POEMS

BY

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

SECOND SERIES.

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POEMS.

NEW ENGLAND.

I will not sing for gain, nor yet for fame,
Though praise I shall enjoy if come it may,
I will not sing to make my nature tame,
And thus it is if I seek Fortune’s way.
But I will chant a rude heroic lay,
On rough New England’s coast, whose sterile soil
Gives happiness and dignity to toil.

If I may be a Son of those stern men,
Who took this Indian land to make them free,
And grasping in my hand a Poet’s pen,
Thus as a Poet their great thoughts decree,
I then shall think I strike for liberty;
My hand, my heart, my pen all draining up,
The imperial vintage in rich Freedom’s cup.
In a New England hand the lyre must beat
With brave emotions; such the winter wind
Sweeps on chill pinions, when the cutting sleet
Doth the bare traveller in the fields half blind,
Yet freezing to the trees congeals a rind,
Next day more brilliant than the Arab skies,
Or plumes from gorgeous birds of Paradise.

A bold and nervous hand must strike the strings,
Our varying climate forms its children so,
And what we lack in Oriental things,
We render good by that perpetual blow,
Which wears away the strongest rocks we know,
Sure in supply, and constant in demand,
Active and patient, fit to serve or stand.

They do malign us who contract our hope
To prudent gain or blind religious zeal,
More signs than these shine in our horoscope,
Nobly to live, to do, and dare, and feel,
Knit to each other by firm bands of steel,
Our eyes to God we turn, our hearts to home,
Standing content beneath the azure dome.
My country, 'tis for thee I strike the lyre,
My country, wide as is the free wind's flight,
I sing New England as she lights her fire
In every Prairie's midst; and where the bright
Enchanting stars shine pure through Southern night,
She still is there the guardian on the tower,
To open for the world a purer hour.

Could they but know the wild enchanting thrill
That in our homely houses fills the heart,
To feel how faithfully New England's will
Beats in each artery, and each small part
Of this great Continent, their blood would start
In Georgia, or where Spain once sat in state,
Or Texas with her lone star desolate.

Because they shall be free,—we wish it thus;
In vain against our purpose may they turn,
They are our Brothers, and belong to us,
And on our altars Slavery shall burn,
Its ashes buried in a silent urn.
Then think not 'tis a vain New England boast,—
We love the distant West, the Atlantic coast.
'Tis a New England thought, to make this land
The very home of Freedom, and the nurse
Of each sublime emotion; she does stand
Between the sunny South, and the dread curse
Of God, who else should make her hearse
Of condemnation to this Union's life,—
She stands to heal this plague, and banish strife.

I do not sing of this, but hymn the day
That gilds our cheerful villages and plains,
Our hamlets strewn at distance on the way,
Our forests and the ancient streams' domains,
We are a band of Brothers, and our pains
Are freely shared, no beggar in our roads,
Content and peace within our fair abodes.

In my small Cottage on the lonely hill,
Where like a Hermit I must bide my time,
Surrounded by a landscape lying still
All seasons through as in the winter's prime,
Rude and as homely as these verses chime,
I have a satisfaction which no king
Has often felt, if Fortune's happiest thing.
'T is not my Fortune, which is mainly low,
'T is not my merit, that is nothing worth,
'T is not that I have stores of Thought below
Which everywhere should build up Heaven on earth,
Nor was I highly favored in my birth,
Few friends have I, and they are much to me,
Yet fly above my poor Society.

But all about me live New England men,
Their humble houses meet my daily gaze,—
The children of this land where Life again
Flows like a great stream in sunshiny ways,
This is a joy to know them, and my days
Are filled with love to meditate on them,
These native gentlemen on Nature's hem.

That I could take one feature of their life,
Then on my page a mellow light should shine;
Their days are Holydays with labor rife,
Labor the song of praise, that sounds divine,
And better than all sacred hymns of mine;
The patient Earth sets platters for their food,
Corn, milk, and apples, and the best of good.
See here no shining scenes for artist's eye,
This woollen frock shall make no painter's fame,
These homely tools all burnishing deny,
The beasts are slow and heavy, still or tame,
The sensual eye may think this labor lame,
'Tis in the Man where lies the sweetest art,
His true endeavor in his earnest part.

The wind may blow a hurricane, but he
Goes fairly onward with the thing in hand,
He sails undaunted on the crashing sea,
Beneath the keenest winter frost does stand,
And by his Will, he makes his way command,
Till all the seasons smile delight to feel
The grasp of his hard hand encased in steel.

He meets the year confiding, no great throws,
That suddenly bring riches does he use,
But like Thor's hammer vast, his patient blows,
Vanquish his difficult tasks, he does refuse
To tread the path, nor know the way he views,
No sad complaining words he uttereth,
But draws in peace a free and easy breath.
I love to meet him on the frozen road,
How manly is his eye, as clear as air; —
He cheers his beasts without the brutal goad,
His face is ruddy, and his features fair,
His brave, good-day, sounds like an honest prayer,
This man is in his place and feels his trust,
'Tis not dull plodding through the heavy crust.

And when I have him at his homely hearth,
Within his homestead, where no ornament
Glows on the mantle but his own true worth,
I feel as if within an Arab's tent,
His hospitality is more than meant;
I there am welcome, as the sunlight is,
I must feel warm to be a Friend of his.

This man takes pleasure o'er the crackling fire,
His glittering axe subdued the monarch oak,
He earned the cheerful blaze by something higher
Than pensioned blows, he owned the tree he stroke,
And knows the value of the distant smoke,
When he returns at night his labor done,
Matched in his action with the long day's sun.
I love these homely mansions, and to me
A Farmer's house seems better than a King's,
The palace boasts its art, but liberty
And honest pride and toil are splendid things;
They carved this clumsy lintel, and it brings
The man upon its front; Greece hath her art,
But this rude homestead shows the farmer's heart.

How many brave adventures with the cold,
Built up the cumbrous cellar of plain stone,
How many summer heats the bricks did mould,
That make the ample fireplace, and the tone
Of twice a thousand winds sings through the zone,
Of rustic paling round the modest yard,—
These are the verses of this simple bard.

