,
That only look and live God's truth.

BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

JULIA WARD HOWE

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fatal lightning of his terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps.
His Day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-seat:
Oh! be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,

While God is marching on.

OUR COUNTRY

JULIA WARD HOWE

On primal rocks she wrote her name,
Her towers were reared on holy graves,
The golden seed that bore her came
Swift-winged with prayer o'er ocean waves.

The Forest bowed his solemn crest,
And open flung his sylvan doors;
Meek Rivers led the appointed Guest
To clasp the wide-embracing shores;

Till, fold by fold, the brodered Land
To swell her virgin vestments grew,
While Sages, strong in heart and hand,
Her virtue's fiery girdle drew.

O Exile of the wrath of Kings!
O Pilgrim Ark of Liberty!
The refuge of divinest things,
Their record must abide in thee.

First in the glories of thy front
Let the crown jewel Truth be found;
The right hand fling with generous wont

Love's happy chain to furthest bound.

Let Justice with the faultless scales
Hold fast the worship of thy sons,
Thy commerce spread her shining sails
Where no dark tide of rapine runs.

So link thy ways to those of God,
So follow firm the heavenly laws,
That stars may greet thee, warrior-browed,
And storm-spiced angels hail thy cause.

O Land, the measure of our prayers,
Hope of the world, in grief and wrong!
Be thine the blessing of the years,
The gift of faith, the crown of song.

SYBIL

JULIA WARD HOWE

Your head is wild with books, Sybil,
 But your heart is good and kind—
I feel a new contentment near you,
 A pleasure of the mind.

Glad should I be to sit beside you,
 And let long hours glide by,
Reading, through all your sweet narrations,
 The language of your eye.

Since the maternal saint I worshipped
 Did look and love her last,
No woman o'er my wayward spirit
 Such gentle spell has cast.

Oh! tell me of your varied fortunes,
 For you know not, from your face
Looks out strange sadness, lit with rapture,
 And melancholy grace.

You are a gem, whose native brilliance
 Could never wholly reign,
An opal, whose prismatic fire

A white cloud doth restrain.

And thus, the mood to which you move me
Is never perfect, quite,
'Tis pity, wonderment, and pleasure,
Opacity and light.

Bear me then in your presence, Sybil,
And leave your hand in mine,
For, though human be my nature,
You've made it half divine.

THE HEART'S ASTRONOMY

JULIA WARD HOWE

This evening, as the twilight fell,
My younger children watched for me;
Like cherubs in the window framed,
I saw the smiling group of three.

While round and round the house I trudged,
Intent to walk a weary mile,
Oft as I passed within their range,
The little things would beck and smile.

They watched me, as Astronomers
Whose business lies in heaven afar,
Await, beside the slanting glass,
The re-appearance of a star.

Not so, not so, my pretty ones,
Seek stars in yonder cloudless sky;
But mark no steadfast path for me,
A comet dire and strange am I.

Now to the inmost spheres of light
Lifted, my wondering soul dilates,
Now dropped in endless depth of night,

My hope God's slow recall awaits.

Among the shining I have shone,
Among the blessing, have been blest,
Then wearying years have held me bound
Where darkness deadness gives, not rest.

Between extremes distraught and rent,
I question not the way I go;
Who made me, gave it me, I deem,
Thus to aspire, to languish so.

But Comets too have holy laws,
Their fiery sinews to restrain,
And from their outmost wanderings
Are drawn to heaven's dear heart again.

And ye, beloved ones, when ye know
What wild, erratic natures are,
Pray that the laws of heavenly force
Would hold and guide the Mother star.

AUNT SUE'S STORIES

LANGSTON HUGHES

Aunt Sue has a head full of stories.

Aunt Sue has a whole heart full of stories.

Summer nights on the front porch

Aunt Sue cuddles a brown-faced child to her bosom

And tells him stories.

Black slaves

Working in the hot sun,

And black slaves

Walking in the dewy night,

And black slaves

Singing sorrow songs on the banks of a mighty river

Mingle themselves softly

In the flow of old Aunt Sue's voice,

Mingle themselves softly

In the dark shadows that cross and recross

Aunt Sue's stories.

And the dark-faced child, listening,

Knows that Aunt Sue's stories are real stories.

He knows that Aunt Sue

Never got her stories out of any book at all,

But that they came

Right out of her own life.

And the dark-faced child is quiet
Of a summer night
Listening to Aunt Sue's stories.

BLUES FANTASY
LANGSTON HUGHES

Hey! Hey!
That's what the
Blues singers say.
Singing minor melodies
They laugh,
Hey! Hey!

My man's done left me,
Chile, he's gone away.
My good man's left me,
Babe, he's gone away.
Now the cryin' blues
Haunts me night and day.

Hey! . . . Hey!

Weary,
Weary,
Trouble, pain.
Sun's gonna shine
Somewhere
Again.

I got a railroad ticket,
Pack my trunk and ride.

Sing 'em, sister!

Got a railroad ticket,
Pack my trunk and ride.
And when I get on the train
I'll cast my blues aside.

Laughing,
Hey! . . . Hey!
Laugh a loud,
Hey! Hey!

CROSS

LANGSTON HUGHES

My old man's a white old man
And my old mother's black.
If ever I cursed my white old man
I take my curses back.

If ever I cursed my black old mother
And wished she were in hell,
I'm sorry for that evil wish
And now I wish her well.

My old man died in a fine big house.
My ma died in a shack.
I wonder where I'm gonna die,
Being neither white nor black?

MINSTREL MAN

LANGSTON HUGHES

Because my mouth
Is wide with laughter
And my throat
Is deep with song,
You do not think
I suffer after
I have held my pain
So long.

Because my mouth
Is wide with laughter,
You do not hear
My inner cry,
Because my feet
Are gay with dancing,
You do not know
I die.

MOTHER TO SON

LANGSTON HUGHES

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare;
But all the time
I'se been a'climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark,
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back;
Don't you sit down on the steps,
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard;
Don't you fall now—
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

SONG FOR A BANJO DANCE

LANGSTON HUGHES

Shake your brown feet, honey,
Shake your brown feet, chile,
Shake your brown feet, honey,
Shake 'em swift and wil'–

Get way back, honey,
Do that low-down step.

Walk on over, darling,

Now! Come out

With your left.

Shake your brown feet, honey,
Shake 'em, honey chile.

Sun's going down this evening–

Might never rise no mo'.

The sun's going down this very night–

Might never rise no mo'–

So dance with swift feet, honey,

(The banjo's sobbing low)

Dance with swift feet, honey–

Might never dance no mo'.

Shake your brown feet, Liza,

Shake 'em, Liza, chile,

Shake your brown feet, Liza,

(The music's soft and wil')

Shake your brown feet, Liza,

(The banjo's sobbing low)

The sun's going down this very night–

Might never rise no mo'.

THE WEARY BLUES

LANGSTON HUGHES

Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
 I heard a Negro play.

Down on Lenox Avenue the other night
By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light
 He did a lazy sway . . .
 He did a lazy sway . . .

To the tune o' those Weary Blues.
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.

 O Blues!

Swaying to and fro on his rickety stool
He played that sad raggy tune like a musical fool.

 Sweet Blues!

Coming from a black man's soul.

 O Blues!

In a deep song voice with a melancholy tone
I heard that Negro sing, that old piano moan—

 "Ain't got nobody in all this world,
 Ain't got nobody but ma self.
 I's gwine to quit ma frownin'
 And put ma troubles on the shelf."

Thump, thump, thump, went his foot on the floor.
He played a few chords then he sang some more—

“I got the Weary Blues
And I can’t be satisfied.
Got the Weary Blues
And can’t be satisfied—
I ain’t happy no mo’
And I wish that I had died.”

And far into the night he crooned that tune.
The stars went out and so did the moon.
The singer stopped playing and went to bed
While the Weary Blues echoed through his head.
He slept like a rock or a man that’s dead.

TWO

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

I. Apart

One place—one roof—one name—their daily bread
In daily sacrament they break
Together, and together take
Perpetual counsel, such as use has fed
The habit of, in words which make
No lie. For courtesy's sweet sake
And pity's, one brave heart whose joy is dead,
Smiles ever, answering words which wake
But weariness; hides all its ache,—
Its hopeless ache, its longing and its dread;
Strong as a martyr at the stake
Renouncing self; striving to slake
The pangs of thirst on bitter hyssop red
With vinegar! O brave, strong heart!
God sets all days, all hours apart,
Joy cometh at his hour appointed.

II. Together

No touch—no sight—no sound—wide continents
And seas clasp hands to separate

Them from each other now. Too late!
Triumphant Love has leagued the elements
To do their will. Hath light a mate
For swiftness? Can it overweight
The air? Or doth the sun know accidents?
The light, the air, the sun, inviolate
For them, do constant keep and state
Message of their ineffable contents
And raptures, each in each. So great
Their bliss of loving, even fate
In parting them, hath found no instruments
Whose bitter pain insatiate
Doth kill it, or their faith abate
In presence of Love's hourly sacraments.

MOUNTAIN PINES

ROBINSON JEFFERS

In scornful upright loneliness they stand,
 Counting themselves no kin of anything
 Whether of earth or sky. Their gnarled roots cling
Like wasted fingers of a clutching hand
In the grim rock. A silent spectral band
 They watch the old sky, but hold no communing
 With aught. Only, when some lone eagle's wing
Flaps past above their grey and desolate land,
Or when the wind pants up a rough-hewn glen,
 Bending them down as with an age of thought,
 Or when, 'mid flying clouds that can not dull
Her constant light, the moon shines silver, then
 They find a soul, and their dim moan is wrought
 Into a singing sad and beautiful.

A PRAYER IN SIGNS

ALICE CORNELIA JENNINGS

No uttered word is ours—no solemn tone

The reverent air bears upward to the sky:

No eloquence of meaning, borne along

Of voice and accent, meet the God on high.

But dare ye tell us that we do not pray—

We who so truly “lift up hands of prayer,”

And by the speaking gesture mark the way,

Our heart’s desire would take to reach Him there?

“Our Father!” that appealing gesture lifts.

With force more potent than the spoken word,

Desire, petition for the precious gift

Held in the hand of One All-Seeing Lord.

“In Heaven!” we picture in the circling sweep

Of arm and hand, the glorious dome above;

“Holy Thy Name!” with reverent movement keep

The sacred thought of purity and love.

“Thy Kingdom!” with imperial touch we show.

The badge of royalty—the sceptre’s sway;

And that Thy glorious Will may work and grow

Potent and perfect, this and every day.

Our opened hands with daily bread to fill

The Lord we ask, "Forgive as we forgive":

O hearing brothers! We are like you still—

The hardest this to pray, and this to live.

From tempter's touch, whene'er beside he stands—

We pray Thee still our weakness to defend:

And by the symbol strong of broken bands

We crave deliverance, succor, to the end.

Once more the royal sign—"Thy Kingdom Thine!"

"The Power," that sign is vital, living, strong:

"The Glory": rays of brightness seem to shine

And scintillate around us, sweet and long.

"Forever and forever!" round and round

The finger sweeps, and who shall tell us then

Expression for the prayer we have not found,

Nor join us in our glad and grand "Amen"?

A COUNTRY BOY IN WINTER

SARAH ORNE JEWETT

The wind may blow the snow about,
For all I care, says Jack,
And I don't mind how cold it grows,
For then the ice won't crack.
Old folks may shiver all day long,
But I shall never freeze;
What cares a jolly boy like me
For winter days like these?

Far down the long snow-covered hills
It is such fun to coast,
So clear the road! the fastest sled
There is in school I boast.
The paint is pretty well worn off,
But then I take the lead;
A dandy sled's a loiterer,
And I go in for speed.

When I go home at supper-time,
Ki! but my cheeks are red!
They burn and sting like anything;
I'm cross until I'm fed.
You ought to see the biscuit go,

I am so hungry then;
And old Aunt Polly says that boys
Eat twice as much as men.

There's always something I can do
To pass the time away;
The dark comes quick in winter-time—
A short and stormy day
And when I give my mind to it,
It's just as father says,
I almost do a man's work now,
And help him many ways.

I shall be glad when I grow up
And get all through with school,
I'll show them by-and-by that I
Was not meant for a fool.
I'll take the crops off this old farm,
I'll do the best I can.
A jolly boy like me won't be
A dolt when he's a man.

I like to hear the old horse neigh
Just as I come in sight,
The oxen poke me with their horns
To get their hay at night.

Somehow the creatures seem like friends,
And like to see me come.
Some fellows talk about New York,
But I shall stay at home.

SEPARATION

SOPHIE JEWETT

Along the Eastern shore the low waves creep,
 Making a ceaseless music on the sand,
 A song that gulls and curlews understand,
 The lullaby that sings the day to sleep.
A thousand miles afar, the grim pines keep
 Unending watch upon a shoreless land,
 Yet through their tops, swept by some wizard hand,
 The sound of surf comes singing up the steep.
Sweet, thou canst hear the tidal litany;
 I, mid the pines land-wearied, may but dream
 Of the far shore; but though the distance seem
Between us fixed, impassable, to me
 Cometh thy soul's voice, chanting love's old theme,
 And mine doth answer, as the pines the sea.

1885

RULERS

FENTON JOHNSON

It is said that many a king in troubled Europe would sell his crown for a day of happiness.

I have seen a monarch who held tightly the jewel of happiness.

On Lombard street in Philadelphia, as evening dropped to earth, I gazed upon a laborer duskier than a sky devoid of moon. He was seated on a throne of flour bags, waving his hand imperiously as two small boys played on their guitars the ragtime tunes of the day.

God's blessing on the monarch who rules on Lombard Street in Philadelphia.

THE NEW DAY

FENTON JOHNSON

From a vision red with war I awoke and saw the Prince of
Peace hovering over No Man's Land.

Loud the whistles blew and the thunder of cannon was
drowned by the happy shouting of the people.

From the Sinai that faces Armageddon I heard this chant
from the throats of white-robed angels:

Blow your trumpets, little children!
From the East and from the West,
From the cities in the valley,
From God's dwelling on the mountain,
Blow your blast that Peace might know
She is Queen of God's great army.
With the crying blood of millions
We have written deep her name
In the Book of all the Ages;
With the lilies in the valley,
With the roses by the Mersey,
With the golden flower of Jersey
We have crowned her smooth young temples.
Where her footsteps cease to falter
Golden grain will greet the morning,
Where her chariot descends

Shall be broken down the altars
Of the gods of dark disturbance.
Nevermore shall men know suffering,
Nevermore shall women wailing
Shake to grief the God of Heaven.
From the East and from the West,
From the cities in the valley,
From God's dwelling on the mountain,
Little children, blow your trumpets!

From Ethiopia, groaning 'neath her heavy burdens, I heard
the music of the old slave songs.
I heard the wail of warriors, dusk brown, who grimly
fought the fight of others in the trenches of Mars.
I heard the plea of blood-stained men of dusk and the
crimson in my veins leapt furiously.

Forget not, O my brothers, how we fought
In No Man's Land that peace might come again!
Forget not, O my brothers, how we gave
Red blood to save the freedom of the world!
We were not free, our tawny hands were tied;
But Belgium's plight and Serbia's woes we shared
Each rise of sun or setting of the moon.
So when the bugle blast had called us forth
We went not like the surly brute of yore

But, as the Spartan, proud to give the world
The freedom that we never knew nor shared.
These chains, O brothers mine, have weighed us down
As Samson in the temple of the gods;
Unloosen them and let us breathe the air
That makes the goldenrod the flower of Christ.
For we have been with thee in No Man's Land,
Through lake of fire and down to Hell itself;
And now we ask of thee our liberty,
Our freedom in the land of Stars and Stripes.

I am glad that the Prince of Peace is hovering over No Man's Land.

BROTHERHOOD

GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON

Come, brothers all!
Shall we not wend
The blind-way of our prison-world
By sympathy entwined?
Shall we not make
The bleak way for each other's sake
Less rugged and unkind?
O let each throbbing heart repeat
The faint note of another's beat
To lift a chanson for the feet
That stumble down life's checkered street.

THE HEART OF A WOMAN

GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON

The heart of a woman goes forth with the dawn,
As a lone bird, soft winging, so restlessly on,
Afar o'er life's turrets and vales does it roam
In the wake of those echoes the heart calls home.

The heart of a woman falls back with the night,
And enters some alien cage in its plight,
And tries to forget it has dreamed of the stars
While it breaks, breaks, breaks on the sheltering bars.

A SOUTHERN ROAD

HELENE JOHNSON

Yolk-colored tongue
Parched beneath a burning sky,
A lazy little tune
Hummed up the crest of some
Soft sloping hill.
One streaming line of beauty
Flowing by a forest
Pregnant with tears.
A hidden nest for beauty
Idly flung by God
In one lonely lingering hour
Before the Sabbath.
A blue-fruited black gum,
Like a tall predella,
Bears a dangling figure,—
Sacrificial dower to the raff,
Swinging alone,
A solemn, tortured shadow in the air.

BEFORE A PAINTING

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

I knew not who had wrought with skill so fine

What I beheld; nor by what laws of art

He had created life and love and heart

On canvas, from mere color, curve and line.

Silent I stood and made no move or sign;

Not with the crowd, but reverently apart;

Nor felt the power my rooted limbs to start,

But mutely gazed upon that face divine.

And over me the sense of beauty fell,

As music over a raptured listener to

The deep-voiced organ breathing out a hymn;

Or as on one who kneels, his beads to tell,

There falls the aureate glory filtered through

The windows in some old cathedral dim.

POET OF OUR RACE

MAGGIE POGUE JOHNSON

Dedicated to the memory of Paul Laurence Dunbar

Oh, Poet of our Race,
We reverence thy name
As thy hist'ry we retrace,
Which enfolds thy widespread fame.
We loved thee, yea, too well,
But He didst love thee more
And called thee up with Him to dwell
On that Celestial shore.
Thy sorrows here on earth,
Yea, more than thou couldst bear,
Burdened thee from birth
E'en in their visions fair.
And thou, adored of men,
Whose bed might been of flowers,
With mighty stroke of pen
Expressed thy sad, sad hours.

Thou hast been called above,
Where all is peace and rest,
To dwell in boundless love,
Eternally and blest.