Who sings the praise of Woman in our clime,—
I do not boast her beauty or her grace,
Some humble Duties render her sublime,
She the sweet nurse of this New England race,
The flower upon the country's sterile face,
The mother of New England's sons, the pride
Of every house where those good sons abide.
There is a Roman splendor in her smile,
A tenderness that owes its depth to toil,
Well may she leave the soft voluptuous wile,
That forms the woman of a softer soil;
She does pour forth herself a fragrant oil,
Upon the dark asperities of Fate,
And make a garden else all desolate.

From early morn to fading eve she stands,
Labor's best offering on the shrine of worth,
And labor's jewels glitter on her hands,
To make a plenty out of partial dearth,
To animate the heaviness of earth,
To stand and serve serenely through the pain,
To nurse a vigorous race and ne'er complain.

New England women are New England's pride;
'Tis fitting they should be so, they are free,—
Intelligence doth all their acts decide,
Such deeds more charming than old ancestry.
I could not dwell beside them, and not be
Enamored of them greatly; they are meant
To charm the Poet, by their pure intent.
A natural honest bearing of their lot,
Cheerful at work, and happy when 't is done,
They shine like stars within the humblest cot,
And speak for freedom centred all in one.
From every river's side I hear the son
Of some New England woman answer me,
"Joy to our Mothers, who did make us free."

And when those wanderers turn to home again,
See the familiar village, and the street
Where they once frolick'd, they are less than men
If in their eyes the tear-drops do not meet,
To feel how soon their mothers they shall greet,
Sons of New England have no dearer day,
Than once again within those arms to lay.

These are her men and women, this the sight
That greets me daily when I pass their homes,
It is enough to love, it throws some light
Over the gloomiest hours, the fancy roams
No more to Italy or Greece, the loams
Whereon we tread are sacred by the lives
Of those who till them, and our comfort thrives.
Here might one pass his days, content to be
The witness of these spectacles alway,
Bring if you may your treasure from the sea,
My pride is in my Townsmen, where the day
Rises so fairly on a race who lay
Their hopes on Heaven, after their toil is o'er,
Upon this rude and bold New England shore.

Vainly ye pine-woods rising on the height,
Should lift your verdant boughs and cones aloft,
Vainly ye winds should surge around in might,
Or murmur o'er the meadow stanzas soft,
To me should nothing yield or lake or croft,
Had not the figures of the pleasant scene,
Like trees and fields an innocent demean.

I feel when I am here some pride elate,
Proud in your presence who do duty here,
For I am some partaker of your fate;
Your manly anthem vibrates in my ear,
Your hearts are heaving unconsumed by fear,
Your modest deeds are constantly supplied,
Your simple truths by which you must abide.
Therefore I love a cold and stony realm,
I love the sky that hangs New England o'er,
And if I were embarked, and at the helm,
I ran my vessel on New England's shore,
And dashed upon her crags, would live no more,
Rather than go to seek those lands of graves,
Where men who tread the fields are cowering slaves.

I love the mossy rocks so strangely rude,
The little forests, underwood and all, —
I love the damp paths of the Solitude,
Where in the tiny brook some waterfall
Gives its small shower of diamonds to the thrall
Of light's pursuing reflex, and the trill
Of the bright cascade, making silence still.

I love the cold, sad Winter's lengthened time,
When man half aches with cold, and Nature seems
To leer and grimace with an icy smile,
And all the little life is clad in dreams,
I love it even if the far Sun-beams
Look through the clouds like faces filled with woe,
Like mourners who to funerals do go.
Search me ye wintry winds for I am proof;
New England’s kindness circles round my heart.
I see afar that old declining roof
Where underneath dwells something which is part
Of Nature’s sweetest music; — through me dart
Your coldest spasms, there burns manhood’s fire,
I sit by that as warm as I desire.

And if the torrid August sun scalds down,
And big drops stand upon my brow like rain,
I can enjoy this fire, and call it crown
To my content; it ripens golden grain,
New England corn,— I prize the fervid pain,
An honest hand has planted comfort there,
And fragrant coolness steals throughout the air.

It seems a happy thing that I was born
In rough New England, here that I may be,
Among a race whom all mankind adorn;
A plain strong race deep-rooted as a tree,
And I am most content my ancestry
Dates back no further than New England’s date,—
What worth is King or Lord, where man is State.
ITALIAN SONG.

The old Tower gray
Bids purple day
Paint the grave mosses with its Tyrian hue,
And fine-toned Night
Rounds with dim light
Each crumbling stone into proportion due.

My tinkling lute
Converts the mute
And humble silence into golden singing;
The laden air
Rich scents doth bear,
Around the ruin, vase-like odors flinging.
The Tower's round song
Dances along,
Like a brown gondola through the still sea,
Its shadow sings,
My love-note brings,
How sweet is night, in my own Italy.
THE WANDERER.

Who is that wight, who wanders there
   So often o'er those lonely fields,—
Can solitude his thought repair,
   Or filch the honey that he yields?

I see him often by the brook,
   He pauses on some little rock,
Or, sheltered in a sunny nook,
   He sits, nor feels the sharp wind's shock.

I meet him in the lonely lane,
   Where merrily I drive my team,
And seek his downcast eye in vain,
   To break the silence of his dream.
And sometimes when I fell the trees,
He muses with a saddened eye,
While leaps the forest like the Seas,
When tide and wind are running high.

Yet never questions he a word,
Of what I do or where I go,
His gentle voice I never heard,
His voice so soft and sweetly low.

And once at Sunset, on the hill
He stood and gazed at scenes afar,
While fell the twilight o'er the rill,
And glittered in the west,—a star.

I cannot see his years improve,
He leaves no tokens on the way,
'Tis simply breathing, or to move
Like some dim spectre through the day.

And yet I love him, for his form
Seems graceful as a Maiden's sigh,
And something beautiful and warm
Is shadowed in his quiet eye.
Thus spoke the driver of the wain,—

While solemnly he passed along,
This man unknown to fame or gain,

The hero of no Post's song.

And there he wanders yet, I trust,

A figure pensive as the scene,

Created from the common dust,

Yet treading o'er the grasses green.
THE POET
OF THE OLD AND NEW TIMES.

In olden time the Poet sang,
The ancient hall with ballads rang,
Wandering he touched the golden lyre,
By the ancestral Castle's fire,
A sacred man the Poet then,
Beloved by gods, beloved by men.

As far the Shepherd on the hill,
Saw from his height this child of skill,
And straightway left his flock to go
And greet the bard who moved below,
The stern mechanic left his work,
His hammer fell not on the berk.
The gentle ladies sat and heard
The ditties of the tuneful bird,
With fine regard they greeted him;
He sang, — their soft eyes swam so dim
They often wept; the Poet's song
To the heart's secret did belong.

The Poets recked not for their fare,
Their comfort was the People's care;
They sang, — the doors were open wide,
They loved, — the nation dowered the Bride,
They saw the wealth around them flow
Of princes, — 'tis no longer so.

The wandering Bard no city claims,
The nation loves not poet's aims,
A lonely man he bides afar,
His halls are fields, his lamp a star,
Nature's so regal, she does wait
And minister his ancient state.

The Brook must be his mirror now,
His organ in the dark Pine-bough,
For ladies' eyes the flowerets dyes,
The southern rain his lady's sighs;
The grass the carpet of his Hall,
The trees its pillars smooth and tall.

Few doors are open if he sings,
Faint welcome with his lyre he brings,
Cold eyes avert from him their gaze,
The world suspects his idle ways,
He sits not on the hearth so wide,
For Priest and Clerk him thrust aside.

Now few can comprehend his way,
The haze has overspread his day,
Forgotten, stands he quite apart,—
The life-blood of the Nation's heart,
He sings alone, the crowds go by,
And question him with curious eye.

O world, thou hast the Poet's art
Thyself,—he counterfeits thy part,
And of his age the Poet's lyre,
Is instrument of pure desire,
Most joyful let the Poet be,
It is through him that all men see.

Not ever falls the Sunshine clear,
And heavy clouds obscure the mere,
Not ever is the fruit-tree proud,
For worms weave oft its yellow shroud,
Yet smiles the sky, the tree comes green,
The Poet shall be heard and seen.

My country, in thy early hour,
I feel the magic of thy power,
Thy hands are strong, thy aims are long,
To thee the Poets shall belong,
I mark thy pride in them, and they
Shall sing thee in heroic lay.

For in thy stature there is strength,
And in thy aims an endless length,
And Bards shall praise thy features fair,
And Poesy fill all the air,
Clear as thy dazzling sunshines are,
Deep as thy forests waving far.
THE JOURNEY.

A BREEZY softness fills the air,
That clasps the tender hand of Spring,
And yet no brooklet's voice does sing.
For all is purest stillness there,
Unless the light, soft foliage waves;
The boughs are clothed in shining green,
Through which ne'er angry Tempest raves,
And sunlight shines between.

II.

Beneath the oak a Palmer lay,
Upon the green-award was his bed,
And in luxuriance bound the gray
And silver Laurel o'er his head.
A picture framed by calm repose,
A Grecian monument of life,
Too placid for the storm of woes,
Too grateful to be worn by strife.
I should have passed,—he bade me stay,
And tranquilly these words did say.—

Thou curtain of the tender spring,
Thy graces to my old eyes bring
The recollections of those years,
When sweet are shed our early tears,
Those days of sunny April weather,
Changeful and glad with every thing,
When Youth and Age go linked together,
Like sisters twain, and sauntering
Down mazy paths in ancient woods,
The garlands of such solitudes.—

III.

I passed along,
The Palmer's song,
Still sounding with its clear content,
At length I reached my promised tent.
Around, were crags of ruin piled,
The temples of a Nation's pride,
Within their clefts the bright stars smiled,
And moonlight swept the court-yard wide.
Some Ivy-boughs o'erhung the wall,
Or bound the pillars' sculptured fall,
Whilst deepening Shade lay o'er the place,
That still the grandeur would efface.

iv.
Not long I slept,—the wind awoke,
A river from the mountains came,
All through the Temple's courts it broke,
While they were lit by lightning's flame.
The skies hurled down their bolts of dread,
But still my little Tent was good,
No drop of rain fell on my head,
Unarmed amid the war I stood.

v.
A mightier blast,—more lurid light,
The wind dispersed my sheltering fold,
I paused an instant in the night,
Then sought that mighty Temple old.
The channel of the stream I sought,
And bravely with the waters fought.
I saw the glancing fire's design,
To smite the stone's colossal form
That jutted from the topmost line,—
Too cold that steady heart to warm; —
I gained beyond the Court a bank,
And fainting in the darkness sank.
THE SEXTON’S STORY.

These quiet meadows, and the sloping bank
With its green hem of hardy pines, whose leaves
The sudden frosts, and sudden Autumn rains
Cannot displace, have been the scenes of conflict.
Housed in the yielding Sand that shapes the bank,
The early Settlers lodged their sturdy frames,
And on these Meadows where the brook o’erflows,
They saw the Indians glide, their dusky hue,
Agreeing with the brown and withered grass.
Their Memory yet endures to paint this scene,
And oft as I sit musing, they become
Scarcely less living than in Days of old.
Noble adventurers, godlike Puritans!
Poets in deed, who came, and saw, and braved
The accumulated wilderness, and read
The fatal policy of Indian guile,
May we, your Sons, thus conquer the wild foes
Who aim their shafts at your sublime Design.

It was a Winter's day. The air came keen
Across the Meadows, sheeted with pure snow,
New fallen, that now as day wheeled downward
Had ceased to fall, and the clouds parting off,
Mild showers of light spread o'er the groves and fields.
And as the light grew brighter, the wind failed,
And with the calm came a most perfect frost,
That sealed the very glances of the sun,
No longer warm to Man, or beast, or field.