And, yet, thou still dost linger near,
For thy words, as sweetest flowers,
Do grow in beauty 'round us here
To cheer us in saddest hours.
Thy thoughts in rapture seem to soar
So far, yea, far above,
And shower a heavy downpour
Of sparkling, glittering love.
Thou, with stroke of mighty pen,
Hast told of joy and mirth,
And read the hearts and souls of men
As cradled from their birth.
The language of the flowers,
Thou hast read them all,
And e'en the little brook
Responded to thy call.
All Nature hast communed
And lingered, yea, with thee,
Their secrets were entombed
But thou hast made them free.
Oh, Poet of our Race,
Thou dost soar above;
No paths wilt thou retrace
But those of peace and love.
Thy pilgrimage is done,
Thy toils on earth are o'er,

Thy victor's crown is won,
Thou'lt rest forever more.

A SONG OF THANKS

EDWARD SMYTH JONES

For the sun that shone at the dawn of spring,
For the flowers which bloom and the birds that sing,
For the verdant robe of the gray old earth,
For her coffers filled with their countless worth,
For the flocks which feed on a thousand hills,
For the rippling streams which turn the mills,
For the lowing herds in the lovely vale,
For the songs of gladness on the gale,—
From the Gulf and the Lakes to the Oceans' banks,—
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!

For the farmer reaping his whitened fields,
For the bounty which the rich soil yields,
For the cooling dews and refreshing rains,
For the sun which ripens the golden grains,
For the bearded wheat and the fattened swine,
For the stalléd ox and the fruitful vine,
For the tubers large and cotton white,
For the kid and the lambkin frisk and blithe,
For the swan which floats near the river-banks,—
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!

For the pumpkin sweet and the yellow yam,

For the corn and beans and the sugared ham,
For the plum and the peach and the apple red,
For the dear old press where the wine is tread,
For the cock which crows at the breaking dawn,
And the proud old "turk" at the farmer's barn,
For the fish which swim in the babbling brooks,
For the game which hide in the shady nooks,—
From the Gulf and the Lakes to the Oceans' banks —
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!

For the sturdy oaks and the stately pines,
For the lead and the coal from the deep, dark mines,
For the silver ores of a thousand fold,
For the diamond bright and the yellow gold,
For the river boat and the flying train,
For the fleecy sail of the rolling main,
For the velvet sponge and the glossy pearl,
For the flag of peace which we now unfurl—
From the Gulf and the Lakes to the Oceans' banks—
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!

For the lowly cot and the mansion fair,
For the peace and plenty together share,
For the Hand which guides us from above,
For Thy tender mercies, abiding love,
For the blessed home with its children gay,

For returnings of Thanksgiving Day,
For the bearing toils and the sharing cares,
We lift up our hearts in our songs and our prayers—
From the Gulf and the Lakes to the Oceans' banks—
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!

MOUNTAIN STORM

YOUNGHILL KANG

Black clouds, lion-shaped,

White clouds, elephant-like, yonder.

Crash! Crash! Thundering as if breaking the sky into two pieces.

Slash! Slash! Lightening to cut the mountain top off.

The Storm extends from sky to earth,

Youth's vigour, love's passion, beauty's rapture.

Then Pearl-drops of hail – hundreds of jade-pieces,

Tok-tok-tok-tok-tok, monastery jingling bell.

Again soft slender rain.

Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh! whispering to the lover's ear alone:

"I love you, I love you, ever, ever, ever, ever."

SONNET

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE

Cover me with your everlasting arms,
Ye guardian giants of this solitude!
From the ill-sight of men, and from the rude,
Tumultuous din of yon wild world's alarms!
Oh, knit your mighty limbs around, above,
And close me in for ever! let me dwell
With the wood spirits, in the darkest cell
That ever with your verdant locks ye wove.
The air is full of countless voices, joined
In one eternal hymn; the whispering wind,
The shuddering leaves, the hidden water springs,
The work-song of the bees, whose honeyed wings
Hang in the golden tresses of the lime,
Or buried lie in purple beds of thyme.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming;
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner; O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,

From the terror of flight and the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land,
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just.
And this be our motto— "In God is our trust;"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

TREES

JOYCE KILMER

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

GRASSES

ALFRED KREYMBORG

Who
would decry
instruments—
when grasses
ever so fragile,
provide strings
stout enough for
insect moods
to glide up and down
in glissandos
of toes along wires
or finger-tips on zithers—
 though
 the mere sounds
 be theirs, not ours—
 theirs, not ours,
 the first inspiration—
 discord
 without resolution—
who
would cry
being loved,
when even such tinkling

comes of the loving?

LONG ISLAND SOUND

EMMA LAZARUS

I see it as it looked one afternoon
In August,— by a fresh soft breeze o'erblown.
The swiftness of the tide, the light thereon,
A far-off sail, white as a crescent moon.
The shining waters with pale currents strewn,
The quiet fishing-smacks, the Eastern cove,
The semi-circle of its dark, green grove.
The luminous grasses, and the merry sun
In the grave sky; the sparkle far and wide,
Laughter of unseen children, cheerful chirp
Of crickets, and low lisp of rippling tide,
Light summer clouds fantastical as sleep
Changing unnoted while I gazed thereon.
All these fair sounds and sights I made my own.

THE NEW COLOSSUS

EMMA LAZARUS

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

THE NEW YEAR

EMMA LAZARUS

Rosh-Hashanah, 5643

Not while the snow-shroud round dead earth is rolled,
And naked branches point to frozen skies.—
When orchards burn their lamps of fiery gold,
The grape glows like a jewel, and the corn
A sea of beauty and abundance lies,
Then the new year is born.

Look where the mother of the months uplifts
In the green clearness of the unsunned West,
Her ivory horn of plenty, dropping gifts,
Cool, harvest-feeding dews, fine-winnowed light;
Tired labor with fruition, joy and rest
Profusely to requite.

Blow, Israel, the sacred cornet! Call
Back to thy courts whatever faint heart throb
With thine ancestral blood, thy need craves all.
The red, dark year is dead, the year just born
Leads on from anguish wrought by priest and mob,
To what undreamed-of morn?

For never yet, since on the holy height,
The Temple's marble walls of white and green
Carved like the sea-waves, fell, and the world's light
Went out in darkness,—never was the year
Greater with portent and with promise seen,
Than this eve now and here.

Even as the Prophet promised, so your tent
Hath been enlarged unto earth's farthest rim.
To snow-capped Sierras from vast steppes ye went,
Through fire and blood and tempest-tossing wave,
For freedom to proclaim and worship Him,
Mighty to slay and save.

High above flood and fire ye held the scroll,
Out of the depths ye published still the Word.
No bodily pang had power to swerve your soul:
Ye, in a cynic age of crumbling faiths,
Lived to bear witness to the living Lord,
Or died a thousand deaths.

In two divided streams the exiles part,
One rolling homeward to its ancient source,
One rushing sunward with fresh will, new heart.
By each the truth is spread, the law unfurled,
Each separate soul contains the nation's force,

And both embrace the world.

Kindle the silver candle's seven rays,
Offer the first fruits of the clustered bowers,
The garnered spoil of bees. With prayer and praise
Rejoice that once more tried, once more we prove
How strength of supreme suffering still is ours
For Truth and Law and Love.

KUMULIPO, WĀ I

QUEEN LILI'UOKALANI

WĀ'EKAHI

O ke au i kahuli wela ka honua

O ke au i kahuli lole ka lani

O ke au i kukaiaka ka la.

E hoomalamalama i ka malama

O ke au o Makali'i ka po

O ka walewale hookumu honua ia

O ke kumu o ka lipo, i lipo ai

O ke kumu o ka Po, i po ai

O ka lipolipo, o ka lipolipo

O ka lipo o ka la, o ka lipo o ka po

Po wale hoi

Hanau ka po

At the time that turned the heat of the earth,

At the time when the heavens turned and changed,

At the time when the light of the sun was subdued

To cause light to break forth,

At the time of the night of Makalii (winter)

Then began the slime which established the earth,

The source of deepest darkness.

Of the depth of darkness, of the depth of darkness,

Of the darkness of the sun, in the depth of night,

It is night,
So was night born

TO ROSA

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

You are young, and I am older;
You are hopeful, I am not—
Enjoy life, ere it grow colder—
Pluck the roses ere they rot.

Teach your beau to heed the lay—
That sunshine soon is lost in shade—
That now's as good as any day—
To take thee, Rosa, ere she fade.

MEETING OURSELVES

VACHEL LINDSAY

We met ourselves as we came back
As we hiked the trail from the north.
Our foot-prints mixed in the rainy path
Coming back and going forth.
The prints of my comrade's hob-nailed shoes
And my tramp shoes mixed in the rain.
We had climbed for days and days to the North
And this was the sum of our gain:
We met ourselves as we came back,
And were happy in mist and rain.
Our old souls and our new souls
Met to salute and explain—
That a day shall be as a thousand years,
And a thousand years as a day.
The powers of a thousand dreaming skies
As we shouted along the trail of surprise
Were gathered in our play:
The purple skies of the South and the North,
The crimson skies of the South and the North,
Of tomorrow and yesterday.

THE AMARANTH

VACHEL LINDSAY

Ah, in the night, all music haunts me here. . . .
Is it for naught high Heaven cracks and yawns
And the tremendous Amaranth descends
Sweet with the glory of ten thousand dawns?

Does it not mean my God would have me say: —
“Whether you will or no, O city young,
Heaven will bloom like one great flower for you,
Flash and loom greatly all your marts among?”

Friends, I will not cease hoping though you weep.
Such things I see, and some of them shall come
Though now our streets are harsh and ashen-gray,
Though our strong youths are strident now, or dumb.
Friends, that sweet torn, that wonder-town, shall rise.
Naught can delay it. Though it may not be
Just as I dream, it comes at last I know
With streets like channels of an incense-sea.

TO MISS VIC

JOHN GUNTER LIPE

I stand at the portal and knock,
And tearfully, prayerfully wait.
O! who will unfasten the lock,
And open the beautiful gate?

Forever and ever and ever,
Must I linger and suffer alone?
Are there none that are able to sever,
The fetters that keep me from home?

My spirit is lonely and weary,
I long for the beautiful streets.
The world is so chilly and dreary,
And bleeding and torn are my feet.

Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation.

BOLIVAR

LUIS LLORÉNS TORRES

translated from the Spanish by Muna Lee

Poet, soldier, statesman, hero, he stands—
Great, like the countries whose freedom he won;
He whom no country can claim as her son,
Though as his daughters were born many lands.

His was the valor of who bears a sword;
His was the courtesy of who wears a flower:
Entering salons, he laid by the sword;
Plunging in battles, he tossed away the flower.

The peaks of the Andes to him seemed to be
But exclamation points after his stride:
Soldier-poet he was; poet-soldier was he!

Each land that he freed
Was a soldier's poem and a poet's deed:
And he was crucified.

CHRISTMAS BELLS

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
 And wild and sweet
 The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
 Had rolled along
 The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
 A voice, a chime,
 A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
 And with the sound
 The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
 And made forlorn
 The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
 "For hate is strong,
 And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
 The Wrong shall fail,
 The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

HAUNTED HOUSES

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

All houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.

We meet them at the door-way, on the stair,
Along the passages they come and go,
Impalpable impressions on the air,
A sense of something moving to and fro.

There are more guests at table than the hosts
Invited; the illuminated hall
Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
As silent as the pictures on the wall.

The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is; while unto me
All that has been is visible and clear.

We have no title-deeds to house or lands;
Owners and occupants of earlier dates
From graves forgotten stretch their dusty hands,

And hold in mortmain still their old estates.

The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.

Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires.

These perturbations, this perpetual jar
Of earthly wants and aspirations high,
Come from the influence of an unseen star
An undiscovered planet in our sky.

And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud
Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
Into the realm of mystery and night,—

So from the world of spirits there descends
A bridge of light, connecting it with this,
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss.

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Aspasie, trillistos.

I heard the trailing garments of the Night

Sweep through her marble halls!

I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light

From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,

Stoop o'er me from above;

The calm, majestic presence of the Night,

As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,

The manifold, soft chimes,

That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,

Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air

My spirit drank repose;

The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—

From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear

What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

MEZZO CAMMIN

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Half of my life is gone, and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspiration of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.
Not indolence, nor pleasure, nor the fret
Of restless passions that would not be stilled,
But sorrow, and a care that almost killed,
Kept me from what I may accomplish yet;
Though, half-way up the hill, I see the Past
Lying beneath me with its sounds and sights,—
A city in the twilight dim and vast,
With smoking roofs, soft bells, and gleaming lights,—
And hear above me on the autumnal blast
The cataract of Death far thundering from the heights.

SONG

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care;
 To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
 To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest;
The bird is safest in its nest;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky;
 To stay at home is best.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Between the dark and the daylight,
 When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
 That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
 The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
 And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
 Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
 And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
 Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
 To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
 A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded

They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret

O'er the arms and back of my chair;

If I try to escape, they surround me;

They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,

Their arms about me entwine,

Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen

In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,

Because you have scaled the wall,

Such an old mustache as I am

Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,

And will not let you depart,

But put you down into the dungeon

In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,

Yes, forever and a day,

Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,

And moulder in dust away!

THE CROSS OF SNOW

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face — the face of one long dead —
Looks at me from the wall, where round its head
The night-lamp casts a halo of pale light.
Here in this room she died; and soul more white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose; nor can in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.
There is a mountain in the distant West
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

THE LIGHT OF STARS

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

The night is come, but not too soon;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven
But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love?
The star of love and dreams?
O no! from that blue tent above,
A hero's armor gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain;
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,

And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light
But the cold light of stars;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm, and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

O fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

THE TIDE RISES, THE TIDE FALLS

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveller hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Under a spreading chestnut-tree

 The village smithy stands;

The smith, a mighty man is he,

 With large and sinewy hands,

And the muscles of his brawny arms

 Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long;

 His face is like the tan;

His brow is wet with honest sweat,

 He earns whate'er he can,

And looks the whole world in the face,

 For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,

 You can hear his bellows blow;

You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,

 With measured beat and slow,

Like a sexton ringing the village bell,

 When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school

 Look in at the open door;

They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

A LADY

AMY LOWELL

You are beautiful and faded,
Like an old opera tune
Played upon a harpsichord;
Or like the sun-flooded silks
Of an eighteenth-century boudoir. In your eyes
Smoulder the fallen roses of outlived minutes,
And the perfume of your soul
Is vague and suffusing,
With the pungence of sealed spice-jars.
Your half-tones delight me,
And I grow mad with gazing
At your blent colors.

My vigor is a new-minted penny,
Which I cast at your feet.
Gather it up from the dust
That its sparkle may amuse you.

FROM ONE WHO STAYS

AMY LOWELL

How empty seems the town now you are gone!
A wilderness of sad streets, where gaunt walls
Hide nothing to desire; sunshine falls
Eery, distorted, as it long had shone
On white, dead faces tombed in halls of stone.
The whirl of motors, stricken through with calls
Of playing boys, floats up at intervals;
But all these noises blur to one long moan.
What quest is worth pursuing? And how strange
That other men still go accustomed ways!
I hate their interest in the things they do.
A spectre-horde repeating without change
An old routine. Alone I know the days
Are still-born, and the world stopped, lacking you.

THE LITTLE GARDEN

AMY LOWELL

A little garden on a bleak hillside
Where deep the heavy, dazzling mountain snow
Lies far into the spring. The sun's pale glow
Is scarcely able to melt patches wide
About the single rose bush. All denied
Of nature's tender ministries. But no, —
For wonder-working faith has made it blow
With flowers many hued and starry-eyed.
Here sleeps the sun long, idle summer hours;
Here butterflies and bees fare far to rove
Amid the crumpled leaves of poppy flowers;
Here four o'clocks, to the passionate night above
Fling whiffs of perfume, like pale incense showers.
A little garden, loved with a great love!

ROUEN, PLACE DE LA PUCELLE

MARIA WHITE LOWELL

Here blooms the legend, fed by Time and Chance,
 Fresh as the morning, though with centuries old,
The whitest lily on the shield of France,
 With heart of virgin gold.

Along the square she moved, sweet Joan of Arc,
 With face more pallid than a daylit star,
Half-seen, half-doubted, while before her dark
 Stretched the array of war.

Swift passed the battle-smoke of lying breath
 From off her path, as if a wind had blown,
Showing no faithless King, but righteous Death
 On the low wooden throne.

He would reward her: she who meekly wore
 Alike the gilded mail and peasant gown,
As meekly now received one honor more,
 The formless, fiery crown.

A white dove trembled up the heated air,
 And in the opening zenith found its goal;
Soft as a downward feather, dropped a prayer

For each repentant soul.

FIDDLER JONES

EDGAR LEE MASTERS

The earth keeps some vibration going
There in your heart, and that is you.
And if the people find you can fiddle,
Why, fiddle you must, for all your life.
What do you see, a harvest of clover?
Or a meadow to walk through to the river?
The wind's in the corn; you rub your hands
For beeves hereafter ready for market;
Or else you hear the rustle of skirts
Like the girls when dancing at Little Grove.
To Cooney Potter a pillar of dust
Or whirling leaves meant ruinous drouth;
They looked to me like Red-Head Sammy
Stepping it off, to "Toor-a-Loor."
How could I till my forty acres
Not to speak of getting more,
With a medley of horns, bassoons and piccolos
Stirred in my brain by crows and robins
And the creak of a wind-mill—only these?
And I never started to plow in my life
That some one did not stop in the road
And take me away to a dance or picnic.
I ended up with forty acres;

I ended up with a broken fiddle—
And a broken laugh, and a thousand memories,
And not a single regret.

A JANUARY DANDELION

GEORGE MARION MCCLELLAN

All Nashville is a chill. And everywhere
Like desert sand, when the winds blow,
There is each moment sifted through the air,
A powdered blast of January snow.
O! thoughtless Dandelion, to be misled
By a few warm days to leave thy natural bed,
Was folly growth and blooming over soon.
And yet, thou blasted yellow-coated gem,
Full many a heart has but a common boon
With thee, now freezing on thy slender stem.
When the heart has bloomed by the touch of love's warm breath
Then left and chilling snow is sifted in,
It still may beat but there is blast and death
To all that blooming life that might have been.

THE FEET OF JUDAS

GEORGE MARION MCCLELLAN

Christ washed the feet of Judas!

The dark and evil passions of his soul,
His secret plot, and sordidness complete,
His hate, his purposing, Christ knew the whole.
And still in love he stooped and washed his feet.

Christ washed the feet of Judas!

Yet all his lurking sin was bare to him,
His bargain with the priest, and more than this,
In Olivet, beneath the moonlight dim,
Aforehand knew and felt his treacherous kiss.

Christ washed the feet of Judas!

And so ineffable his love 'twas meet,
That pity fill his great forgiving heart,
And tenderly to wash the traitor's feet,
Who in his Lord had basely sold his part.

Christ washed the feet of Judas!