The Sexton of our village was an old
And weather-beaten artizan, whose life
Led him to battle with the depths of cold.
Amid the Woods he plied a vigorous arm,
The tall trees crashed in thunder 'neath his stroke,
And a hale cheer was spread about his form.
Death does not stand and falter at the cold,
And our brave Sexton plied his pickaxe bright,
Whether the soft Snow fell, or 'mid the Rains.
This day, this Winter's day, he made a grave
For a young Blossom which the frost had nipped;
And towards the sunset hour he took his way,
Across the Meadows wide, and o'er the Brook,
Beyond the bridge and through the leafless arch
Of Willows that supports the sunken road
To the sad house of Death, bearing with him
The frail, light tenement that bounds the corpse.
The Sexton's heart beat cheerly in his breast,
For constant commerce with the grave had lined
The Coffin's smooth inside with frugal wit.
He saw no Terror in the mouldering form
Of that, where late the ruddy current ran
In social sympathy, and generous mirth.
The ghastly bones, the pale, remorseless hand
That strikes those shuddering notes on Human lyres,
E'en Death himself kept company with him.
This was no stolid want of sympathy,
Or cold forgetfulness of mortal woe,
Or curious hankering thought to purchase ease,
The Sexton had forgotten what Death was,
And graves he dealt in, as some deal in Farms.
He turned when near the Bridge, for such a flush
Of crimson wandered o'er the snow, the fields
So glowed as if with Summer's fire, his heart
Bounded to meet that last gold glance of Day.
But it felt wondrous cold, and was so still,
As if the Frost had fastened on itself.
He reached the house of death,—a friendly house,
And sat in peace to see the Wood-fire flash,
His numb and stiffened fingers spread to meet
The cheerful warmth, and then he spoke as one
Who came from living worlds, for in that house,
There was a pensive figure in one seat.
The Sexton did not see that figure sad,
But the pale Mother with her tear-stained eyes,
Look'd on and drooped her head, the Father, too,
He looked and saw that youth, the cold, cold form
Of wintry Death who sits by some sad hearths.

When he stept forth upon his homeward path,
(‘T was a short saunter to the Village church,)
A change was in the sky, a wild wind blew,
The Frost had tired of silence, and now played
A merry Battle-march with the light snow,
That whirled across the road in dizzy sport,
White wreaths for banners, and gay sparkling sheets.
The last ray faded in the sleeping West,
Day had abandoned earth, and the weird Night
That asks from human eye no sympathy,
Called up a host of Actors for its play.
From the soft hills that hem the Meadows in,
The Sexton heard the music of the Pines,
A sudden gush of sounds, as when a flock
Of startled Birds are beating through the air,
And tossing off the light from their quick wings;
Then pauses of deep silence, that his ear
Accustomed to the sounds of cheerful day
Could not contain, and first his Inward voice.—

—It is a bitter night, but I have felt
More cold without anxiety. The snow
Beats heavily o’er the unsheltered road,
Huge drifts to-morrow, and hard sledding here.—
Then came a heavier blast than all before,
And beat upon the cheerful Sexton’s front,
As the broad, tossing billows breast the Ship.
He ploughed along the way, nor fence, nor shrub,
And a dark curtain in the air. The stars
Were flickering, as the distant Light-boat moored,
Shifts to the Pilot's eye each breaking wave.
His eye not eager sought the Willow arch,
A little onward to the Bridge, he thought,
And pausing beat his stout arms on his breast,
Then turned and faced the wintry surge again.
One step,—and then his feet sank through,—the edge
It was of the deep Brook that wandered down
The dreary Meadows, sinuous in its course.
The Sexton's feet slipped o'er the glassy plate,
He was across,—across the meadow Brook.
He sank upon the Snow, and breathed a prayer,
His heart thrilled strangely with an icy fear,
His thoughts ran in dim shapes across his brain,
A tumult of wild Images of woe,
And one dark warning figure, wintry Death,
Stood on the bank, and said with gentle voice:—
Yes, now across the Brook thy feet have come,
The deep, black Brook, 't was never known to freeze;
It has upborne thee on its icy scale
Where but a feather's weight had turned the beam.
Thou, not in battle, nor in sharp disease,
But here within the peaceful village Fields,
Hast by the veriest chance, as may'st thou think,
Been guided well through such a sudden fear,
As no dark dream had conjured in thy mind.
Yet by no chance, since this a lesson is,
To teach thee if the burial and the tomb
Consign to rest the palsied Shapes of Life,
How grand that Hour must be, when the bright soul
Led by my hand, draws nigh to the deep Stream,
Across whose icy flow no Mortal walks,
In whose still unvexed Depths, the hosts of Men,
Still ever following, sink without return.

There stood a Laborer's cottage not afar,
Where the Day's toil was over, and they sat,
The family about the crackling fire,
In merry mood, and heard the Spinning-wheels
Hum like a swarm of bees in Summer time,
For all the wind's loud bluster, and the cold
That like a cunning Thief crept round the hut.  
They sudden hear a lamentable sound,  
A voice of deep despair imploring aid.  
The Laborer listens and the sounds renew,  
The voice comes from the Meadow, and his dog  
The Laborer calls, and muffling in his frock,  
He finds the Sexton by the Brook sunk down,  
And stiffening like the cold and icy Night.

Next day, they traced the hardy Sexton's steps,  
And found that but one narrow arch across  
The meadow Brook, the spanning frost had thrown  
As if in sport, to try its secret powers.  
And there the Sexton crossed, — that little arch  
Left him alive to guide the funeral train  
That from the friendly house came forth in woe.  
It taught this lesson, that in common hours  
There hides deep meaning, and a sudden fear,  
Nor need we track the deserts of the Pole,  
To 'scape from sight of Death and life's dark Night.
FIELD-BIRDS’ NESTS.

Beyond the Brook so swift I went,
Beyond the fields my course I bent,
Where on the height the oak grove stands,
And Hemlocks thick like iron bands.

And by the marsh, and by the pond,
Though I had wandered oft beyond,
Never before I saw those eight,
Those eight Birds’ nests now desolate.

Each nest was filled with snow and leaves,
Each nest that some small songster weaves,
Yet pleasantly they seemed to me,
These little homes of yesterday.
So frail these buildings that the wind
To airy journeys them consigned,
Had not the architect displayed
The quiet cunning of his trade.

On some small twig the house was laid,
That every breath from Heaven swayed,
The nests swing easy as the bush,
The wind in vain on these may push.

Some grass and sticks together piled,
Secure as stately Palace tiled;
A twig the rock on which they stand,
As firm as acres of deep land.

Another summer comes the Bird,
Her sweetly swelling song is heard,
She hops into her little home,
Her mate then merrily does come.

Ye men who pass a wretched life,
Consumed with care, consumed with strife,
Whose gloom grows deeper day by day,
The audience at a tiresome play;
FIELD-BIRDS’ NESTS.

Who build the stately palaces,
Where only endless Gilding is,
Who riot in perpetual show,
In dress, and wine, and costly woe;

Who haunt the narrow City’s street,
Surrounded by a thousand feet,
With weary wrinkles in your brows,
And faltering penance in your vows;

Think of the little Field-bird’s nest;
Can you not purchase such a rest,
A twig, some straws, a dreamy moor,
The same some Summers going o’er.
THE SNOW-STORM.

That is the best Poem out there,
To see the snow drift by.
See how it goes,
Hear how it blows,
One continual long-drawn sigh.

Casements rattle in its blatter,
And the solid Housetop shakes,
It paints the wall,
The road and all,
With its pigment of pure flakes.
When I walk within its growling,
Soft it calleth unto me,
How cold it is,
And wet it is,
Chill the Snow-storm utterly.

Yet it seemeth warm directly,
As the Summer's middle heat,
Or some soft day
In month of May,
When the rustling leaves do beat.

How you vex me stupid Snow-storm,
With your variations bold,
Thou art so warm,
So sweet in form,
Thou art so ugly, art so cold.

A truce to thy continual sighing,
Thy hypocritic face so white,
Come dear brown earth,
Come Spring's soft birth,
Go, go, thou hoary eremite.
Was it a dream, — I saw the lances glance,
And gaily leapt on polished helms the sun,
Was it a dream, — I saw the festal dance,
For happily the Tournament begun,
Was it a dream, — or in that softest eye,
Anna de Rose, whose name is chivalry.

Was it a dream, — I saw the ancient hall,
The warder old, and watch-dog at his feet,
Was it a dream, — I heard the Baron call,
The draw-bridge fall, the horseman in his seat,
Was it a dream, — or was thy sunny mouth,
Anna de Rose, this picture of the south.
TO ANNA DE ROSE.

Was it a dream,—I saw the castle fire
That lighted up the oaken Hall so wide,
Was it a dream,—when drank the wine the Sire,
And with his earnest gaze the Baron eyed,
Was it a dream,—or was that pleasing thought
Anna de Rose, thy figure richly wrought.

These dreams were Anna what thou wert to me,
A token of the Thought which in my youth
About the busy world hung Courtesy,
And colored every day with golden truth,
Then, Knights and Ladies danced along the plain,
Fair days had come, the world felt young again.

I have had dreams which were Realities,
I thought to dream no more, but thou didst come,
And I have dreamed in sooth of those sweet eyes,
That smiling mouth, and Beauty's priceless sum,
I waked yet thou wert bright, and so despair
Shall something softer, some mild aspect wear.
I have had visions which have turned to pain,
I mourn some altered friends, some misty days,
Thou bringest to me many hours again
When Sunlight fell, and oft the Star's clear rays,
Bright hours were those, I am in debt to thee,
Anna de Rose, and would thou wert to me.

No more, I said, shall any Beauty go
Before my eyes, to warm me with its fire,
No more the fairy Rivers softly flow
That bear upon them, what I may desire,
Some little beauty in the world I seek,
In vain, the place is empty, wind is bleak.

But ever as I lose my hold on Earth,
She clasps me closer with a new-found treasure,
And when I sigh she beckons infant Mirth,
And when I weep she summons gentle Pleasure,
Thus by the course of history I know,
That still in Spring the violets shall blow.
Before thee lies the world, an aimless prize,
Thou shall float onward, see the Distant near,
O youth, why forward turn thy seeking eyes,
Why not upon the Future look with fear,
Yet not in utter fear, but with some dread,
It must not be, with visions thou art fed.

And were it in my power, my Dream should be,
That Castle old, with its ancestral fire,
That Baron and the warders bold to see,
And thou the Lady, while I touched the lyre,
What matter if those forms we see no more,
From Fancy's urn the brilliant waters pour.

Thou listenest for thy Lord as eve draws nigh,
Afar the courser fiery-footed springs,
Then nearer draws the sound, thy gladdened eye
Beams ere the Figure in the mailed rings
Passes the castle-gate, — then falls the sun,
Night is without, with thee Day has begun.
THE RESTLESS MIND.

By the bleak wild hill,
Or the deep lake still,
In the silent grain
On the upland plain,
I would that the unsparing Storm might rage,
And blot with gloom the fair day's sunny page.

The lightning's gleam
Should gentle seem,
The thunder's blow
Both soft and low,
For now the world hath fill of summer weather,
Ye shining days why throng you thus together.
I am possesst
With strange Unrest,
My feelings jar,
My heart is war,
A spirit dances in my dreams to-day,
I am too cold, for its strange, sunny play.

Then hurry down
With angry frown,
Thou sudden storm
Come fierce and warm,
And splinter trees and whistle o'er the moor,
For in thy Bravery I can life endure.
TO ELIZABETH.  

Thou last sweet Beam of sunny day,
Thou latest friend,
Before thy light I bend,
Too heavy earth to form thy shining way;
Thou last link of the golden chain,
Thou Star amid these nights of misty rain;
Bright weather for us all,
How joyful we are thrall.
How wert thou sent so late,
How was thy voice so mute,
How many days did fate,
Silence thy liquid lute?
Thou beacon Fire
That o'er the unsounded deep,
By thy warm heart's desire,
Lightest the harbor's steep,
Shed from thy eye the warning flame,
Ere silence writes in tears the unheeded name.

So many come and go
Like a swift Fountain's flow,
Glancing reflections of the passing scene,
The mimicries of spheres, whose Fates are all;
The woods, the clouds, blue sky, and lawny green,
One instant fixed, then nothing we can call,
And o'er the unspeaking Fall.

Weep not,—I see thine eyes
Are filled with tears,
Weep not,—for those revolving Memories
Like autumn leaves, the years
Whirl in the unvexed skies,
And dim thy fears.
For in the illimitable hand of Time,
Who sweeps forever in vast silence, the sublime
TO ELIZABETH.