And thus a girded servant, self-abased,
Taught that no wrong this side the gate of heaven
Was ever too great to wholly be effaced,
And though unasked, in spirit be forgiven.

And so if we have ever felt the wrong
Of Trampled rights, of caste, it matters not,
What e'er the soul has felt or suffered long,
Oh, heart! this one thing should not be forgot:
Christ washed the feet of Judas.

NOTHING TO DO

JAMES EPHRAIM MCGIRT

The fields are white;
The laborers are few;
Yet say the idle:
There's nothing to do.

Jails are crowded;
In Sunday-schools few;
We still complain:
There's nothing to do.

Drunkards are dying—
Your sons, it is true;
Mothers' arms folded
With nothing to do.

Heathens are dying;
Their blood falls on you;
How can you people
Find nothing to do?

I SHALL RETURN

CLAUDE MCKAY

I shall return again; I shall return
To laugh and love and watch with wonder-eyes
At golden noon the forest fires burn,
Wafting their blue-black smoke to sapphire skies.
I shall return to loiter by the streams
That bathe the brown blades of the bending grasses,
And realize once more my thousand dreams
Of waters rushing down the mountain passes.
I shall return to hear the fiddle and fife
Of village dances, dear delicious tunes
That stir the hidden depths of native life,
Stray melodies of dim remembered runes.
I shall return, I shall return again,
To ease my mind of long, long years of pain.

MY HOUSE

CLAUDE MCKAY

For this peculiar tint that paints my house
Peculiar in an alien atmosphere
Where other houses wear a kindred hue,
I have a stirring always very rare
And romance-making in my ardent blood,
That channels through my body like a flood.

I know the dark delight of being strange,
The penalty of difference in the crowd,
The loneliness of wisdom among fools,
Yet never have I felt but very proud,
Though I have suffered agonies of hell,
Of living in my own peculiar cell.

There is an exaltation of man's life,
His hidden life, that he alone can feel.
The blended fires that heat his veins within,
Shaping his metals into finest steel,
Are elements from his own native earth,
That the wise gods bestowed on him at birth.

Oh each man's mind contains an unknown realm
Walled in from other men however near,

An unimagined in their highest flights
Of comprehension or of vision clear;
A realm where he withdraws to contemplate
Infinity and his own finite state.

Thence he may sometimes catch a god-like glimpse
Of mysteries that seems beyond life's bar;
Thence he may hurt his little shaft at heaven
And bring down accidentally a star,
And drink its foamy dust like sparkling wine
And echo accents of the laugh divine.

Then he may fall into a drunken sleep
And wake up in his same house painted blue
Or white or green or red or brown or black—
His house, his own, whatever be the hue.
But things for him will not be what they seem
To average men since he has dreamt his dream!

WHEN I HAVE PASSED AWAY

CLAUDE MCKAY

When I have passed away and am forgotten,
 And no one living can recall my face,
When under alien sod my bones lie rotten
 With not a tree or stone to mark the place;

Perchance a pensive youth, with passion burning,
 For olden verse that smacks of love and wine,
The musty pages of old volumes turning,
 May light upon a little song of mine,

And he may softly hum the tune and wonder
 Who wrote the verses in the long ago;
Or he may sit him down awhile to ponder
 Upon the simple words that touch him so.

BALL'S BLUFF

HERMAN MELVILLE

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

HERMAN MELVILLE

(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.

INSCRIPTION

HERMAN MELVILLE

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.

SHILOH: A REQUIEM (APRIL, 1862)

HERMAN MELVILLE

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 MALDIVE SHARK

HERMAN MELVILLE

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.

THE MARCH INTO VIRGINIA

HERMAN MELVILLE

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 belauled 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 are spent—
 Perish, enlightened by the vollied glare;
Or shame survive, and, like to adamant,
 The throe of Second Manassas share.

THE STONE FLEET

HERMAN MELVILLE

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.

INFELIX

ADAH ISAACS MENKEN

Where is the promise of my years;
 Once written on my brow?
Ere errors, agonies and fears
Brought with them all that speaks in tears,
Ere I had sunk beneath my peers;
 Where sleeps that promise now?

Naught lingers to redeem those hours,
 Still, still to memory sweet!
The flowers that bloomed in sunny bowers
Are withered all; and Evil towers
Supreme above her sister powers
 Of Sorrow and Deceit.

I look along the columned years,
 And see Life's riven fane,
Just where it fell, amid the jeers
Of scornful lips, whose mocking sneers,
For ever hiss within mine ears
 To break the sleep of pain.

I can but own my life is vain
 A desert void of peace;

I missed the goal I sought to gain,
I missed the measure of the strain
That lulls Fame's fever in the brain,
And bids Earth's tumult cease.

Myself! alas for theme so poor
A theme but rich in Fear;
I stand a wreck on Error's shore,
A spectre not within the door,
A houseless shadow evermore,
An exile lingering here.

AFTERNOON ON A HILL

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

I will be the gladdest thing

Under the sun!

I will touch a hundred flowers

And not pick one.

I will look at cliffs and clouds

With quiet eyes,

Watch the wind bow down the grass,

And the grass rise.

And when lights begin to show

Up from the town,

I will mark which must be mine,

And then start down!

ELEGY BEFORE DEATH

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

There will be rose and rhododendron
 When you are dead and under ground;
Still will be heard from white syringas
 Heavy with bees, a sunny sound;

Still will the tamaracks be raining
 After the rain has ceased, and still
Will there be robins in the stubble,
 Brown sheep upon the warm green hill.

Spring will not ail nor autumn falter;
 Nothing will know that you are gone,
Saving alone some sullen plough-land
 None but yourself sets foot upon;

Saving the may-weed and the pig-weed
 Nothing will know that you are dead,—
These, and perhaps a useless wagon
 Standing beside some tumbled shed.

Oh, there will pass with your great passing
 Little of beauty not your own,—
Only the light from common water,

Only the grace from simple stone!

I SHALL FORGET YOU PRESENTLY, MY DEAR (SONNET IV)

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

I shall forget you presently, my dear,
So make the most of this, your little day,
Your little month, your little half a year
Ere I forget, or die, or move away,
And we are done forever; by and by
I shall forget you, as I said, but now,
If you entreat me with your loveliest lie
I will protest you with my favorite vow.
I would indeed that love were longer-lived,
And vows were not so brittle as they are,
But so it is, and nature has contrived
To struggle on without a break thus far,—
Whether or not we find what we are seeking
Is idle, biologically speaking.

LOW-TIDE

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

These wet rocks where the tide has been,
 Barnacled white and weeded brown
And slimed beneath to a beautiful green,
 These wet rocks where the tide went down
Will show again when the tide is high
 Faint and perilous, far from shore,
No place to dream, but a place to die,—
 The bottom of the sea once more.
There was a child that wandered through
 A giant's empty house all day,—
House full of wonderful things and new,
 But no fit place for a child to play.

NEVER MAY THE FRUIT BE PICKED

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Never, never may the fruit be plucked from the bough
And gathered into barrels.
He that would eat of love must eat it where it hangs.
Though the branches bend like reeds,
Though the ripe fruit splash in the grass or wrinkle on the tree,
He that would eat of love may bear away with him
Only what his belly can hold,
Nothing in the apron,
Nothing in the pockets.
Never, never may the fruit be gathered from the bough
And harvested in barrels.
The winter of love is a cellar of empty bins,
In an orchard soft with rot.

SOUVENIR

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Just a rainy day or two
In a windy tower,
That was all I had of you—
Saving half an hour.
Marred by greeting passing groups
In a cinder walk,
Near some naked blackberry hoops
Dim with purple chalk.
I remember three or four
Things you said in spite,
And an ugly coat you wore,
Plaided black and white.
Just a rainy day or two
And a bitter word.
Why do I remember you
As a singing bird?

A SUGGESTED CAMPAIGN SONG

ALICE DUER MILLER

("No brass bands. No speeches. Instead a still, silent, effective influence."—*Anti-suffrage speech.*)

We are waging—can you doubt it?

A campaign so calm and still

No one knows a thing about it

And we hope they never will.

No one knows

What we oppose,

And we hope they never will.

We are ladylike and quiet,

Here a whisper—there a hint;

Never speeches, bands or riot,

Nothing suitable for print.

No one knows

What we oppose,

For we never speak for print.

Sometimes in profound seclusion,

In some far (but homelike) spot,

We will make a dark allusion:

"We're opposed to you-know-what."

No one knows

What we oppose,
For we call it "You-Know-What."

DO YOU KNOW

ALICE DUER MILLER

That in 1869 Miss Jex-Blake and four other women entered for a medical degree at the University of Edinburgh?

That the president of the College of Physicians refused to give the women the prizes they had won?

That the undergraduates insulted any professor who allowed women to compete for prizes?

That the women were stoned in the streets, and finally excluded from the medical school?

That in 1877 the British Medical Association declared women ineligible for membership?

That in 1881 the International Medical Congress excluded women from all but its "social and ceremonial meetings"?

That the Obstetrical Society refused to allow a woman's name to appear on the title page of a pamphlet which she had written with her husband?

That according to a recent dispatch from London, many hospitals, since the outbreak of hostilities, have asked women to become resident physicians, and public authorities are daily endeavoring to obtain women as assistant medical officers and as school doctors?

INTRODUCTION

ALICE DUER MILLER

Father, what is a Legislature?

A representative body elected by the people of the state.

Are women people?

No, my son, criminals, lunatics and women are not people.

Do legislators legislate for nothing?

Oh, no; they are paid a salary.

By whom?

By the people.

Are women people?

Of course, my son, just as much as men are.

OUR OWN TWELVE ANTI-SUFFRAGIST REASONS

ALICE DUER MILLER

1. Because no woman will leave her domestic duties to vote.
2. Because no woman who may vote will attend to her domestic duties.
3. Because it will make dissension between husband and wife.
4. Because every woman will vote as her husband tells her to.
5. Because bad women will corrupt politics.
6. Because bad politics will corrupt women.
7. Because women have no power of organization.
8. Because women will form a solid party and outvote men.
9. Because men and women are so different that they must stick to different duties.
10. Because men and women are so much alike that men, with one vote each, can represent their own views and ours too.
11. Because women cannot use force.

12. Because the militants did use force.

PARTNERS

ALICE DUER MILLER

("Our laws have not yet reached the point of holding that property which is the result of the husband's earnings and the wife's savings becomes their joint property....In this most important of all partnerships there is no partnership property."—*Recent decision of the New York Supreme Court.*)

Lady, share the praise I obtain

Now and again;

Though I'm shy, it doesn't matter,

I will tell you how they flatter:

Every compliment I'll share

Fair and square.

Lady, I my toil will divide

At your side;

I outside the home, you within;

You shall wash and cook and spin,

I'll provide the flax and food,

If you're good.

Partners, lady, we shall be,

You and me,

Partners in the highest sense

Looking for no recompense,

For, the savings that we make,

I shall take.

REPRESENTATION

ALICE DUER MILLER

("My wife is against suffrage, and that settles me."—Vice-President Marshall.)

I.

My wife dislikes the income tax,
And so I cannot pay it;
She thinks that golf all interest lacks,
So now I never play it;
She is opposed to tolls repeal
(Though why I cannot say),
But woman's duty is to feel,
And man's is to obey.

II.

I'm in a hard position for a perfect gentleman,
I want to please the ladies, but I don't see how I can,
My present wife's a suffragist, and counts on my support,
But my mother is an anti, of a rather biting sort;
One grandmother is on the fence, the other much opposed,
And my sister lives in Oregon, she thinks the question's closed;
Each one is counting on my vote to represent her view.
Now what should you think proper for a gentleman to do?

THE PROTECTED SEX

ALICE DUER MILLER

With apologies to James Whitcomb Riley.

("The result of taking second place to girls at school is that the boy feels a sense of inferiority that he is never afterward able to entirely shake off."—*Editorial in London Globe against co-education.*)

There, little girl, don't read,
You're fond of your books, I know,
But Brother might mope
If he had no hope
Of getting ahead of you.
It's dull for a boy who cannot lead.
There, little girl, don't read.

WHAT GOVERNMENTS SAY TO WOMEN

ALICE DUER MILLER

(The law compels a married woman to take the nationality of her husband.)

I.

In Time of War

Help us. Your country needs you;

 Show that you love her,

Give her your men to fight,

 Ay, even to fall;

The fair, free land of your birth,

 Set nothing above her,

Not husband nor son,

 She must come first of all.

II.

In Time of Peace

What's this? You've wed an alien,

 Yet you ask for legislation

To guard your nationality?

 We're shocked at your demand.

A woman when she marries

 Takes her husband's name and nation:

She should love her husband only.

 What's a woman's native land?

WHY WE OPPOSE POCKETS FOR WOMEN

ALICE DUER MILLER

1. Because pockets are not a natural right.
2. Because the great majority of women do not want pockets. If they did they would have them.
3. Because whenever women have had pockets they have not used them.
4. Because women are required to carry enough things as it is, without the additional burden of pockets.
5. Because it would make dissension between husband and wife as to whose pockets were to be filled.
6. Because it would destroy man's chivalry toward woman, if he did not have to carry all her things in his pockets.
7. Because men are men, and women are women. We must not fly in the face of nature.
8. Because pockets have been used by men to carry tobacco, pipes, whiskey flasks, chewing gum and compromising letters. We see no reason to suppose that women would use them more wisely.

WHY WE OPPOSE WOMEN TRAVELLING IN RAILWAY TRAINS

ALICE DUER MILLER

1. Because travelling in trains is not a natural right.
2. Because our great-grandmothers never asked to travel in trains.
3. Because woman's place is the home, not the train.
4. Because it is unnecessary; there is no point reached by a train that cannot be reached on foot.
5. Because it will double the work of conductors, engineers and brakemen who are already overburdened.
6. Because men smoke and play cards in trains. Is there any reason to believe that women will behave better?

IN THE YELLOWSTONE

HARRIET MONROE

Little pin-prick geysers, spitting and sputtering;

Little foaming geysers, that spatter and cough;

Bubbling geysers, that gurgle out of the calyx of morning glory pools;

Laughing geysers, that dance in the sun, and spread their robes like lace
over the rocks;

Raging geysers, that rush out of hell with a great noise, and blurt out vast
dragon-gulps of steam, and,

finishing, sink back wearily into darkness;

Glad geysers, nymphs of the sun, that rise, slim and nude, out of the hot
dark earth, and stand poised in

beauty a moment, veiling their brows and breasts in mist;

Winged geysers, spirits of fire, that rise tall and straight like a sequoia, and
plume the sky with foam:

O wild choral fountains, forever singing and seething, forever boiling in deep
places and leaping forth for

bright moments into the air,

How do you like it up here? Why must you go back to the spirits of dark-
ness? What do you tell them

down there about your little glorious life in the sun?

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

CLEMENT CLARKE MOORE

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!

Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St. Nicholas too.
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,

And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle,
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."

POETRY

MARIANNE MOORE

I too, dislike it: there are things that are important beyond all this fiddle.

Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers that there is in

it after all, a place for the genuine.

Hands that can grasp, eyes

that can dilate, hair that can rise

if it must, these things are important not because a

high-sounding interpretation can be put upon them but because they are useful; when they become so derivative as to become unintelligible, the same thing may be said for all of us—that we

do not admire what

we cannot understand. The bat,

holding on upside down or in quest of something to

eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll, a tireless wolf under

a tree, the immovable critic twinkling his skin like a horse that feels a flea, the base—

ball fan, the statistician—case after case

could be cited did

one wish it; nor is it valid

to discriminate against “business documents and

school-books"; all these phenomena are important. One must make a distinction

however: when dragged into prominence by half poets, the result is not poetry,

nor till the autocrats among us can be

"literalists of

the imagination"—above

insolence and triviality and can present

for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads in them, shall we have

it. In the meantime, if you demand on the one hand, in defiance of their opinion—

the raw material of poetry in

all its rawness, and

that which is on the other hand,

genuine, then you are interested in poetry.

THE FISH

MARIANNE MOORE

wade

through black jade.

Of the crow-blue mussel-shells, one keeps

adjusting the ash-heaps;

opening and shutting itself like

an

injured fan.

The barnacles which encrust the side

of the wave, cannot hide

there for the submerged shafts of the

sun,

split like spun

glass, move themselves with spotlight swiftness

into the crevices—

in and out, illuminating

the

turquoise sea

of bodies. The water drives a wedge

of iron through the iron edge

of the cliff; whereupon the stars,

pink

rice-grains, ink-

bespattered jelly fish, crabs like green

lilies, and submarine

toadstools, slide each on the other.

All

external

marks of abuse are present on this

defiant edifice—

all the physical features of

ac-

cident—lack

of cornice, dynamite grooves, burns, and

hatchet strokes, these things stand

out on it; the chasm-side is

dead.

Repeated

evidence has proved that it can live

on what can not revive

its youth. The sea grows old in it.

THE PAPER NAUTILUS

MARIANNE MOORE

For authorities whose hopes
are shaped by mercenaries?
Writers entrapped by
teatime fame and by
commuters' comforts? Not for these
the paper nautilus
constructs her thin glass shell.

Giving her perishable
souvenir of hope, a dull
white outside and smooth-
edged inner surface
glossy as the sea, the watchful
maker of it guards it
day and night; she scarcely

eats until the eggs are hatched.
Buried eight-fold in her eight
arms, for she is in
a sense a devil-
fish, her glass ramshorn-cradled freight
is hid but is not crushed.
As Hercules, bitten

by a crab loyal to the hydra,
was hindered to succeed,
the intensively
watched eggs coming from
the shell free it when they are freed,—
leaving its wasp-nest flaws
of white on white, and close-

laid Ionic chiton-folds
like the lines in the mane of
A Parthenon horse,
round which the arms had
wound themselves as if they knew love
is the only fortress
strong enough to trust to.

THE PAST IS THE PRESENT

MARIANNE MOORE

Revived bitterness
is unnecessary unless
 One is ignorant.

To-morrow will be
Yesterday unless you say the
 Days of the week back-

Ward. Last weeks' circus
Overflow frames an old grudge. Thus:
 When you attempt to

Force the doors and come
At the cause of the shouts, you thumb
 A brass nailed echo.