Slow-moving history of Man,
Sure winnoweth that broad fan.

Thou angel form,
Thou calm and sunny day,
Why in this storm
Pursuest thou thy way,
While we, pale Phantoms crowd around thy car,
And catch a faint complexion from thy star.

We do remember thee,
For in the radiant Past had we some light,
Thy voice reveals the key
That made the music bright,
Yet linger not so long amid our graves,
And fear the rocks that tear the angry waves.

Thou vase of Beauty,
Carved in high relief
With shapes of Gods, and forms
That best Belief
Gave to some Races towering o'er,
All the low dwellers on this misty shore,
Shall we not live, while Thou resolv'st to bear,
Thy cold, dull crown of Grief, and proudly wear
Garments of autumn foliage for an hour,
Having immortal Beauty for thy dower.
ARAB SONG.

Moor yon pillars of the sand
To my Life, this burning day,
Seize me in your sultry hand,
Whirl me in your heat away:
So Alek said, a youth of flame,
Whose pathway ran too smooth and tame.

II.

The Desert stretched for miles along,
Its perilous way so drear and wide,
Where only sang the Stars their song,
Which in the heavens did abide,
A Hymn of splendid glow and state,
Though only with the Hermit mate.

III.
Beneath the Palm tree's emerald shade,
That over-roofed a sainted glade,
A spot of coolness in the heat,
Alek one day his Maid did meet.
Within her eye's unmelting ice,
He saw her Soul's deep purity,
And prized it more than softest beams,
That spoke a warm futurity.

IV.
They wandered to the glazèd Well,
Whose colors sank to deeps unknown,
And heard afar the Camel's bell,
Pitched in its sandy sultry tone;
The Nightingale sang sweet and free,
As sweet as any sound could be,
A pretty breeze toyed with the Palm,
Not wind enough to stir the calm,
And roses bled for Alek's eyes,
What melted in his rich replies.
A single glance, the Maiden sent,
One look,—that in his firmament,
Made planetary music far
Beyond the hymn of any star.

v.

'T was in the Caliph's royal room,
The hall of gilded pomp and state,
That Alek saw the Maid, once more,
And felt the presage of his fate;
For Alek's blood though highly wrought,
No Palace with its greatness bought;
He met her eye amid the crowd,
With but a slow salute she bowed,
For the Maid's rank was gently high,—
And Alek felt the cold reply.

VI.

Now mounted he his sable Steed,
   Who snuffed the moonlight all elate,
Now pressed upon the tightening bit,
   Then passed the City's western gate,
Where the tall Warrior saw the night,
Sparkling with gems, and told its flight.

VII.

Away, he flies o'er parchèd Sands,
The reins loose hanging from his hands;
His speed outrushing simoon's blast,
His Courser whirling gladly past.
By scattered palm, and fountain small,
By sacred tomb, by city's wall,
By river running merrily,
By Mosque enlightened splendidly;
Like gray clouds driven by the wind,
He left no trace of him behind,
Yet in his race the Maid kept by,
And Alek felt the cold reply.
FIRST LOVE.

It was an old, a celebrated Church;
About the aisle ran many pillars tall,
And carved wood-work the chancel gathered in;
An old, worn Church, sad was the sight to see.
How lazy through the darkened window-panes,
The sun half-way withdrawn shone dimly down;
Across those clumsy frames the spiders wove,
A dull and heavy air of Sorrow hung
About the old worn pile; upon the Texts
Graven in gold over the chancel’s steps.
But when, as comes the prelude to a storm,
The deep-toned organ waked the drowsy air,
And crept up cheerfully from underneath,
The mournful building felt a sudden warmth,
Those liberal Organ notes enlivened it.
There prayed and preached a godly, pious Clerk,
To good and pious auditors most true.
It was most sad to see the crowd throng up
The dimly-lighted aisle, as if Ghosts came,
Entranced by recollections of their Sins.
Young Henry came not as a worshipper,
To bend in worship to the blessed Lord,
For in the ancient aisle one being stood,
A young and fair-haired girl, whom Henry loved;
Her name was Hester, lovely as the Spring.
To them, this reverend building was a fane,
Whereon the God of love, fair Cupid laid
Two youthful hearts, then kindled into flame.

O what is love, young Love, what liquid fire,
What undiscovered furnace lighted up,
What mirror in our breasts that thus presents
A mistress in her bloom and glorious hour.
To Henry no such thoughts, on Hester's form
The gentle youth turned gently a faint look,
More worthy to be worshipped than the Host
Which all the congregation worshippèd.
Nor had the youth e'er told the Maid his love
In words, which are the foremost curse of love.
Hester and Henry, whither have you fled,—
The ancient Church still holds the sacred form,
And hollow ghosts stalk through the gloomy aisles,
But Hester's form has fled, and Henry's fled.

How many Sabbaths did the heavy bell,
Which pealed from out the square Tower's little arch,
Strike through young Henry's heart a thrill of fear,
Lest Hester might not be at church that day.
Yet Hester came, and week succeeded week,
And months fled by, and sometimes Hester came not.
When she was absent, Henry felt how vain,
How utterly vain and hollow was the Creed
Taught from the Liturgy and New Testament.

Not only in the sadden'd Minster's light,
Young Henry sought the lovely Hester's shape,
But when the choral stars shone bright in Heaven,
Or when to earth fell heavily the storm,
He paced the quiet street where Hester lived.
The close-drawn curtain kept his eye without,
Still his heart beat, for there within those walls
His spirit dwelt. The framework of the house
Was hung as with a hundred starry lights,
And silvery bells made music in the way.
She dwelt so near the outward air, her life
Mingled itself with the common circumstance;
But Henry could not call those happy hours.
Deep melancholy fastened on the youth,
His cheek grew pale, his heart was sorrowful,
As day by day, the swift years circled on,
Nor brought him nearer lovely Hester's form.

Where'er he wandered through four lonely years,
He saw a spirit dancing in the path,
To whom he vainly hastened,—she did fly.—
So deep below the daily life he lived,
Consumed him this pure passion, that her name,
Sometimes repeated when the youth sat near,
Choked up his utterance, and a weight of blood
Instantly stagnant, settled at his heart.—
Thou dew of life, young Love, thou morning tear,
Thus richly rises the sweet sun of youth.
THE DESERT.

No shining grass, or sunny tree,
Or smiling Villa greets my eyes,
No forms of fair society,
Or gentle domesticities,
The scanty furze grows yellow all,
Like threadbare Tapestry on the wall.

But here I wandered most content,
With one fair spirit by my side,
A Sister to my manhood lent
Her beaming eyes of maiden pride,
And clothed the drear rock's loneliness
With her abiding tenderness.
So should she drape the World's wide round,
   With sunny robes, and fresh Spring weather
And consecrate the loneliest ground,
   While we went wandering linked together,
Her music voice, her beaming eyes,
Give to the Silence, glad replies.

Thy sandy hills, bleak desert Waste,
   Now murmur soft like singing streams,
Thy lonely Moors with music taste
   Like temples clad in Grecian dreams,
Thou Desert, art a living thing,
Since she and I went wandering.
AUTUMN WOODS.

I have had tearful days,
I have been taught by melancholy hours,
My tears have dropped, like these chill Autumn showers,
Upon the rustling ways.

Yes! youth, thou sorrowest,
For these dead leaves, unlike your rising Morn,
Are the sad progeny of months forlorn,
Weary and seeking rest.

Thou wert a homeless child,
And vainly clasped the solitary air,
And the gray Ash renewed thy cold despair,—
Grief was thy mother mild.
Thy days have Sunlight now,
Those Autumn leaves thy tears do not deplore,
There flames a beacon on the forest's shore,
   And thy unwrinkled brow.

O holy are the Woods,
Where nature yearly glorifies her might,
And weaves a rich and frolicsome delight,
   In the deep Solitudes.

Far through the fading trees
The Pine's green plume is waving bright and free,
And in the withered age of man to me
   A warm and sweet Spring breeze.
THE LONELY ROAD.

No track had worn the lone deserted road,
Save where the Fox had leapt from wall to wall;
There were the swelling, glittering piles of snow,
Up even with the walls, and save the Crow
Who lately had been pecking Barberries,
No other signs of life beyond ourselves.
We strayed along, beneath our feet the lane
Creaked at each pace, and soon we stood content
Where the old cellar of the house had been,
Out of which now a fruit-tree wags its top.
Some scraggy orchards hem the landscape round,
A forest of sad Apple-trees unpruned,
And then a newer orchard pet of him,
Who in his dotage kept this lonely place.
In this wild scene, and shut-in Orchard dell,
Men like ourselves, once dwelt by roaring fires,
Loved this still spot, nor had a further wish.
A little wall half falling bounds a square
Where choicer fruit-trees showed the Garden's pride,
Now crimsoned by the Sumach, whose red cones
Displace the colors of the cultured growth.
I know not how it is, that in these scenes
There is a desolation so complete,
It tarries with me after I have passed,
And the dense growth of woodland, or a sight
Of distant Cottages or landscapes wide,
Cannot obscure the dreary, cheerless thought.
But why should I remember those once there,
And think of childish voices, or that kind
Caressing hands of tender parents gone,
Have twined themselves in that soft golden hair,
All fled, and silent as an unlit Cave.
Why should I stand and muse upon their lives,
Who for me truly never had more life,
Than in the glancing mind's eye; or in Fancy
Wear this irrespective form, thus fleeting.
I people the void scene with Fancy's eye,
Her children do not live too long for me,
They vibrate in the house whose walls I rear,
The mansion as themselves, the fugitives
Of my Intent in this soft Winter day.

Nor will I scatter these faint images,
Idle as shadows that the tall reeds cast
Over the silent ice, beneath the moon,
For in these lonely haunts where Fancy dwells,
And evermore creating weaves a veil
In which all this that we call life abides,
There must be deep retirement from the day,
And in these shadowy vistas we shall meet,
Sometime the very Phantom of ourselves.—

A long Farewell, thou dim and silent spot,
Where serious Winter sleeps, or the soft hour,
Of some half dreamy Autumn afternoon;
And may no idle feet tread thy domain,
But only men to Contemplation vowed,
Still as ourselves, creators of the Past.
A cloud upon the day is lying,
A cloud of care, a cloud of sorrow,
That will not speed away for sighing,
That will not lift upon the Morrow.

And yet it is not gloom I carry,
To shade a world else framed in lightness,
It is not sorrow that doth tarry,
To veil the joyous sky of brightness.

Then tell me what it is, thou Nature
That of all Earth art queen supremest,
Give to my grief distinctest feature,
Thou, who art ever to me nearest.
Because my lot has no distinction,
And unregarded I am standing,
A pilgrim wan without dominion,
A ship-wrecked Mariner just landing.

Resolve for me, ye prudent Sages,
Why I am tasked without a reason,
Or penetrate the lapse of ages,
And show where is my Summer season.

For let the sky be blue above me,
Or softest breezes lift the forest,
I still uncertain, wander to thee,
Thou who the lot of Man deplorest.

Nor will I strive for Fortune's gilding,
But still the Disappointment follow,
Seek steadily the pasture's wilding,
Nor grasp a satisfaction hollow.
THE ARCHÈD STREAM.

It went within my inmost heart,

The overhanging Arch to see,
The liquid stream, became a part

Of my internal Harmony.

So gladly rushed the full stream through,

Pleased with the measure of its flow,
So burst the gladness on the view,

It made a song of Mirth below.

Yet gray were those o'erarching stones,

And sere and dry the fringing grass,
And mournful with remembered tones,

That out of Autumn's bosom pass.
And over it the heavy road,

Where creaks the wain with burdened cheer,
But gaily from this low abode,
Leapt out the merry Brook so clear.

Then Nature said: My child, to thee,
From the gray Arch shall beauty flow,
Thou art a pleasant thing to me,
And freely in my meadows go.

Thy Verse shall gush thus freely on,
Some Poet yet may sit thereby,
And cheer himself within the sun,
My Life has kindled in thine eye.
A DREAM OUT-OF-DOORS.