IT WAS NOT FATE

WILLIAM H. A. MOORE

It was not fate which overtook me,
Rather a wayward, wilful wind
That blew hot for awhile
And then, as the even shadows came, blew cold.
What pity it is that a man grown old in life's dreaming
Should stop, e'en for a moment, to look into a woman's eyes.
And I forgot!
Forgot that one's heart must be steeled against the east wind.
Life and death alike come out of the East:
Life as tender as young grass,
Death as dreadful as the sight of clotted blood.
I shall go back into the darkness,
Not to dream but to seek the light again.
I shall go by paths, mayhap,
On roads that wind around the foothills
Where the plains are bare and wild
And the passers-by come few and far between.
I want the night to be long, the moon blind.
The hills thick with moving memories,
And my heart beating a breathless requiem
For all the dead days I have lived.
When the Dawn comes—Dawn, deathless, dreaming—
I shall will that my soul must be cleansed of hate,

I shall pray for strength to hold children close to my heart,

I shall desire to build houses where the poor will know

shelter, comfort, beauty.

And then may I look into a woman's eyes

And find holiness, love and the peace which passeth understanding.

O SEA, THAT KNOWEST THY STRENGTH

EFFIE LEE NEWSOM

Hast thou been known to sing,
 O sea, that knowest thy strength?
Hast thou been known to sing?
 Thy voice, can it rejoice?
Naught save great sorrowing,
 To me, thy sounds incessant
Do express, naught save great sorrowing.
Thy lips, they daily kiss the sand,
 In wanton mockery.
Deep in thine awful heart
 Thou dost not love the land.
 Thou dost not love the land.
 O sea, that knowest thy strength.

“These sands, these listless, helpless,
 Sun-gold sands, I’ll play with these,
Or crush them in my white-fanged hands
 For leagues, to please
The thing in me that is the Sea,
 Intangible, untamed,
 Untamed and wild,
 And wild and weird and strong!”

AT NIGHT

YONE NUGOCHI

At night the Universe grows lean, sober-
faced, of intoxication,
The shadow of the half-sphere curtains
down closely against my world, like a
doorless cage, and the stillness chained by
wrinkled darkness strains throughout the Uni-
verse to be free.

Listen, frogs in the pond, (the world is a pond itself)
cry out for the light, for the truth!

The curtains rattle ghostlily along, bloodily biting
my soul, the winds knocking on my cabin door
with their shadowy hands.

HOW NEAR TO FAIRYLAND

YONE NUGOCHI

The spring warmth steals into me, drying up all the tears of my soul,
And gives me a flight into the vastness,—into a floorless, unroofed reverie-
hall.

Lo, such greenness, such velvety greenness, such a heaven without heaven
above!

Lo, again, such grayness, such velvety grayness, such an earth without earth
below!

My soul sails through the waveless mirror-seas.

Oh, how near to Fairyland!

Blow, blow, gust of wind!

Sweep away my soul-boat against that very shore!

I AM LIKE A LEAF

YONE NUGOCHI

The silence is broken: into the nature
My soul sails out,
Carrying the song of life on his brow,
To meet the flowers and birds.

When my heart returns in the solitude,
She is very sad,
Looking back on the dead passions
Lying on Love's ruin.

I am like a leaf
Hanging over hope and despair,
Which trembles and joins
The world's imagination and ghost.

INCURABLE

DOROTHY PARKER

And if my heart be scarred and burned,
The safer, I, for all I learned;
The calmer, I, to see it true
That ways of love are never new—
The love that sets you daft and dazed
Is every love that ever blazed;
The happier, I, to fathom this:
A kiss is every other kiss.
The reckless vow, the lovely name,
When Helen walked, were spoke the same;
The weighted breast, the grinding woe,
When Phaon fled, were ever so.
Oh, it is sure as it is sad
That any lad is every lad,
And what's a girl, to dare implore
Her dear be hers forevermore?
Though he be tried and he be bold,
And swearing death should he be cold,
He'll run the path the others went....
But you, my sweet, are different.

RECURRENCE

DOROTHY PARKER

We shall have our little day.
Take my hand and travel still
Round and round the little way,
Up and down the little hill.

It is good to love again;
Scan the renovated skies,
Dip and drive the idling pen,
Sweetly tint the paling lies.

Trace the dripping, pierced heart,
Speak the fair, insistent verse,
Vow to God, and slip apart,
Little better, little worse.

Would we need not know before
How shall end this prettiness;
One of us must love the more,
One of us shall love the less.

Thus it is, and so it goes;
We shall have our day, my dear.
Where, unwilling, dies the rose

Buds the new, another year.

TO A BRIDE

MARY TOLES PEET

Thou askest, O my friend, a song to-day;
But what soft note, what subtle melody
Can thy young heart's delicious joy convey?

In Life's enchanted lyre, one chord alone
Can thrill thee with a music all its own,
And fill thine heart with one most perfect tone.

What need, then, hast thou that I sing to thee?
June roses for thy bridal, fair to see,
Are sweeter music than my notes can be;

And song-birds flitting thro' the fragrant air,
And stars that gleam, like living eyes, from where
Thine own turn softly in thy troth-plight prayer.

Then silence, sweeter than all varied sound,
Shall fold thee soft, like loving arms around,
For life's most perfect gift thy heart hath found.

SONG OF THE CHOCTAW GIRL

PETER PERKINS PITCHLYNN

I'm looking on the mountain,
I'm gazing o'er the plain;
I love the friends around me,
But wish for home again!

I hear their tones of kindness,
They soothe my every pain;
I know they love me truly—
I wish for that home again!

My mother's grave is yonder,
And there it must remain;
My father's care is tender,
I wish for home again!

My sisters and my brothers—
Alas! it may be vain,
This longing for beloved ones—
I wish for home again.

O, take me to my Nation,
And let me there remain;
This other world is strange, strange—

I wish for home again

Give me the western forest—
the mountain, stream and plain,
The shaded lawns of childhood—
Give me my home again!

The free breeze of the prairie
The wild bird's joyous strain,
The three my father planted –
O, take me home again!

The sunshine and the flowers,
My mother's grave again,
Give me my race and kindred—
O, take me home again!

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Take this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow:
You are not wrong who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?

Is all that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

ISRAFEL

EDGAR ALLAN POE

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures. —KORAN

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell

 "Whose heart-strings are a lute";

None sing so wildly well

As the angel Israfel,

And the giddy stars (so legends tell),

Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell

 Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above

 In her highest noon,

 The enamoured moon

Blushes with love,

 While, to listen, the red levin

 (With the rapid Pleiads, even,

 Which were seven,)

 Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir

 And the other listening things)

That Israfeli's fire

Is owing to that lyre

By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israferi, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sour;

Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfael
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

LENORE

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Ah broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;
And, Guy De Vere, hast thou no tear?—weep now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

“Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,
“And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—that she died!
“How shall the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung
“By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue
“That did to death the innocent that died, and died so young?”

Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel so wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath “gone before,” with Hope, that flew beside
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride—
For her, the fair and debonair, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—
The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

“Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,

"But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!
"Let no bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
"Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damnéd Earth.
"To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven—
"From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—
"From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven."

THE CONQUEROR WORM

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Lo! 't is a gala night

Within the lonesome latter years!

An angel throng, bewinged, bedight

In veils, and drowned in tears,

Sit in a theatre, to see

A play of hopes and fears,

While the orchestra breathes fitfully

The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,

Mutter and mumble low,

And hither and thither fly—

Mere puppets they, who come and go

At bidding of vast formless things

That shift the scenery to and fro,

Flapping from out their Condor wings

Invisible Wo!

That motley drama—oh, be sure

It shall not be forgot!

With its Phantom chased for evermore

By a crowd that seize it not,

Through a circle that ever returneth in

To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout,
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, “Man,”
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

TO HELEN

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Helen, thy beauty is to me

Like those Nicéan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy-Land!

[TO ALLOT, OR NOT TO ALLOT]

ALEXANDER POSEY

To allot, or not to allot, that is the
Question; whether 'tis nobler in the mind to
Suffer the country to lie in common as it is,
Or to divide it up and give each man
His share pro rata, and by dividing
End this sea of troubles? To allot, divide,
Perchance to end in statehood;
Ah, there's the rub!

COYOTE

ALEXANDER POSEY

A few days more, and then
There'll be no secret glen,
Or hollow, deep and dim,
To hide or shelter him.

And on the prairie far,
Beneath the beacon star
On evening's dark'ning shore,
I'll hear him nevermore.

For where the tepee smoke
Curled up of yore, the stroke
Of hammers rings all day,
And grim Doom shouts, "Make way!"

The immemorial hush
Is broken by the rush
Of armed enemies
Unto the utmost seas.

THE DEW AND THE BIRD

ALEXANDER POSEY

There is more glory in a drop of dew,
That shineth only for an hour,
Than there is in the pomp of earth's great Kings
Within the noonday of their power.

There is more sweetness in a single strain
That falleth from a wild bird's throat,
At random in the lonely forest's depths,
Than there's in all the songs that bards e'er wrote.

Yet men, for aye, rememb'ring Caesar's name,
Forget the glory in the dew,
And, praising Homer's epic, let the lark's
Song fall unheeded from the blue.

TO A HUMMINGBIRD

ALEXANDER POSEY

Now here, now there;
E'er posed somewhere
In sensuous air.
I only hear, I cannot see
The matchless winds that beareth thee.
Art thou some frenzied poet's thought,
That God embodied and forgot?

TULLEDEGA

ALEXANDER POSEY

My choice of all choice spots in Indian lands!
Hedged in, shut up by walls of purple hills,
That swell clear cut against our sunset sky,
Hedged in, shut up and hidden from the world.
As through it said, "I have no words for you;
I'm not part of you; your ways aren't mine."
Hedged in, shut up with low log cabins built—
How snugly!—in the quaint old fashioned way;
With fields of yellow maize, so small that you
Might hide them with your palm while gazing on
Them from the hills around them, high and blue.
Hedged in, shut up with long forgotten ways,
And stories handed down from sire to son.
Hedged in, shut up with broad Oktaha, like
A flash of glory curled among the hills!
How it sweeps away toward the morning,
Deepened here and younger by the beetling
Crag, the music of its dashings mingling
With the screams of eagles whirling over,
With its splendid tribute to the ocean!
And this spot, this nook is Tulledega;
Hedged in, shut up, I say by walls of hills,
Like tents stretched on the borders of the day,

As blue as yonder op'ning in the clouds!

A PACT

EZRA POUND

I make truce with you, Walt Whitman—
I have detested you long enough.
I come to you as a grown child
Who has had a pig-headed father;
I am old enough now to make friends.
It was you that broke the new wood,
Now is a time for carving.
We have one sap and one root—
Let there be commerce between us.

MEMORIAL WREATH

DUDLEY RANDALL

(It is a little-known fact that 200,000 Negroes fought for freedom in the Union Army during the Civil War.)

In this green month when resurrected flowers,
Like laughing children ignorant of death,
Brighten the couch of those who wake no more,
Love and remembrance blossom in our hearts
For you who bore the extreme sharp pang for us,
And bought our freedom with your lives.

And now,
Honoring your memory, with love we bring
These fiery roses, white-hot cotton flowers
And violets bluer than cool northern skies
You dreamed of stooped in burning prison fields
When liberty was only a faint north star,
Not a bright flower planted by your hands
Reaching up hardy nourished with your blood.

Fit gravefellows you are for Douglass, Brown,
Turner and Truth and Tubman . . . whose rapt eyes
Fashioned a new world in this wilderness.

American earth is richer for your bones:
Our hearts beat prouder for the blood we inherit.

MY EASTER DOVE

HENRIETTA CORDELIA RAY

There came a dove, an Easter dove,
 When morning stars grew dim;
It fluttered round my lattice bars,
 To chant a matin hymn.

It brought a lily in its beak,
 Aglow with dewy sheen;
I caught the strain, the incense breathed,
 And uttered praise between.

It brought a shrine of holy thoughts
 To calm my soul that day;
I caught the meaning of the note,
 Why did it fly away?

Come peaceful dove, sweet Easter dove!
 Above earth's storm and strife,
Sing of the joy of Easter-tide,
 Of light and hope and life.

RHYTHMS (SECTION I)

CHARLES REZNIKOFF

The stars are hidden,
the lights are out;
the tall black houses
are ranked about.

I beat my fists
on the stout doors,
no answering steps
come down the floors.

I have walked until
I am faint and numb;
from one dark street
to another I come.

The comforting
winds are still.

This is a chaos
through which I stumble,
till I reach the void
and down I tumble.

The stars will then
be out forever;
the fists unclenched,
the feet walk never,

and all I say
blown by the wind
away.

ALLAH WA ANA

AMEEN RIHANI

Though I'm God, thou art man, we are one,
 We are all and we shall ever be;
Though the light of my sky thou didst shun,
Thou shalt love me ere thy course is run,
 As forever I live loving thee.

Thou art mine, I am thine and the fire
 Of my breath all thy regions shall warm,
Ere the life in thy soil shall expire,
Ere the seeds of thy basest desire
 From their prison break out and take form.

Thou wilt doubt and deny me forsooth
 And rejoice in thy vanity's power;
Thou wilt die on the breast of my truth,
In the end thou wilt laugh at thy youth,
 And its wine although old will be sour.

I was with thee when thou didst deny,
 As I am with thy mother at prayer;
I was with thee when thou didst defy
My hell and my earth and my sky,
 And I love non the less those that dare.

In the yogi's pagoda I am;
In the fire of the magi I was;
To the sons of Abraheem and Sham
And their foes and to thee I undam
All the banks of my veins on the cross.

Through the spheres and the primitive throngs
I came down and I struggled with thee;
Through the ages I sing in thy songs,
But I leave thee to rise on thy wrongs;--
Thou shalt rise and thou shalt live in me.

FARDI WA NAFLI

AMEEN RIHANI

This was written in the hospital where Mr. Rihani's sister suffered for more than two years. She was taken sick not long before the day appointed for her wedding.

I

"Here she is: O take her not away so soon!

Spare her youth—the fatal cup from her withhold!

Let her groan within my arms in life's forenoon;

Let me still my soul within her eyes unfold."

God of Love! my faith in thee is not yet gray:

Grant that she may walk again,

Free from suffering and pain—

Give her life to see the altar's light one day.

II

In the night, before the day that never came,

On the way with poppies and gardenias strewn,

With her music and her torch's holy flame,

She was struck and never since saw sun or moon.

God of Light! refuse her not another ray:

Her bridal garment joins with me

In beseeching, begging thee—
Give her life to see the altar's light one day.

III

All the sorrow earth contains I can support,
All the agony and pain I can endure;
Years of misery will seem surprising short,
If to me thou leav'st her, though without a cure.
All my dreams before thy throne, O God, I slay;
These my offerings let be,
These my sacrifice to thee—
Give her life to see the altar's light one day.

IV

"Hurry here! O get the doctors—call the nurse—
Call the priest—be quick—some more digitaline—
He is here, alas! before you all—a hearse."
Death has passed us by; take up the violin!
To Thy heart my music fain would find its way;
Every sound Thy grace would earn;
Let it not as sad return—
Give her life to see the altar's light one day.

V

Every wound and every sigh and groan and tear,
Every drop of Saada's melting flesh and hope
Now ascend, wrapt in this music, pale and blear—
Around Thy throne, in gyves of pain, they blindly grope.
What remains, what's gone of her before Thee lay:
Faith and Doubt are at Thy door—
Mother, brother, pray, implore—
Give her life to see the altar's light one day.

SAADA

AMEEN RIHANI

Long hast thou suffered, sister of my heart,
Still thou art
Fair to see ;
Thy pains thou entertainest with thy song,
But how long
Will this be?

The seasons all have come and gone, my dear,
But thy cheer
Still abides.

I ask which of thy moan or song is best
And thou sayst :
"God decides."

I feel the ebbing of the undertone
Of thy moan
In thy song ;
How long will tears and irony compete
For thee, Sweet,
O, how long?

When wilt thou, Baby dear, with nimble feet,
Run to greet

Me at the door?
When wilt thou, Saada, walk again with me
Near the sea,
As before?

O sister, how I wish to see thee run,
In the sun,
On the sands !
The singing breakers and the smiling beach
To thee reach
Out their hands.

The light of day is longing for thy face
And the grace
Of thy form ;
O how I wish to see thee, Noor-ul-Ain
Caught again
In the storm !

THE WANDERER

AMEEN RIHANI

I wander among the hills of alien lands
Where Nature her prerogative resigns
To Man; where Comfort in her shack reclines
And all the arts and sciences commands.
But in my soul
The eastern billows roll—
I hear the voices of my native strands.

My lingering eyes, a lonely hemlock fills
With grace and splendor rising manifold;
Beneath her boughs the maples spread their gold
And at her feet, the silver of rills.
But in my heart
A peasant void of art
Echoes the voices of my native hills.

On every height a studied art confines
All human joy in social pulchritude;
The boxwood frowns where beckoning birches stood,
And where the thrushes caroled Fashion dines.
But through the spreading cheer
The shepherd's reed I hear
Beneath my Lebanon terebinths and pines.

And though no voices here are heard of toil,
Nor accents least of sorrow, nor the din
Of multitudes, nor even at the Inn
The City is permitted aught to spoil,
Yet in my breast,
A shack at best,
Laments the mother of my native soil.

Even where the sumptuous solitudes deny
A shelter to a bird or butterfly,
As in the humblest dwelling of the dale
A gracious welcome's shown the passer-by;
But evermore clear
Allwhere I hear
The calling of my native hut and sky.

Land of my birth! a handful of thy sod
Resuscitates the flower of my faith;
For whatsoever the seer of science sayth,
Thou art the cradle and the tomb of God;
And forever I behold
A vision old
Of Beauty weeping where He once hath trod.

THE DAYS GONE BY

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

O the days gone by! O the days gone by!

The apples in the orchard, and the pathway through the rye;
The chirrup of the robin, and the whistle of the quail
As he piped across the meadows sweet as any nightingale;
When the bloom was on the clover, and the blue was in the sky,
And my happy heart brimmed over in the days gone by.

In the days gone by, when my naked feet were tripped
By the honey-suckle's tangles where the water-lilies dipped,
And the ripples of the river lipped the moss along the brink
Where the placid-eyed and lazy-footed cattle came to drink,
And the tilting snipe stood fearless of the truant's wayward cry
And the splashing of the swimmer, in the days gone by.

O the days gone by! O the days gone by!

The music of the laughing lip, the luster of the eye;
The childish faith in fairies, and Aladdin's magic ring—
The simple, soul-reposing, glad belief in everything,—
When life was like a story, holding neither sob nor sigh,
In the golden olden glory of the days gone by.

LUKE HAVERGAL

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Go to the western gate, Luke Havergal,
There where the vines cling crimson on the wall,
And in the twilight wait for what will come.
The leaves will whisper there of her, and some,
Like flying words, will strike you as they fall;
But go, and if you listen she will call.
Go to the western gate, Luke Havergal—
Luke Havergal.

No, there is not a dawn in eastern skies
To rift the fiery night that's in your eyes;
But there, where western glooms are gathering,
The dark will end the dark, if anything:
God slays Himself with every leaf that flies,
And hell is more than half of paradise.
No, there is not a dawn in eastern skies—
In eastern skies.

Out of a grave I come to tell you this,
Out of a grave I come to quench the kiss
That flames upon your forehead with a glow
That blinds you to the way that you must go.
Yes, there is yet one way to where she is,

Bitter, but one that faith may never miss.
Out of a grave I come to tell you this—
To tell you this.

There is the western gate, Luke Havergal,
There are the crimson leaves upon the wall.
Go, for the winds are tearing them away,—
Nor think to riddle the dead words they say,
Nor any more to feel them as they fall;
But go, and if you trust her she will call.
There is the western gate, Luke Havergal—
Luke Havergal.

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

They are all gone away,
The House is shut and still,
There is nothing more to say.

Through broken walls and gray
The winds blow bleak and shrill:
They are all gone away.

Nor is there one to-day
To speak them good or ill:
There is nothing more to say.

Why is it then we stray
Around the sunken sill?
They are all gone away,

And our poor fancy-play
For them is wasted skill:
There is nothing more to say.

There is ruin and decay
In the House on the Hill:
They are all gone away,

There is nothing more to say.

MIST

LOLA RODRÍGUEZ DE TIÓ

translated from the Spanish by Roderick Gill

O faint remembrances of vanished days
That stole away on such a velvet wing
O'er meads and groves, o'er plains and mountain ways,
What grief and sorrow to my heart you bring!

Come back without the shadow of your care,
Come back in silence and without a moan,
As the birds cross the unregarding air
Till none may tell the whence or whither flown.

Come back amid the pallor of the moon
That silvers all the azure rifts at sea,
Or in the deadly mist that in a swoon
Engulfs afar the green palm's royal tree.

Bring back the murmur of the doves that made
Their little nests so neighborly to mine;
The vibrant airs—the fragrances that played
Around the peaks that saw my cradle shine.

Sing in my ear the melodies of old,

So sweet and joyous to my inmost heart;
O faint remembrances two breasts should hold,
Two breasts that Destiny was loath to part!

What matter if a sigh steals through the dream
That shows the withered vine in flower again?—
So that remembrances in singing seem,
O tremulous lyre, to speak my endless pain!

MY PAPA'S WALTZ

THEODORE ROETHKE

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not easy.

We romped until the pans
Slid from the kitchen shelf;
My mother's countenance
Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
Was battered on one knuckle;
At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.

CHICAGO

CARL SANDBURG

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's
Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your
painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: yes, it is true I have seen
the

gunman kill and go free to kill again.

And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and
children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.

And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city,
and I give them back the sneer and say to them:

Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive
and coarse and strong and cunning.

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold
slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted
against the wilderness,

Bareheaded,

Shoveling,

Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs
the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked,
sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player
with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

PRAYERS OF STEEL

CARL SANDBURG

Lay me on an anvil, O God.

Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.

Let me pry loose old walls.

Let me lift and loosen old foundations.

Lay me on an anvil, O God.

Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.

Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.

Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.

Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars.

STILL LIFE

CARL SANDBURG

Cool your heels on the rail of an observation car.
Let the engineer open her up for ninety miles an hour.
Take in the prairie right and left, rolling land and new hay crops,
 swaths of new hay laid in the sun.
A gray village flecks by and the horses hitched in front of the
 post-office never blink an eye.
A barnyard and fifteen Holstein cows, dabs of white on a black
 wall map, never blink an eye.
A signalman in a tower, the outpost of Kansas City, keeps his
 place at a window with the serenity of a bronze statue on a
 dark night when lovers pass whispering.

UNDER THE HARVEST MOON

CARL SANDBURG

Under the harvest moon,
When the soft silver
Drips shimmering
Over the garden nights,
Death, the gray mocker,
Comes and whispers to you
As a beautiful friend
Who remembers.

Under the summer roses
When the flagrant crimson
Lurks in the dusk
Of the wild red leaves,
Love, with little hands,
Comes and touches you
With a thousand memories,
And asks you
Beautiful, unanswerable questions.

THE PRAIRIE TOWN

HELEN SANTMYER

Lovers of beauty laugh at this grey town,
Where dust lies thick on ragged curb-side trees,
And compass-needle streets lead up and down
And lose themselves in empty prairie seas.

Here is no winding scented lane, no hill
Crowned with a steepled church, no garden wall
Of old grey stone where lilacs bloom, and fill
The air with fragrance when the May rains fall.

But here is the unsoftened majesty
Of the wide earth where all the wide streets end,
And from the dusty corner one may see
The full moon rise, and flaming sun descend.

The long main street, whence farmers' teams go forth,
Lies like an old sea road, star-pointed north.

LINES WRITTEN AT CASTLE ISLAND, LAKE SUPERIOR

JANE JOHNSTON SCHOOLCRAFT

translated from the Anishinaabemowin

Here in my native inland sea
From pain and sickness would I flee
And from its shores and island bright
Gather a store of sweet delight.
Lone island of the saltless sea!
How wide, how sweet, how fresh and free
How all transporting—is the view
Of rocks and skies and waters blue
Uniting, as a song's sweet strains
To tell, here nature only reigns.
Ah, nature! here forever sway
Far from the haunts of men away
For here, there are no sordid fears,
No crimes, no misery, no tears
No pride of wealth; the heart to fill,
No laws to treat my people ill.

FROM BROOKLYN

EVELYN SCOTT

Along the shore

A black net of branches

Tangles the pulpy yellow lamps.

The shell-colored sky is lustrous with the fading sun.

Across the river Manhattan floats—

Dim gardens of fire—

And rushing invisible toward me through the fog,

A hurricane of faces.

SONNETT II

ALAN SEEGER

Not that I always struck the proper mean
Of what mankind must give for what they gain,
But, when I think of those whom dull routine
And the pursuit of cheerless toil enchain,
Who from their desk-chairs seeing a summer cloud
Race through blue heaven on its joyful course
Sigh sometimes for a life less cramped and bowed,
I think I might have done a great deal worse;
For I have ever gone untied and free,
The stars and my high thoughts for company;
Wet with the salt-spray and the mountain showers,
I have had the sense of space and amplitude,
And love in many places, silver-shoed,
Has come and scattered all my path with flowers.

POETRY

LYDIA HUNTLEY SIGOURNEY

Morn on her rosy couch awoke,
 Enchantment led the hour,
And mirth and music drank the dews
 That freshen'd Beauty's flower,
Then from her bower of deep delight,
 I heard a young girl sing,
'Oh, speak no ill of poetry,
 For 'tis a holy thing.'

The Sun in noon-day heat rose high,
 And on the heaving breast,
I saw a weary pilgrim toil
 Unpitied and unblest,
Yet still in trembling measures flow'd
 Forth from a broken string,
'Oh, speak no ill of poetry,
 For 'tis a holy thing.'

'Twas night, and Death the curtains drew,
 'Mid agony severe,
While there a willing spirit went
 Home to a glorious sphere,
Yet still it sigh'd, even when was spread

The waiting Angel's wing,
'Oh, speak no ill of poetry,
For 'tis a holy thing.'

ENIGMA

LEONORA SPEYER

It would be easy to forgive,
If I could but remember;
If I could hear, lost love of mine,
The music of your cruelties,
Shaking to sound the silent skies,
Could voice with them their song divine,
Red with pain's leaping ember:
It would be easy to forgive,
If I could but remember.
It would be easy to forget,
If I could find lost Sorrow;
If I could kiss her plaintive face,
And break with her her bitter bread,
Could share again her woeful bed,
And know with tears her pale embrace.
Make yesterday, to-morrow:
It would be easy to forget,
If I could find lost Sorrow.

SQUALL

LEONORA SPEYER

The squall sweeps gray-winged across the obliterated hills,
And the startled lake seems to run before it;
From the wood comes a clamor of leaves,
Tugging at the twigs,
Pouring from the branches,
And suddenly the birds are still.
Thunder crumples the sky,
Lightning tears at it.
And now the rain!
The rain—thudding—implacable—
The wind, reveling in the confusion of great pines!
And a silver sifting of light,
A coolness;
A sense of summer anger passing,
Of summer gentleness creeping nearer—
Penitent, tearful,
Forgiven!

SWALLOWS

LEONORA SPEYER

They dip their wings in the sunset,
They dash against the air
As if to break themselves upon its stillness:
In every movement, too swift to count,
Is a revelry of indecision,
A furtive delight in trees they do not desire
And in grasses that shall not know their weight.
They hover and lean toward the meadow
With little edged cries;
And then,
As if frightened at the earth's nearness,
They seek the high austerity of evening sky
And swirl into its depth.

THE LAST MORNING IN THE COUNTRY

LEONORA SPEYER

Dawn slips within my room to say good-by:
Buffeted, bruised, by autumn rain
All night,
While I lay sleeping, held to dreams, again
She comes from out the violated sky,
Dragging her tarnished light.

With dim leaves drooping, hanging all about
Her misty face, her eyes still wet,
She stands
Disconsolate beneath her veils—and yet
Bravely she spills one last bird's note from out
Her summer-empty hands.

A PATRIOTIC LEADING

GERTRUDE STEIN

Verse I.

Indeed indeed

Can you see

The stars.

And regularly the precious treasure.

What do we have without measure.

We know.

Verse II.

We suspect the second man.

Verse III

We are worthy of everything that happens.

You mean weddings.

Naturally I mean weddings.

Verse IV

And then we are.

Hail to the nation.

Verse V

Do you think we believe it.

Verse VI

It is that or bust.

Verse VII

We cannot bust.

Verse VIII

Thank you.

Verse IX

Thank you so much.

MUCH LATER

GERTRUDE STEIN

Elephants and birds of beauty and a gold fish. Gold fish or a superstition.
They always

bad luck. He had them and he was not told. Gold fish and he was not old.

Gold fish and he was not to scold. Gold fish all told. The result was that
the other

people never had them and he knows nothing of it.

TENDER BUTTONS [A PLATE]

GERTRUDE STEIN

A PLATE.

An occasion for a plate, an occasional resource is in buying and how soon does washing enable a selection of the same thing neater. If the party is small a clever song is in order.

Plates and a dinner set of colored china. Pack together a string and enough with it to protect the centre, cause a considerable haste and gather more as it is cooling, collect more trembling and not any even trembling, cause a whole thing to be a church.

A sad size a size that is not sad is blue as every bit of blue is precocious. A kind of green a game in green and nothing flat nothing quite flat and more round, nothing a particular color strangely, nothing breaking the losing of no little piece.

A splendid address a really splendid address is not shown by giving a flower freely, it is not shown by a mark or by wetting.

Cut cut in white, cut in white so lately. Cut more than any other and show it. Show it in the stem and in starting and in evening coming complication.

A lamp is not the only sign of glass. The lamp and the cake are not the only sign of stone. The lamp and the cake and the cover are not the only necessity altogether.

A plan a hearty plan, a compressed disease and no coffee, not even a card or a change to incline each way, a plan that has that excess and that break is the one that shows filling.

EARTHLY ANECDOTE

WALLACE STEVENS

Every time the bucks went clattering
Over Oklahoma
A firecat bristled in the way.

Wherever they went,
They went clattering,
Until they swerved,
In a swift, circular line,
To the right,
Because of the firecat.

Or until they swerved,
In a swift, circular line,
To the left,
Because of the firecat.

The bucks clattered.
The firecat went leaping,
To the right, to the left,
And
Bristled in the way.

Later, the firecat closed his bright eyes

And slept.

SONNET

WALLACE STEVENS

Lo, even as I passed beside the booth
Of roses, and beheld them brightly twine
To damask heights, taking them as a sign
Of my own self still unconcerned with truth;
Even as I held up in hands uncouth
And drained with joy the golden-bodied wine,
Deeming it half-unworthy, half divine,
From out the sweet-rimmed goblet of my youth.

Even in that pure hour I heard the tone
Of grievous music stir in memory,
Telling me of the time already flown
From my first youth. It sounded like the rise
Of distant echo from dead melody,
Soft as a song heard far in Paradise.

TEA AT THE PALAZ OF HOON

WALLACE STEVENS

Not less because in purple I descended
The western day through what you called
The loneliest air, not less was I myself.

What was the ointment sprinkled on my beard?
What were the hymns that buzzed beside my ears?
What was the sea whose tide swept through me there?

Out of my mind the golden ointment rained,
And my ears made the blowing hymns they heard.
I was myself the compass of that sea:

I was the world in which I walked, and what I saw
Or heard or felt came not but from myself;
And there I found myself more truly and more strange.

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

MNEMOSYNE

TRUMBULL STICKNEY

It's autumn in the country I remember

How warm a wind blew here about the ways!
And shadows on the hillside lay to slumber
During the long sun-sweetened summer-days.

It's cold abroad the country I remember.

The swallows veering skimmed the golden grain
At midday with a wing aslant and limber;
And yellow cattle browsed upon the plain

It's empty down the country I remember.

I had a sister lovely in my sight:
Her hair was dark, her eyes were very sombre;
We sang together in the woods at night.

It's lonely in the country I remember.

The babble of our children fills my ears,
And on our hearth I stare the perished ember
To flames that show all starry thro' my tears.

It's dark about the country I remember.

There are the mountains where I lived.

The path Is slushed with cattle-tracks and fallen timber,

The stumps are twisted by the tempests' wrath.

But that I knew these places are my own,

I'd ask how came such wretchedness to cumber

The earth, and I to people it alone.

It rains across the country I remember.

COLLECTORS

MARION STROBEL

The barnacle of crowds—
Like a tuck
On a finished skirt, unnoticed—
He collected his material
Covertly:
A ragpicker,
A scavenger of words.

And the gleanings
Of his hearing
He would costume
In his own words,
And parade before
A listener.

So that now,
Across the tea-cup,
He was telling
Of his research,
Of his study,
Of his deep thought-out
Conclusions.

And the lady,
Connoisseur of old thoughts
Bound in new gilt bindings,
Smiled approval
At the finding
Of another curio
To place
In her long gallery.

MAY DAY

SARA TEASDALE

A delicate fabric of bird song
Floats in the air,
The smell of wet wild earth
Is everywhere.

Red small leaves of the maple
Are clenched like a hand,
Like girls at their first communion
The pear trees stand.

Oh I must pass nothing by
Without loving it much,
The raindrop try with my lips,
The grass with my touch;

For how can I be sure
I shall see again
The world on the first of May
Shining after the rain?

SPRING IN WAR-TIME

SARA TEASDALE

I feel the spring far off, far off,
 The faint, far scent of bud and leaf—
Oh, how can spring take heart to come
 To a world in grief,
 Deep grief?

The sun turns north, the days grow long,
 Later the evening star grows bright—
How can the daylight linger on
 For men to fight,
 Still fight?

The grass is waking in the ground,
 Soon it will rise and blow in waves—
How can it have the heart to sway
 Over the graves,
 New graves?

Under the boughs where lovers walked
 The apple-blooms will shed their breath—
But what of all the lovers now
 Parted by Death,
 Grey Death?

CASEY AT THE BAT

ERNEST LAWRENCE THAYER

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day:
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play,
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A pall-like silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, "If only Casey could but get a whack at that—
We'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat."

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a hoodoo, while the latter was a cake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It pounded on the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,

For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile lit Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt;
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance flashed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one!" the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore;
"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the dun sphere flew;
But Casey still ignored it and the umpire said, "Strike two!"

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered "Fraud!"
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favoured land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.

I'LL FOLLOW THEE

CLARA ANN THOMPSON

My Savior, let me hear Thy voice tonight,

The clouds that overhang my way, obscure

I'd hear Thy voice above the tempest's shriek;

And though my sight be dim, my spirit weak,

I'd feel Thy arm, supporting in the dark;

For Thou canst fan to flame, faith's sinking

I shall not sink, dear Lord, when Thou'rt my

Though lashed by heavy waves, on ev'ry side,

MEMORIAL DAY

CLARA ANN THOMPSON

Go;—for 'tis Memorial morning—

Go with hearts of peace and love;

Deck the graves of fallen soldiers;

Go, your gratitude to prove.

Gather flow'rs and take them thither,

Emblem of a nation's tears;

Grateful hearts cannot forget them,

In the rush of passing years.

Strew the flow'rs above their couches;

Let thy heart's affection blend,

With the dewy buds and blossoms,

That in fragrant showers descend.

Strew the flow'rs above the heroes,

Slain for loving friends and thee;

Canst thou find a better off'ring,

For those sons of liberty?

While the buds and blooms are falling,

Earnest hearts are asking,—Why—

In a tone, though low and gentle,

Yet, as ardent as a cry,—

'Why must precious lives be given,
That our country may be free?
Is there not a nobler pathway
To the throne of liberty?

'Can we choose no nobler watch-word,
Than the ringing battle-cry,
Harbinger of strife and bloodshed,
Must we sin, that sin may die?

'Long ago, to far Judea,
Came the blessed Prince of Peace:
Shall we ever heed His teaching,
That these wars and feuds may cease?'

NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPING

CLARA ANN THOMPSON

We say he is dead; ah, the word is too

'Tis the touch of God, on the weary

That has caused them to close, in peace-

To open with joy, in the upper skies.

We say he is gone; we have lost him for-

His face and his form we will cherish no

While happy and safe, just over the river,

He is waiting for us, where partings

Ah, sad are our hearts, as we gaze on

And bitter and sad are the tears gush-

And yet,— but we cannot see, for the

He has only exchanged the cross, for

And though the dark mists of grief may

Obscuring the face of the Father above,
And blindly we grope, still His arms are

To guide and sustain with His pitying

And he whom we love, is safe in His

Yes, safe and secure, whatever may

But ne'er will we know how sweetly he's

Till God, in His mercy, shall gather us

EMANCIPATION

PRISCILLA JANE THOMPSON

'Tis a time for much rejoicing;
Let each heart be lured away;
Let each tongue, its thanks be voicing
For Emancipation Day.
Day of victory, day of glory,
For thee, many a field was gory!

Many a time in days now ended,
Hath our fathers' courage failed,
Patiently their tears they blended;
Ne'er they to their, Maker, railed,
Well we know their groans, He numbered,
When dominions fell, asundered.

As of old the Red Sea parted,
And oppressed passed safely through,
Back from the North, the bold South, started,
And a fissure wide she drew;
Drew a cleft of Liberty,
Through it, marched our people free.

And, in memory, ever grateful,
Of the day they reached the shore,

Meet we now, with hearts e'er faithful,
 Joyous that the storm is o'er.
Storm of Torture! May grim Past,
Hurl thee down his torrents fast.

Bring your harpers, bring your sages,
 Bid each one the story tell;
Waft it on to future ages,
 Bid descendants learn it well.
Kept it bright in minds now tender,
Teach the young their thanks to render.

Come with hearts all firm united,
 In the union of a race;
With your loyalty well plighted,
 Look your brother in the face,
Stand by him, forsake him never,
God is with us now, forever.

CONSCIENCE

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Conscience is instinct bred in the house,
Feeling and Thinking propagate the sin
By an unnatural breeding in and in.
I say, Turn it out doors,
Into the moors.
I love a life whose plot is simple,
And does not thicken with every pimple,
A soul so sound no sickly conscience binds it,
That makes the universe no worse than 't finds it.
I love an earnest soul,
Whose mighty joy and sorrow
Are not drowned in a bowl,
And brought to life to-morrow
That lives one tragedy,
And not seventy;
A conscience worth keeping,
Laughing not weeping;
A conscience wise and steady,
And for ever ready;
Not changing with events,
Dealing in compliments;
A conscience exercised about

Large things, where one may doubt.
I love a soul not all of wood,
Predestinated to be good,
But true to the backbone
Unto itself alone,
And false to none;
Born to its own affairs,
Its own joys and own cares;
By whom the work which God begun
Is finished, and not undone;
Taken up where he left off,
Whether to worship or to scoff;
If not good, why then evil,
If not good god, good devil.
Goodness!—you hypocrite, come out of that,
Live your life, do your work, then take your hat.
I have no patience towards
Such conscientious cowards.
Give me simple laboring folk,
Who love their work,
Whose virtue is a song
To cheer God along.

MY PRAYER

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Great God, I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself;
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.
And next in value, which thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how thou'st distinguished me.
That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practise more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated thy designs.

TALL AMBROSIA

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Among the signs of autumn I perceive
The Roman wormwood (called by learned men
Ambrosia elatior, food for gods,—
For to impartial science the humblest weed
Is as immortal once as the proudest flower—)
Sprinkles its yellow dust over my shoes
As I cross the now neglected garden.
—We trample under foot the food of gods
And spill their nectar in each drop of dew—
My honest shoes, fast friends that never stray
Far from my couch, thus powdered, countryfied,
Bearing many a mile the marks of their adventure,
At the post-house disgrace the Gallic gloss
Of those well dressed ones who no morning dew
Nor Roman wormwood ever have been through,
Who never walk but are transported rather—
For what old crime of theirs I do not gather.

THE MOON NOW RISES TO HER ABSOLUTE RULE

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

The moon now rises to her absolute rule,
And the husbandman and hunter
Acknowledge her for their mistress.
Asters and golden reign in the fields
And the life everlasting withers not.
The fields are reaped and shorn of their pride
But an inward verdure still crowns them;
The thistle scatters its down on the pool
And yellow leaves clothe the river—
And nought disturbs the serious life of men.
But behind the sheaves and under the sod
There lurks a ripe fruit which the reapers have not gathered,
The true harvest of the year—the boreal fruit
Which it bears forever,
With fondness annually watering and maturing it.
But man never severs the stalk
Which bears this palatable fruit.

TO A GREAT LADY IN MY SMALL HOUSE

MARK VAN DOREN

You were too kind to come at all.
The door closed on you, and my hall
Shivered in sudden naked shame.
I whispered it was not to blame
And followed you within, to where
You were awaited by my chair.
It was so small, and you sat down
With a so gracious smile—a frown
Would have gone better with that wall;
You were too kind to smile at all.
You stretched a hand toward the grate;
Its welcome was inadequate.
You looked about you and pretended
The carpet and the picture blended.
I looked—and all my furnishings
Had turned their heads: the sorry things!
You said you felt at home—a lie
My misery was finished by.
Even your guilelessness was gall.
You were too kind to come at all.

THE CLOUDED MORNING

JONES VERY

The morning comes, and thickening clouds prevail,
 Hanging like curtains all the horizon round,
Or overhead in heavy stillness sail;
 So still is day, it seems like night profound;
Scarce by the city's din the air is stirred,
 And dull and deadened comes its every sound;
The cock's shrill, piercing voice subdued is heard,
 By the thick folds of muffling vapors drowned.
Dissolved in mists the hills and trees appear,
 Their outlines lost and blended with the sky;
And well-known objects, that to all are near,
 No longer seem familiar to the eye,
But with fantastic forms they mock the sight,
As when we grope amid the gloom of night.

THE WINTER BIRD

JONES VERY

Thou sing'st alone on the bare wintry bough,
As if Spring with its leaves were around thee now;
And its voice that was heard in the laughing rill,
And the breeze as it whispered o'er meadow and hill,
Still fell on thine ear, as it murmured along
To join the sweet tide of thine own gushing song.
Sing on—though its sweetness was lost on the blast,
And the storm has not heeded thy song as it passed,
Yet its music awoke in a heart that was near,
A thought whose remembrance will ever prove dear;
Though the brook may be frozen, though silent its voice,
And the gales through the meadows no longer rejoice,
Still I felt, as my ear caught thy glad note of glee,
That my heart in life's winter might carol like thee.

A DEDICATION

LUCIAN B. WATKINS

To Principal Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee Industrial School

To you who now so nobly do
 A noble deed;
Who now instill the virtues true
 To virtuous need;
Whose mission is so truly good—
So full of kindly brotherhood—
Who live the life you surely should—
 A trusty lead;

Who early saw that skillful head
 And skillful hands
Should, surely, be in union wed
 'Gainst life's quicksands—
For people whose unhappy state
Was, surely, in the hands of fate,
Would make a combination great
 As iron hands.

Long may your daring presence live
 And works instill,
Long may your kingly reasons give

A forceful will.

Long may your glowing, useful days
Shine forth their bright illumining rays,
And to gloomy lives always
A happy thrill.

A MEMORIAL

LUCIAN B. WATKINS

In Memory of Frederick Douglass

In mem'ry of your truly noble life;

 In mem'ry of the cause for which you fought;

In mem'ry of your fierce and bitter strife;

 In mem'ry of the lasting good you wrought;

In mem'ry of the talents, really great,

 That found a home within your massive brains

And swayed the thousands of each town and State

 Who heard your forceful oratory strains;

I offer now these simple words of praise—

 This chord I touch to sound your honor's due—

The pathway of your truly useful days

 Shines now a grand and brilliant light for you.

TO ONE OF THE BRAVE

LUCIAN B. WATKINS

Written While a Soldier, at Fort Washakie, Wyo., for First Sergeant William Barnes, Troop "F," 10th Cavalry, on the Occasion of His Forty-Fifth Birthday

Though forty-five long years, you say,
Have silvered o'er your head with gray,
Your friends rejoice, to-day, that you
Stand hale and hearty in your "blue."

Long for Old Glory you have stood
With truest sense of brotherhood;
Long may you live a useful life—
Noble and true in peace of strife.

AN AUTUMN SUNSET

EDITH WHARTON

I

Leaguered in fire
The wild black promontories of the coast extend
Their savage silhouettes;
The sun in universal carnage sets,
And, halting higher,
The motionless storm-clouds mass their sullen threats,
Like an advancing mob in sword-points penned,
That, balked, yet stands at bay.
Mid-zenith hangs the fascinated day
In wind-lustrated hollows crystalline,
A wan Valkyrie whose wide pinions shine
Across the ensanguined ruins of the fray,
And in her hand swings high o'erhead,
Above the waster of war,
The silver torch-light of the evening star
Wherewith to search the faces of the dead.

II

Lagooned in gold,
Seem not those jetty promontories rather

The outposts of some ancient land forlorn,
Uncomforted of morn,
Where old oblivions gather,
The melancholy unconsoling fold
Of all things that go utterly to death
And mix no more, no more
With life's perpetually awakening breath?
Shall Time not ferry me to such a shore,
Over such sailless seas,
To walk with hope's slain importunities
In miserable marriage? Nay, shall not
All things be there forgot,
Save the sea's golden barrier and the black
Close-crouching promontories?
Dead to all shames, forgotten of all glories,
Shall I not wander there, a shadow's shade,
A spectre self-destroyed,
So purged of all remembrance and sucked back
Into the primal void,
That should we on the shore phantasmal meet
I should not know the coming of your feet?

EXPERIENCE

EDITH WHARTON

I

Like Crusoe with the bootless gold we stand
Upon the desert verge of death, and say:
"What shall avail the woes of yesterday
To buy to-morrow's wisdom, in the land
Whose currency is strange unto our hand?
In life's small market they had served to pay
Some late-found rapture, could we but delay
Till Time hath matched our means to our demand."

But otherwise Fate wills it, for, behold,
Our gathered strength of individual pain,
When Time's long alchemy hath made it gold,
Dies with us—hoarded all these years in vain,
Since those that might be heir to it the mould
Renew, and coin themselves new griefs again.

II

O Death, we come full-handed to thy gate,
Rich with strange burden of the mingled years,
Gains and renunciations, mirth and tears,

And love's oblivion, and remembering hate,
Nor know we what compulsion laid such freight
Upon our souls—and shall our hopes and fears
Buy nothing of thee, Death? Behold our wares,
And sell us the one joy for which we wait.
Had we lived longer, like had such for sale,
With the last coin of sorrow purchased cheap,
But now we stand before thy shadowy pale,
And all our longings lie within thy keep—
Death, can it be the years shall naught avail?

"Not so," Death answered, "they shall purchase sleep."

LIFE

EDITH WHARTON

Life, like a marble block, is given to all,
A blank, inchoate mass of years and days,
Whence one with ardent chisel swift essays
Some shape of strength or symmetry to call;
One shatters it in bits to mend a wall;
One in a craftier hand the chisel lays,
And one, to wake the mirth in Lesbia's gaze,
Carves it apace in toys fantastical.

But least is he who, with enchanted eyes
Filled with high visions of fair shapes to be,
Muses which god he shall immortalize
In the proud Parian's perpetuity,
Till twilight warns him from the punctual skies
That the night cometh wherein none shall see.

A FAREWELL TO AMERICA

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

I.

Adieu, New-England's smiling meads,
Adieu, th' flow'ry plain:
I leave thine op'ning charms, O spring,
And tempt the roaring main.

II.

In vain for me the flow'rets rise,
And boast their gaudy pride,
While here beneath the northern skies
I mourn for health deny'd.

III.

Celestial maid of rosy hue,
Oh let me feel thy reign!
I languish till thy face I view,
Thy vanish'd joys regain.

IV.

Susannah mourns, nor can I bear
To see the crystal shower
Or mark the tender falling tear
At sad departure's hour;

V.

Not regarding can I see
Her soul with grief opprest
But let no sighs, no groans for me
Steal from her pensive breast.

VI.

In vain the feather'd warblers sing
In vain the garden blooms
And on the bosom of the spring
Breathes out her sweet perfumes.

VII.

While for Britannia's distant shore
We weep the liquid plain,
And with astonish'd eyes explore
The wide-extended main.

VIII.

Lo! Health appears! celestial dame!
Complacent and serene,
With Hebe's mantle o'er her frame,
With soul-delighting mien.

IX.

To mark the vale where London lies
With misty vapors crown'd
Which cloud Aurora's thousand dyes,
And veil her charms around.

X.

Why, Phoebus, moves thy car so slow?
So slow thy rising ray?
Give us the famous town to view,
Thou glorious King of day!

XI.

For thee, Britannia, I resign
New-England's smiling fields;
To view again her charms divine,

What joy the prospect yields!

XII.

But thou! Temptation hence away,
With all thy fatal train,
Nor once seduce my soul away,
By thine enchanting strain.

XIII.

Thrice happy they, whose heavenly shield
Secures their souls from harm,
And fell Temptation on the field
Of all its pow'r disarms.

A HYMN TO THE EVENING

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

Soon as the sun forsook the eastern main
The pealing thunder shook the heav'nly plain;
Majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,
Exhales the incense of the blooming spring.
Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,
And through the air their mingled music floats.
Through all the heav'ns what beauteous dies are spread!
But the west glories in the deepest red:
So may our breasts with ev'ry virtue glow,
The living temples of our God below!
Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,
And draws the sable curtains of the night,
Let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,
At morn to wake more heav'nly, more refin'd;
So shall the labours of the day begin
More pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.
Night's leaden sceptre seals my drowsy eyes,
Then cease, my song, till fair Aurora rise.

HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

Celestial choir! enthron'd in realms of light,
Columbia's scenes of glorious toils I write.
While freedom's cause her anxious breast alarms,
She flashes dreadful in refulgent arms.
See mother earth her offspring's fate bemoan,
And nations gaze at scenes before unknown!
See the bright beams of heaven's revolving light
Involved in sorrows and the veil of night!

The Goddess comes, she moves divinely fair,
Olive and laurel binds Her golden hair:
Wherever shines this native of the skies,
Unnumber'd charms and recent graces rise.

Muse! Bow propitious while my pen relates
How pour her armies through a thousand gates,
As when Eolus heaven's fair face deforms,
Enwrapp'd in tempest and a night of storms;
Astonish'd ocean feels the wild uproar,
The refluent surges beat the sounding shore;
Or think as leaves in Autumn's golden reign,
Such, and so many, moves the warrior's train.
In bright array they seek the work of war,

Where high unfurl'd the ensign waves in air.
Shall I to Washington their praise recite?
Enough thou know'st them in the fields of fight.
Thee, first in peace and honors—we demand
The grace and glory of thy martial band.
Fam'd for thy valour, for thy virtues more,
Hear every tongue thy guardian aid implore!

One century scarce perform'd its destined round,
When Gallic powers Columbia's fury found;
And so may you, whoever dares disgrace
The land of freedom's heaven-defended race!
Fix'd are the eyes of nations on the scales,
For in their hopes Columbia's arm prevails.
Anon Britannia droops the pensive head,
While round increase the rising hills of dead.
Ah! Cruel blindness to Columbia's state!
Lament thy thirst of boundless power too late.

Proceed, great chief, with virtue on thy side,
Thy ev'ry action let the Goddess guide.
A crown, a mansion, and a throne that shine,
With gold unfading, WASHINGTON! Be thine.

ON VIRTUE

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

O thou bright jewel in my aim I strive
To comprehend thee. Thine own words declare
Wisdom is higher than a fool can reach.
I cease to wonder, and no more attempt
Thine height t'explore, or fathom thy profound.
But, O my soul, sink not into despair,
Virtue is near thee, and with gentle hand
Would now embrace thee, hovers o'er thine head.
Fain would the heaven-born soul with her converse,
Then seek, then court her for her promised bliss.

Auspicious queen, thine heavenly pinions spread,
And lead celestial Chastity along;
Lo! now her sacred retinue descends,
Arrayed in glory from the orbs above.
Attend me, Virtue, thro' my youthful years!
O leave me not to the false joys of time!
But guide my steps to endless life and bliss.
Greatness, or Goodness, say what I shall call thee,
To give an higher appellation still,
Teach me a better strain, a nobler lay,
O Thou, enthroned with Cherubs in the realms of day!

TO S. M. A YOUNG AFRICAN PAINTER, ON SEEING HIS WORKS

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

TO show the lab'ring bosom's deep intent,
And thought in living characters to paint,
When first thy pencil did those beauties give,
And breathing figures learnt from thee to live,
How did those prospects give my soul delight,
A new creation rushing on my sight?
Still, wond'rous youth! each noble path pursue,
On deathless glories fix thine ardent view:
Still may the painter's and the poet's fire
To aid thy pencil, and thy verse conspire!
And may the charms of each seraphic theme
Conduct thy footsteps to immortal fame!
High to the blissful wonders of the skies
Elate thy soul, and raise thy wishful eyes.
Thrice happy, when exalted to survey
That splendid city, crown'd with endless day,
Whose twice six gates on radiant hinges ring:
Celestial Salem blooms in endless spring.
Calm and serene thy moments glide along,
And may the muse inspire each future song!
Still, with the sweets of contemplation bless'd,
May peace with balmy wings your soul invest!
But when these shades of time are chas'd away,

And darkness ends in everlasting day,
On what seraphic pinions shall we move,
And view the landscapes in the realms above?
There shall thy tongue in heav'nly murmurs flow,
And there my muse with heav'nly transport glow:
No more to tell of Damon's tender sighs,
Or rising radiance of Aurora's eyes,
For nobler themes demand a nobler strain,
And purer language on th' ethereal plain.
Cease, gentle muse! the solemn gloom of night
Now seals the fair creation from my sight.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM, EARL OF DARTMOUTH
PHILLIS WHEATLEY

HAIL, happy day, when, smiling like the morn,
Fair Freedom rose New-England to adorn:
The northern clime beneath her genial ray,
Dartmouth, congratulates thy blissful sway:
Elate with hope her race no longer mourns,
Each soul expands, each grateful bosom burns,
While in thine hand with pleasure we behold
The silken reins, and Freedom's charms unfold.
Long lost to realms beneath the northern skies

She shines supreme, while hated faction dies:
Soon as appear'd the Goddess long desir'd,
Sick at the view, she languish'd and expir'd;
Thus from the splendors of the morning light
The owl in sadness seeks the caves of night.
No more, America, in mournful strain
Of wrongs, and grievance unredress'd complain,
No longer shalt thou dread the iron chain,
Which wanton Tyranny with lawless hand
Had made, and with it meant t' enslave the land.

Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
Wonder from whence my love of Freedom sprung,

Whence flow these wishes for the common good,
By feeling hearts alone best understood,
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?
Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd
That from a father seiz'd his babe belov'd:
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

For favours past, great Sir, our thanks are due,
And thee we ask thy favours to renew,
Since in thy pow'r, as in thy will before,
To sooth the griefs, which thou did'st once deplore.
May heav'nly grace the sacred sanction give
To all thy works, and thou for ever live
Not only on the wings of fleeting Fame,
Though praise immortal crowns the patriot's name,
But to conduct to heav'ns refulgent fane,
May fiery coursers sweep th' ethereal plain,
And bear thee upwards to that blest abode,
Where, like the prophet, thou shalt find thy God.

FROM "THE SOUTHLAND'S CHARMS AND FREEDOM'S MAGNITUDE"
(10)

ALBURY ALLSON WHITMAN

10

Oh, direful day that saw Rebellion's guns
 On valiant Sumter opening from the land;
That saw white-handed Chivalry's proud sons
 Their country's standard trail with impious hand
Saw erring Carolina's ablest ones
 Invoke red war on their palmetto strand;
And, in their frenzy, send the challenge forth
That roused the legions of the loyal North.

FROM "THE SOUTHLAND'S CHARMS AND FREEDOM'S MAGNITUDE"
(11)

ALBURY ALLSON WHITMAN

11

The stars and stripes that in our standard fly,
 Immortal symbols of the nation's might,
The splendor of night's orb-emblazoned sky,
 The blue of day's eternal depths—the white
Of Heaven's peace and spotless purity,
 And red of morn's defiance-streaming light,
Meant nothing which that madcap State would heed,
Which vowed to spread vile slavery or secede.

FROM "THE SOUTHLAND'S CHARMS AND FREEDOM'S MAGNITUDE"
(13)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

13

I stood where the contending armies bled—
 A hundred thousand men on either side.
The past returned. Around me rose the dead,
 The brazen bugles rang out far and wide;
The clouds of thund'rous battle round me spread
 O'er lurid fields, where mighty chiefs did ride,
And ranks of serried steel swung into sight,
Flashing afar—an army in its might.

FROM "THE SOUTHLAND'S CHARMS AND FREEDOM'S MAGNITUDE"
(14)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

14

And there was silence in the pulsing air,
 While in the noon sun fluttered banners gay—
A lull that breathed the courage of despair;
 A hush which meant a pause in which to pray,
There youths whose lives had never known a care
 Confronted veterans with locks of aged gray;
Before the cool glare of the veteran,
The blue-eyed youth stood dauntless, man to man.

FROM "THE SOUTHLAND'S CHARMS AND FREEDOM'S MAGNITUDE"
(35)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

35

Free labor still our country's hope remains,—
 In this our largest manhood shall be grown;
The spirit of vast woods and vaster plains,—
 Canyons and geysers of the Yellowstone;
Alaskan summits, where bald winter reigns,
 And rests on base of gold his icy throne,—
These all are prophecies of what shall be,
When Freedom's sons shall leave their brothers free.

FROM "THE SOUTHLAND'S CHARMS AND FREEDOM'S MAGNITUDE"
(56)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

56

Farewell, alas! my native land adored!

I've sung thy praises in a faithful strain;

But westward life's imperial tides have poured,

Eddying in towns, and sweeping on again,

While braver hearts have in their strength ignored

The old South limitations which remain.

And I must leave the land which gave me birth,

Or pine, an alien, on my native hearth.

FROM "TWASINTA'S SEMINOLES" (CANTO I, II)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

The drowsy dawn from many a low-built shed,
Beheld his kindred driven to their task;
Late evening saw them turn with weary tread
And painful faces back; and dost thou ask
How sang these bondmen? how their suff'rings mask?
Song is the soul of sympathy divine,
And hath an inner ray where hope may bask;
Song turns the poorest waters into wine,
Illumines exile hearts and makes their faces shine.

FROM "TWASINTA'S SEMINOLES" (CANTO I, XLV)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

Here erst came exiles from their little farms,
To greet Palmecho and some honored guest;
Then ranged in rows, they sat with folded arms,
And heaven with rude, but fervent songs addrest:
A nameless longing kindled in each breast,
Gave soul to song, and as their voices rose,
And rolled, and echoed, dying in the West,
It seemed as if the dark hills did enclose
Unearthly choirs that chanted Nature to repose.

FROM "TWASINTA'S SEMINOLES" (CANTO I, XXXVII)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

The scout at eve to Mickasukie came;
The stories of Twasinta were his boast,—
A stately chief, Palmecho was his name,
Had numerous herds and fields, and had a host
Of servants in the vale from Tampa's coast.
A proud descendant of a House of Spain,
Distinguished as a patron, gen'rous most,
Whoever sought his roof, sought not in vain,
And he who tarried once, must shelter there again.

FROM "TWASINTA'S SEMINOLES" (CANTO IV, IX)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

There is a time when speech is all too frail,
There is a place where silence speaks the most:
What is the word to paint a human wail,
Or how heroic, speak where all is lost!
He who wears shackles mid his shackled host,
Shows valor's steel to sturdily behave,
For life is Freedom's last and real cost,
And so, the last resistance of the brave,
Is that stern silence which to chains prefers grave.

FROM "TWASINTA'S SEMINOLES" (CANTO IV, XLIX)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

This is a land of free limb and free thought—
Freedom for all, home-keeping or abroad,—
Here man is all unhindered, as he ought,
Dreading no priest's rebuke, no despot's nod,
In high respect of Right, the friend of God!
Sole sovereign of himself, by nature throned,
Planting his titles in the royal sod,
He spreads his reign where labor's might is owned,
And harvests revenues for which no subject groaned.

FROM "TWASINTA'S SEMINOLES" (CANTO IV, XXXVIII)

ALBERY ALLSON WHITMAN

Since he who looks upon a glorious day
Expiring on the threshold of the West,
Must breathe a thoughtful wish to be away;
And feel within him dying unexpressed
The seer-voiced longings of the heart's unrest;
May we not trust that, in the evermore,
A friendlier clime awaits the pensive breast;
May we not hope to reach a father shore,
And catch the billows listing where they cease to roar?

TO –

SARAH HELEN WHITMAN

Vainly my heart had with thy sorceries striven:
It had no refuge from thy love,—no Heaven
But in thy fatal presence;—from afar
It owned thy power and trembled like a star
O'erfraught with light and splendor. Could I deem
How dark a shadow should obscure its beam?—
Could I believe that pain could ever dwell
Where thy bright presence cast its blissful spell?
Thou wert my proud palladium;—could I fear
The avenging Destinies when thou wert near?—
Thou wert my Destiny;—thy song, thy fame,
The wild enchantments clustering round thy name,
Were my soul's heritage, its royal dower;
Its glory and its kingdom and its power!

AMERICA

WALT WHITMAN

Centre of equal daughters, equal sons,
All, all alike endear'd, grown, ungrown, young or old,
Strong, ample, fair, enduring, capable, rich,
Perennial with the Earth, with Freedom, Law and Love,
A grand, sane, towering, seated Mother,
Chair'd in the adamant of Time.

ELECTION DAY, NOVEMBER, 1884

WALT WHITMAN

If I should need to name, O Western World, your powerfulest scene and show,

'Twould not be you, Niagara—nor you, ye limitless prairies—nor your huge rifts of canyons, Colorado,

Nor you, Yosemite—nor Yellowstone, with all its spasmic geyser-loops ascending to the skies, appearing and disappearing,

Nor Oregon's white cones—nor Huron's belt of mighty lakes—nor Mississippi's stream:

—This seething hemisphere's humanity, as now, I'd name—the still small voice vibrating—America's choosing day,

(The heart of it not in the chosen—the act itself the main, the quadriennial choosing,)

The stretch of North and South arous'd—sea-board and inland—Texas to Maine—the Prairie States—Vermont, Virginia, California,

The final ballot-shower from East to West—the paradox and conflict,

The countless snow-flakes falling—(a swordless conflict,

Yet more than all Rome's wars of old, or modern Napoleon's:) the peaceful choice of all,

Or good or ill humanity—welcoming the darker odds, the dross:

—Foams and ferments the wine? it serves to purify—while the heart pants, life glows:

These stormy gusts and winds waft precious ships,

Swell'd Washington's, Jefferson's, Lincoln's sails.

I HEAR AMERICA SINGING

WALT WHITMAN

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,

Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,

The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,

The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,

The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing
on the steamboat deck,

The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he
stands,

The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at
noon intermission or at sundown,

The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the
girl sewing or washing,

Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,

The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, ro-
bust, friendly,

Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

WALT WHITMAN

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up- for you the flag is flung- for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths- for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;

Here Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck,

You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O ME! O LIFE!

WALT WHITMAN

O Me! O life! of the questions of these recurring,
Of the endless trains of the faithless, of cities fill'd with the foolish,
Of myself forever reproaching myself, (for who more foolish than I, and who
more faithless?)
Of eyes that vainly crave the light, of the objects mean, of the struggle ever
renew'd,
Of the poor results of all, of the plodding and sordid crowds I see around
me,
Of the empty and useless years of the rest, with the rest me intertwined,
The question, O me! so sad, recurring—What good amid these, O me, O life?

Answer.

That you are here—that life exists and identity,
That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse.

RISE O DAYS FROM YOUR FATHOMLESS DEEPS

WALT WHITMAN

1

Rise O days from your fathomless deeps, till you loftier, fiercer sweep,
Long for my soul hungering gymnastic I devour'd what the earth gave me,
Long I roam'd amid the woods of the north, long I watch'd Niagara pouring,
I travel'd the prairies over and slept on their breast, I cross'd the Nevadas, I
cross'd the plateaus,
I ascended the towering rocks along the Pacific, I sail'd out to sea,
I sail'd through the storm, I was refresh'd by the storm,
I watch'd with joy the threatening maws of the waves,
I mark'd the white combs where they career'd so high, curling over,
I heard the wind piping, I saw the black clouds,
Saw from below what arose and mounted, (O superb! O wild as my heart,
and powerful!)

Heard the continuous thunder as it bellow'd after the lightning,
Noted the slender and jagged threads of lightning as sudden and fast amid
the din they chased each other across the sky;

These, and such as these, I, elate, saw—saw with wonder, yet pensive and
masterful,

All the menacing might of the globe uprisen around me,
Yet there with my soul I fed, I fed content, supercilious.

2

'Twas well, O soul—'twas a good preparation you gave me,
Now we advance our latent and ampler hunger to fill,

Now we go forth to receive what the earth and the sea never gave us,
Not through the mighty woods we go, but through the mightier cities,
Something for us is pouring now more than Niagara pouring,
Torrents of men, (sources and rills of the Northwest are you indeed inexhaustible?)

What, to pavements and homesteads here, what were those storms of the mountains and sea?

What, to passions I witness around me to-day? was the sea risen?

Was the wind piping the pipe of death under the black clouds?

Lo! from deeps more unfathomable, something more deadly and savage,
Manhattan rising, advancing with menacing front—Cincinnati, Chicago, unchain'd;

What was that swell I saw on the ocean? behold what comes here,

How it climbs with daring feet and hands—how it dashes!

How the true thunder bellows after the lightning—how bright the flashes of lightning!

How Democracy with desperate vengeful port strides on, shown through the dark by those flashes of lightning!

(Yet a mournful wall and low sob I fancied I heard through the dark,
In a lull of the deafening confusion.)

3

Thunder on! stride on, Democracy! strike with vengeful stroke!

And do you rise higher than ever yet O days, O cities!

Crash heavier, heavier yet O storms! you have done me good,

My soul prepared in the mountains absorbs your immortal strong nutriment,

Long had I walk'd my cities, my country roads through farms, only half satisfied,

One doubt nauseous undulating like a snake, crawl'd on the ground before
me,
Continually preceding my steps, turning upon me oft, ironically hissing low;
The cities I loved so well I abandon'd and left, I sped to the certainties suitable to me,
Hungering, hungering, hungering, for primal energies and Nature's dauntless-
ness,
I refresh'd myself with it only, I could relish it only,
I waited the bursting forth of the pent fire—on the water and air waited
long;
But now I no longer wait, I am fully satisfied, I am gluttoned,
I have witness'd the true lightning, I have witness'd my cities electric,
I have lived to behold man burst forth and warlike America rise,
Hence I will seek no more the food of the northern solitary wilds,
No more the mountains roam or sail the stormy sea.

SONG OF MYSELF, 3

WALT WHITMAN

I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk of the beginning and the end

But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

There was never any more inception than there is now,
Nor any more youth or age than there is now,
And will never be any more perfection than there is now,
Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now.

Urge and urge and urge,
Always the procreant urge of the world.

Out of the dimness opposite equals advance, always substance and increase,
always sex,
Always a knit of identity, always distinction, always a breed of life.

To elaborate is no avail, learn'd and unlearn'd feel that it is so.

Sure as the most certain sure, plumb in the uprights, well entretied, braced
in the beams,
Stout as a horse, affectionate, haughty, electrical,
I and this mystery here we stand.

Clear and sweet is my soul, and clear and sweet is all that is not my soul.

Lack one lacks both, and the unseen is proved by the seen,
Till that becomes unseen and receives proof in its turn.

Showing the best and dividing it from the worst age vexes age,
Knowing the perfect fitness and equanimity of things, while they discuss I
am silent, and go bathe and admire myself.

Welcome is every organ and attribute of me, and of any man hearty and
clean,
Not an inch nor a particle of an inch is vile, and none shall be less familiar
than the rest.

I am satisfied—I see, dance, laugh, sing;
As the hugging and loving bed-fellow sleeps at my side through the night,
and withdraws at the peep of the day with stealthy tread.
Leaving me baskets cover'd with white towels swelling the house with their
plenty,
Shall I postpone my acceptation and realization and scream at my eyes,
That they turn from gazing after and down the road,
And forthwith cipher and show me to a cent,
Exactly the value of one and exactly the value of two, and which is ahead?

SONG OF MYSELF, 18

WALT WHITMAN

With music strong I come, with my cornets and my drums,
I play not marches for accepted victors only, I play marches for conquer'd
and slain persons.

Have you heard that it was good to gain the day?
I also say it is good to fall, battles are lost in the same spirit in which they
are won.

I beat and pound for the dead,
I blow through my embouchures my loudest and gayest for them.

Vivas to those who have fail'd!
And to those whose war-vessels sank in the sea!
And to those themselves who sank in the sea!
And to all generals that lost engagements, and all overcome heroes!
And the numberless unknown heroes equal to the greatest heroes known!

SONG OF MYSELF, 26

WALT WHITMAN

Now I will do nothing but listen,

To accrue what I hear into this song, to let sounds contribute toward it.

I hear bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of flames, clack of sticks cooking my meals,

I hear the sound I love, the sound of the human voice,

I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,

Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds of the day and night,

Talkative young ones to those that like them, the loud laugh of work-people at their meals,

The angry base of disjointed friendship, the faint tones of the sick,

The judge with hands tight to the desk, his pallid lips pronouncing a death-sentence,

The heave'e'yo of stevedores unlading ships by the wharves, the refrain of the anchor-lifters,

The ring of alarm-bells, the cry of fire, the whirr of swift-streaking engines and hose-carts with premonitory tinkles and color'd lights,

The steam-whistle, the solid roll of the train of approaching cars,

The slow march play'd at the head of the association marching two and two,

(They go to guard some corpse, the flag-tops are draped with black muslin.)

I hear the violoncello, ('tis the young man's heart's complaint,)

I hear the key'd cornet, it glides quickly in through my ears,

It shakes mad-sweet pangs through my belly and breast.

I hear the chorus, it is a grand opera,
Ah this indeed is music—this suits me.

A tenor large and fresh as the creation fills me,
The orbic flex of his mouth is pouring and filling me full.

I hear the train'd soprano (what work with hers is this?)
The orchestra whirls me wider than Uranus flies,
It wrenches such ardors from me I did not know I possess'd them,
It sails me, I dab with bare feet, they are lick'd by the indolent waves,
I am cut by bitter and angry hail, I lose my breath,
Steep'd amid honey'd morphine, my windpipe throttled in fakes of death,
At length let up again to feel the puzzle of puzzles,
And that we call Being.

SONG OF MYSELF, 34

WALT WHITMAN

Now I tell what I knew in Texas in my early youth,
(I tell not the fall of Alamo,
Not one escaped to tell the fall of Alamo,
The hundred and fifty are dumb yet at Alamo,)
'Tis the tale of the murder in cold blood of four hundred and twelve young
men.

Retreating they had form'd in a hollow square with their baggage for breast-
works,
Nine hundred lives out of the surrounding enemy's, nine times their number,
was the price they took in advance,
Their colonel was wounded and their ammunition gone,
They treated for an honorable capitulation, receiv'd writing and seal, gave up
their arms and march'd back prisoners of war.

They were the glory of the race of rangers,
Matchless with horse, rifle, song, supper, courtship,
Large, turbulent, generous, handsome, proud, and affectionate,
Bearded, sunburnt, drest in the free costume of hunters,
Not a single one over thirty years of age.

The second First-day morning they were brought out in squads and massa-
cred, it was beautiful early summer,
The work commenced about five o'clock and was over by eight.

None obey'd the command to kneel,
Some made a mad and helpless rush, some stood stark and straight,
A few fell at once, shot in the temple or heart, the living and dead lay together,
The maim'd and mangled dug in the dirt, the new-comers saw them there,
Some half-kill'd attempted to crawl away,
These were despatch'd with bayonets or batter'd with the blunts of muskets,
A youth not seventeen years old seiz'd his assassin till two more came to release him,
The three were all torn and cover'd with the boy's blood.

At eleven o'clock began the burning of the bodies;
That is the tale of the murder of the four hundred and twelve young men.

SONG OF MYSELF, 35

WALT WHITMAN

Would you hear of an old-time sea-fight?

Would you learn who won by the light of the moon and stars?

List to the yarn, as my grandmother's father the sailor told it to me.

Our foe was no skulk in his ship I tell you, (said he,)

His was the surly English pluck, and there is no tougher or truer, and never was, and never will be;

Along the lower'd eve he came horribly raking us.

We closed with him, the yards entangled, the cannon touch'd,

My captain lash'd fast with his own hands.

We had receiv'd some eighteen pound shots under the water,

On our lower-gun-deck two large pieces had burst at the first fire, killing all around and blowing up overhead.

Fighting at sun-down, fighting at dark,

Ten o'clock at night, the full moon well up, our leaks on the gain, and five feet of water reported,

The master-at-arms loosing the prisoners confined in the after-hold to give them a chance for themselves.

The transit to and from the magazine is now stopt by the sentinels,

They see so many strange faces they do not know whom to trust.

Our frigate takes fire,
The other asks if we demand quarter?
If our colors are struck and the fighting done?

Now I laugh content, for I hear the voice of my little captain,
We have not struck, he composedly cries, we have just begun our part of the fighting.

Only three guns are in use,
One is directed by the captain himself against the enemy's mainmast,
Two well serv'd with grape and canister silence his musketry and clear his decks.

The tops alone second the fire of this little battery, especially the main-top,
They hold out bravely during the whole of the action.

Not a moment's cease,
The leaks gain fast on the pumps, the fire eats toward the powder-magazine.

One of the pumps has been shot away, it is generally thought we are sinking.

Serene stands the little captain,
He is not hurried, his voice is neither high nor low,
His eyes give more light to us than our battle-lanterns.

Toward twelve there in the beams of the moon they surrender to us.

SONG OF MYSELF, 40

WALT WHITMAN

Flaunt of the sunshine I need not your bask—lie over!
You light surfaces only, I force surfaces and depths also.

Earth! you seem to look for something at my hands,
Say, old top-knot, what do you want?

Man or woman, I might tell how I like you, but cannot,
And might tell what it is in me and what it is in you, but cannot,
And might tell that pining I have, that pulse of my nights and days.

Behold, I do not give lectures or a little charity,
When I give I give myself.

You there, impotent, loose in the knees,
Open your scarf'd chops till I blow grit within you,
Spread your palms and lift the flaps of your pockets,
I am not to be denied, I compel, I have stores plenty and to spare,
And any thing I have I bestow.

I do not ask who you are, that is not important to me,
You can do nothing and be nothing but what I will infold you.

To cotton-field drudge or cleaner of privies I lean,

On his right cheek I put the family kiss,
And in my soul I swear I never will deny him.

On women fit for conception I start bigger and nimbler babes,
(This day I am jetting the stuff of far more arrogant republics.)

To any one dying, thither I speed and twist the knob of the door,
Turn the bed-clothes toward the foot of the bed,
Let the physician and the priest go home.

I seize the descending man and raise him with resistless will,
O despairer, here is my neck,
By God, you shall not go down! hang your whole weight upon me.

I dilate you with tremendous breath, I buoy you up,
Every room of the house do I fill with an arm'd force,
Lovers of me, bafflers of graves.

Sleep—I and they keep guard all night,
Not doubt, not decease shall dare to lay finger upon you,
I have embraced you, and henceforth possess you to myself,
And when you rise in the morning you will find what I tell you is so.

SONG OF MYSELF, 42

WALT WHITMAN

A call in the midst of the crowd,
My own voice, orotund sweeping and final.

Come my children,
Come my boys and girls, my women, household and intimates,
Now the performer launches his nerve, he has pass'd his prelude on the
reeds within.

Easily written loose-finger'd chords—I feel the thrum of your climax and
close.

My head slues round on my neck,
Music rolls, but not from the organ,
Folks are around me, but they are no household of mine.

Ever the hard unsunk ground,
Ever the eaters and drinkers, ever the upward and downward sun, ever the
air and the ceaseless tides,
Ever myself and my neighbors, refreshing, wicked, real,
Ever the old inexplicable query, ever that thorn'd thumb, that breath of
itches and thirsts,
Ever the vexer's hoot! hoot! till we find where the sly one hides and bring
him forth,
Ever love, ever the sobbing liquid of life,
Ever the bandage under the chin, ever the trestles of death.

Here and there with dimes on the eyes walking,
To feed the greed of the belly the brains liberally spooning,
Tickets buying, taking, selling, but in to the feast never once going.
Many sweating, ploughing, thrashing, and then the chaff for payment receiving,
A few idly owning, and they the wheat continually claiming.

This is the city and I am one of the citizens,
Whatever interests the rest interests me, politics, wars, markets, newspapers, schools,
The mayor and councils, banks, tariffs, steamships, factories, stocks, stores, real estate and personal estate.

The little plentiful manikins skipping around in collars and tail'd coats,
I am aware who they are, (they are positively not worms or fleas,)
I acknowledge the duplicates of myself, the weakest and shallowest is deathless with me,
What I do and say the same waits for them,
Every thought that flounders in me the same flounders in them.

I know perfectly well my own egotism,
Know my omnivorous lines and must not write any less,
And would fetch you whoever you are flush with myself.

Not words of routine this song of mine,
But abruptly to question, to leap beyond yet nearer bring;

This printed and bound book—but the printer and the printing-office boy?

The well-taken photographs—but your wife or friend close and solid in your arms?

The black ship mail'd with iron, her mighty guns in her turrets—but the pluck of the captain and engineers?

In the houses the dishes and fare and furniture—but the host and hostess, and the look out of their eyes?

The sky up there—yet here or next door, or across the way?

The saints and sages in history—but you yourself?

Sermons, creeds, theology—but the fathomless human brain,

And what is reason? and what is love? and what is life?

SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD, 6

WALT WHITMAN

Now if a thousand perfect men were to appear it would not amaze me,
Now if a thousand beautiful forms of women appear'd it would not astonish me.

Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

Here a great personal deed has room,
(Such a deed seizes upon the hearts of the whole race of men,
Its effusion of strength and will overwhelms law and mocks all authority and all argument against it.)

Here is the test of wisdom,
Wisdom is not finally tested in schools,
Wisdom cannot be pass'd from one having it to another not having it,
Wisdom is of the soul, is not susceptible of proof, is its own proof,
Applies to all stages and objects and qualities and is content,
Is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things, and the excellence of things;
Something there is in the float of the sight of things that provokes it out of the soul.

Now I re-examine philosophies and religions,
They may prove well in lecture-rooms, yet not prove at all under the spacious clouds and along the landscape and flowing currents.

Here is realization,

Here is a man tallied—he realizes here what he has in him,

The past, the future, majesty, love—if they are vacant of you, you are vacant of them.

Only the kernel of every object nourishes;

Where is he who tears off the husks for you and me?

Where is he that undoes stratagems and envelopes for you and me?

Here is adhesiveness, it is not previously fashion'd, it is apropos;

Do you know what it is as you pass to be loved by strangers?

Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls?

THAT MUSIC ALWAYS ROUND ME

WALT WHITMAN

That music always round me, unceasing, unbeginning, yet long untaught I
did not hear,

But now the chorus I hear and am elated,

A tenor, strong, ascending with power and health, with glad notes of day-
break I hear,

A soprano at intervals sailing buoyantly over the tops of immense waves,

A transparent base shuddering lusciously under and through the universe,

The triumphant tutti, the funeral wailings with sweet flutes and violins, all
these I fill myself with,

I hear not the volumes of sound merely, I am moved by the exquisite mean-
ings,

I listen to the different voices winding in and out, striving, contending with
fiery vehemence to excel each other in emotion;

I do not think the performers know themselves—but now I think I begin to
know them.

TO A LOCOMOTIVE IN WINTER

WALT WHITMAN

Thee for my recitative,
Thee in the driving storm even as now, the snow, the winter-day declining,
Thee in thy panoply, thy measur'd dual throbbing and thy beat convulsive,
Thy black cylindric body, golden brass, and silvery steel,
Thy ponderous side-bars, parallel and connecting rods, gyrating, shuttling at
thy sides,
Thy metrical, now swelling pant and roar, now tapering in the distance,
Thy great protruding head-light fix'd in front,
Thy long, pale, floating vapor-pennants, tinged with delicate purple,
The dense and murky clouds out-belching from thy smoke-stack,
Thy knitted frame, thy springs and valves, the tremulous twinkle of thy
wheels,
Thy train of cars behind, obedient, merrily following,
Through gale or calm, now swift, now slack, yet steadily careering;
Type of the modern—emblem of motion and power—pulse of the continent,
For once come serve the Muse and merge in verse, even as here I see thee,
With storm and buffeting gusts of wind and falling snow,
By day thy warning ringing bell to sound its notes,
By night thy silent signal lamps to swing.

Fierce-throated beauty!

Roll through my chant with all thy lawless music, thy swinging lamps at
night,

Thy madly-whistled laughter, echoing, rumbling like an earthquake, rousing
all,

Law of thyself complete, thine own track firmly holding,

(No sweetness debonair of tearful harp or glib piano thine,)

Thy trills of shrieks by rocks and hills return'd,

Launch'd o'er the prairies wide, across the lakes,

To the free skies unpent and glad and strong.

WASHINGTON'S MONUMENT, FEBRUARY, 1885

WALT WHITMAN

Ah, not this marble, dead and cold:

Far from its base and shaft expanding—the round zones circling, comprehending,

Thou, Washington, art all the world's, the continents' entire—not yours alone, America,

Europe's as well, in every part, castle of lord or laborer's cot,

Or frozen North, or sultry South—the African's—the Arab's in his tent,

Old Asia's there with venerable smile, seated amid her ruins;

(Greets the antique the hero new? 'tis but the same—the heir legitimate, continued ever,

The indomitable heart and arm—proofs of the never-broken line,

Courage, alertness, patience, faith, the same—e'en in defeat defeated not, the same:)

Wherever sails a ship, or house is built on land, or day or night,

Through teeming cities' streets, indoors or out, factories or farms,

Now, or to come, or past—where patriot wills existed or exist,

Wherever Freedom, pois'd by Toleration, sway'd by Law,

Stands or is rising thy true monument.

WHEN I HEARD THE LEARN'D ASTRONOMER

WALT WHITMAN

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure
them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause
in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

WITH MUSIC

HELEN HAY WHITNEY

Dear, did we meet in some dim yesterday?

I half remember how the birds were mute

Among green leaves and tulip-tinted fruit,

And on the grass, beside a stream, we lay

In early twilight; faintly, far away,

Came lovely sounds adrift from silver lute,

With answered echoes of an airy flute,

While Twilight waited tiptoe, fain to stay.

Her violet eyes were sweet with mystery.

You looked in mine, the music rose and fell

Like little, lisping laughter of the sea;

Our souls were barks, wind-wafted from the shore—

Gold cup, a rose, a ruby, who can tell?

Soft—music ceases—I recall no more.

IN SCHOOL-DAYS

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Still sits the school-house by the road,
 A ragged beggar sleeping;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
 And blackberry-vines are creeping.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
 Deep scarred by raps official;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
 The jack-knife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescos on its wall;
 Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
 Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun
 Shone over it at setting;
Lit up its western window-panes,
 And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
 And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed

When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy

Her childish favor singled:

His cap pulled low upon a face

Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow

To right and left, he lingered;—

As restlessly her tiny hands

The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt

The soft hand's light caressing,

And heard the tremble of her voice,

As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:

I hate to go above you,

Because,"—the brown eyes lower fell,—

"Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man

That sweet child-face is showing.

Dear girl! the grasses on her grave

Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her,—because they love him.

A NEW SPINNING SONG

MARGARET WIDDEMER

The fillet needs another pearl, the hand another ring,
 (Turn, wheels, turn, dusk in the red young sun!)

What are little hearts that beat and little lips that sing?
 (Turn wheels, turn, whirl till our whim is won!)

Flesh and blood and dusky eyes, childish heart and gay,
These shall turn our wheels for us and wither through the day—
 (Turn, wheels, turn, dusk in the red young sun!)

The pinnacle needs a swifter sail, the fortress needs a tower,
 (Turn, wheels, turn, bleak in the sultry noon!)

What if all the woods are green and all the fields in flower?
 (Turn, wheels, turn, stilling the youth-time soon!)

Children's strength and children's lives are fuel that we burn,
More shall come when these are gone to make our great wheels turn—
 (Turn, wheels, turn, bleak in the sultry noon!)

Leisure-time and mirth are dear, flesh and blood are cheap
 (Turn, wheels, turn, black in the hopeless night!)

What if children break or die the morns we smile in sleep?
 (Turn, wheels, turn, over the hearts once light!)

Spinning flesh to gold for us, spinning life for bread,
Spinning hope and strength and breath along the endless thread—
 (Turn, wheels, turn black in the hopeless night!)

THE GUIDES

MARGARET WIDDEMER

Where have you been the long day through,
 Little brothers of mine?
For soon the world shall belong to you,
Yours to mar or to build anew—
Have you been to learn what the world shall do,
 Little brothers going home?

*We have been to learn through the weary day
Where the great looms echo and crash and sway—
The world has willed it, and we obey,
 Elder brother.*

What did you learn till set of sun,
 Little brothers of mine,
Down where the great looms wove and spun,
You who are many where we are one
(We whose day is so nearly done),
 Little brothers toiling home?

*We have learned the things that the mill-folk said,
How Man is cruel and God is dead...
And how to spin with an even thread,
 Elder brother.*

What did you win with the thing they taught,
 Little brothers of mine,
You whose sons shall have strength you brought,
Fashion their lives of the faith you bought,
Follow afar the ways you sought,
 Little brothers stealing home?

*Shattered body and stunted brain,
Hearts made hard with the need of gain,
These we won and must give again,
 Elder brother.*

How shall the world fare in your hand,
 Little brothers of mine,
When you shall stand where now we stand?
Will you lift a light in the darkened land
Or fire its ways with a burning brand,
 Little brothers creeping home?

*What of the way the world shall fare?
What the world has given the world must bear...
We are tired—ah, tired—and we cannot care,
 Elder brother!*

THE MODERN WOMAN TO HER LOVER

MARGARET WIDDEMER

I shall not lie to you any more,

Flatter or fawn to attain my end—

I am what never has been before,

Woman—and Friend.

I shall be strong as a man is strong,

I shall be fair as a man is fair,

Hand in locked hand we shall pass along

To a purer air:

I shall not drag at your bridle-rein,

Knee pressed to knee shall we ride the hill;

I shall not lie to you ever again—

Will you love me still?

THE NET

MARGARET WIDDEMER

The strangers' children laugh along the street:
They know not, or forget the sweeping of the Net
Swift to ensnare such little careless feet.

And we—we smile and watch them pass along,
And those who walk beside, soft-smiling, cruel-eyed—
We guard our own—not ours to right the wrong!

We do not care—we shall not heed or mark,
Till we shall hear one day, too late to strive or pray,
Our daughters' voices crying from the dark!

THE OLD SUFFRAGIST

MARGARET WIDDEMER

She could have loved—her woman-passions beat
Deeper than theirs, or else she had not known
How to have dropped her heart beneath their feet
A living stepping-stone:
The little hands—did they not clutch her heart?
The guarding arms—was she not very tired?
Was it an easy thing to walk apart,
Unresting, undesired?
She gave away her crown of woman-praise,
Her gentleness and silent girlhood grace,
To be a merriment for idle days,
Scorn for the market-place:
She strove for an unvisioned, far-off good,
For one far hope she knew she could not see:
These—not her daughters—crowned with motherhood
And love and beauty—free.

FRIENDSHIP AFTER LOVE

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

After the fierce midsummer all ablaze
Has burned itself to ashes, and expires
In the intensity of its own fires,
There come the mellow, mild, St. Martin days
Crowned with the calm of peace, but sad with haze.
So after Love has led us, till he tires
Of his own throes, and torments, and desires,
Comes large-eyed friendship: with a restful gaze,
He beckons us to follow, and across
Cool verdant vales we wander free from care.
Is it a touch of frost lies in the air?
Why are we haunted with a sense of loss?
We do not wish the pain back, or the heat;
And yet, and yet, these days are incomplete.

THOUGHTS

MYRA VIOLA WILDS

What kind of thoughts now, do you carry
In your travels day by day
Are they bright and lofty visions,
Or neglected, gone astray?

Matters not how great in fancy,
Or what deeds of skill you've wrought;
Man, though high may be his station,
Is no better than his thoughts.

Catch your thoughts and hold them tightly,
Let each one an honor be;
Purge them, scourge them, burnish brightly,
Then in love set each one free.

PEACE ON EARTH

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

The Archer is wake!
The Swan is flying!
Gold against blue
An Arrow is lying.
There is hunting in heaven—
Sleep safe till tomorrow.

The Bears are abroad!
The Eagle is screaming!
Gold against blue
Their eyes are gleaming!
Sleep!
Sleep safe till tomorrow.

The Sisters lie
With their arms intertwining;
Gold against blue
Their hair is shining!
The Serpent writhes!
Orion is listening!
Gold against blue
His sword is glistening!
Sleep!

There is hunting in heaven—
Sleep safe till tomorrow.

THE FOOL'S SONG

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

I tried to put a bird in a cage.

O fool that I am!

For the bird was Truth.

Sing merrily, Truth: I tried to put

Truth in a cage!

And when I had the bird in the cage,

O fool that I am!

Why, it broke my pretty cage.

Sing merrily, Truth: I tried to put

Truth in a cage!

And when the bird was flown from the cage,

O fool that I am!

Why, I had nor bird nor cage.

Sing merrily, Truth: I tried to put

Truth in a cage!

Heigh-ho! Truth in a cage.

THE USES OF POETRY

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

I've fond anticipation of a day
O'erfilled with pure diversion presently,
For I must read a lady poesy
The while we glide by many a leafy bay,

Hid deep in rushes, where at random play
The glossy black winged May-flies, or whence flee
Hush-throated nestlings in alarm,
Whom we have idly frightened with our boat's long sway.

For, lest o'ersaddened by such woes as spring
To rural peace from our meek onward trend,
What else more fit? We'll draw the latch-string

And close the door of sense; then satiate wend,
On poesy's transforming giant wing,
To worlds afar whose fruits all anguish mend.

THE WIDOW'S LAMENT IN SPRINGTIME

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Sorrow is my own yard
where the new grass
flames as it has flamed
often before but not
with the cold fire
that closes round me this year.
Thirtyfive years
I lived with my husband.
The plumbtree is white today
with masses of flowers.
Masses of flowers
load the cherry branches
and color some bushes
yellow and some red
but the grief in my heart
is stronger than they
for though they were my joy
formerly, today I notice them
and turn away forgetting.
Today my son told me
that in the meadows,
at the edge of the heavy woods
in the distance, he saw

trees of white flowers.

I feel that I would like

to go there

and fall into those flowers

and sink into the marsh near them.

ATAVISM

ELINOR WYLIE

I always was afraid of Some's Pond:
Not the little pond, by which the willow stands,
Where laughing boys catch alewives in their hands
In brown, bright shallows; but the one beyond.
There, when the frost makes all the birches burn
Yellow as cow-lilies, and the pale sky shines
Like a polished shell between black spruce and pines,
Some strange thing tracks us, turning where we turn.

You'll say I dream it, being the true daughter
Of those who in old times endured this dread.
Look! Where the lily-stems are showing red
A silent paddle moves below the water,
A sliding shape has stirred them like a breath;
Tall plumes surmount a painted mask of death.

LET NO CHARITABLE HOPE

ELINOR WYLIE

Now let no charitable hope
Confuse my mind with images
Of eagle and of antelope:
I am by nature none of these.

I was, being human, born alone;
I am, being woman, hard beset;
I live by squeezing from a stone
The little nourishment I get.

In masks outrageous and austere
The years go by in single file;
But none has merited my fear,
And none has quite escaped my smile.

IRIS OF LIFE

ZITKÁLA-ŠÁ

Like tiny drops of crystal rain,
In every life the moments fall,
To wear away with silent beat,
The shell of selfishness o'er all.

And every act, not one too small,
That leaps from out the heart's pure glow,
Like ray of gold sends forth a light,
While moments into seasons flow.

Athwart the dome, Eternity,
To Iris grown resplendent, fly
Bright gleams from every noble deed,
Till colors with each other vie.

'Tis glimpses of this grand rainbow,
Where moments with good deeds unite,
That gladden many weary hearts,
Inspiring them to seek more Light.