Though through the Pines a soughing wind,
There's sun within the trembling breeze,
For continents do lie behind,
Of rarest Flowers and Strawberries;
Each chilling blast shakes Cherries down,
And tints the knurly Pear with brown.

Your sooty cloaks bright skies resume,
And weep with all-abandoned glee,
The darkening eve shoots rose perfume,
And cowslips nod, and Apple-tree
Outshines the tapestry of the King,
With red and white, a heapèd thing.
Storm, rage, and fret, thou sullen March,
Be black, or blue, or furious red,
Springs roundly the o'erhanging arch
With violets clustering o'er its head;
Thy sullen frowns I highly cheer,
The green fields float, thy atmosphere.

And long behind the Wall I lay,
The gray stone wall with mosses laid,
And heard above my head the day
With eastern fingers twisting braid,
Swift flew the wind, but I was warm,
The sun was playing his gold charm.

There as I lay, a drowsy eye
Leered at me curious, till I sank
And into sleepy lands did fly,
While Lethe murmured down the bank,
"T was warmer then than by the fire,
More music in Apollo's lyre."
I dreamed that in the Church I stood,
Dim were mine eyes the sun did blind,
I never went to church for good,
Nor this time left my rule behind;
I went to find my love who played,
The School girl like a timid maid.

They told me in the gallery then,
That I should find my love so dear;
My eyes were blind, and I was ten,
Yes ten good times the gallery near,
When sudden blindness o'er me came,
And still I went and still the same.

And when I reached the topmost stair,
Nor could my lovely Ellen see,
I shouted, Ellen, Ellen dear,—
She came from far behind to me;
You truant, was what I could say,
As in her sweet embrace I lay.
And I awoke, and the east wind
Did clamor through the old stone wall,
And as I slept, soft clouds had lined
The spanning of the azure Hall,
There's rain meseems within the sky,
Since I in Ellen's arms did lie.

Then blow cold March your trumpets shrill,
Send if you can a biting storm,
The nooks are sunny on the hill,
The mossy stones are smooth and warm,
For I can sleep and dream of thee,
Within whose heart is Spring for me.
TO THE POETS.

They who sing the deeds of men,
From the earth upraise their fame,
Monuments in marble pen,
Keeping ever sweet their name,

Tell me Poets, do I hear,
What you sing, with pious ear?

They who sing the Maiden's Kiss,
And the silver Sage's thought,
Loveliness of inward bliss,
Or the graver learning taught,

Tell me are your skies and streams
Real, or the shape of Dreams?
Many rainy days must go,
Many clouds the sun obscure,
But your verses clearer show,
And your lovely thoughts more pure,
Mortals are we, but you are
Burning keenly like a star.
THE MOUNTAINS.

Toys for the angry lightning in its play,
Summits, and peaks, and crests untrod and steep,
And precipices where the eyes delay,
Sheer gulfs that madly plunge in valleys deep,
Overhung valleys curtained by dark forms,
Ye, nourished by the energetic storms,
I seek you lost in spell-bound shuddering sleep.

Within your rifts hang gem-like crystal stars,
Eyeless by day they glitter through the nights,
Full-zonèd Venus, and red visaged Mars,
And that serenest Jupiter's round lights,
Peer o'er your terrible eminences near,
But throned too high to stoop with mortal fear,
Dreading you not, ye Ocean-stemming heights.
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THE MOUNTAINS.

Your awful forms pale wandering mists surround,
Dim clouds enfold you in funereal haze,
In the white frosted Winters ye abound,
And your vast fissures with the Frost-work glaze,
Slippery and careless of ascending feet,
Holding out violent death, and thus may meet
The Olympians,—mortals with unshrinking gaze.

The fierce bald Eagle builds amid your caves,
Shrieks fearless in your lonely places where
Only his brothers of the wind make waves,
Sweeping with lazy pinions the swift air,
For far below the stealthy wolf retreats,
The fox his various victims crafty greets,
Breeze-knighted birds alone make you their lair.

Sometime in the green valley peasants stand
Shading their glance at mid-day as they pass,
And wonder at such beacons in the land,
Bending again their eyes upon the grass;
Ye heaven-high Mountains deign to stand alone,
Only the airy amphitheatre to own,
Only the shapely clouds, the snows' drear mass.
THE MOUNTAINS.

What are ye, grand, unuttered words of Power,
Why stand you thus, balancing only earth,
Shall not an echo wake, an untold hour
Stir in your cavernous breasts a giant birth,
Shall ye not answer to the roar of seas,
Send back your greeting to the running breeze;

Mountains, I hear you, in your mighty mirth.
TO ONE COMPLAINING.

Go to the waving tree,
    The level circle's golden round,
Or on the margin of the Sea,
    List to the sound.

I bid thee from the roof,
    Where underneath the dreary day,
Puts thy frail spirit to the proof,
    To turn away.

Speak not beneath the wall,
    God hears thee not while thou art there,
But make thy consecrated hall
    The endless air.
Ride on the wild wind's mane
   When scornful Autumn hisses loud,
Sing like the heavy Summer's rain,
   So stately proud.

Have never-failing Hate,
   And be forbidden in thy deed,
And make thyself all desolate,
   Nor sate thy need.

Then when thy rage is spent,
   Thou shalt sit down to tell the tale,
And as thou see'st the way thou went,
   Be clad in mail.

Bad memories shall be,
   The storehouse of thy present worth,
The Past shall win this stake for thee,
   Another birth.
MID-WINTER.

O sweetly falls the pure white snow
Over the chill and silent earth,
And warms the patient seed below,
Waiting for Spring's voluptuous birth.

Thus fall the gentle deeds of men,
And nourish in those Hearts content,
That wait for sunshine sweet again,
And touches of that element.

Thou art not cold to me, if gray
And dimly shown the Heaven's smile,
I am the child of Northern day,
And love the Snow-drift's glittering pile.
"Tis Freedom’s writing, clear and white,
Which Southern skies must long deplore,
It sparkles in the depth of night,
Conceals the Stars and paints them o’er.
I like this Princeton, a most silent place,
Better than Chester, that I loved to pace
So many years ago; is stiller far,
Less people, they not caring who you are,
While Chester mortals have a certain wit,
By which they know you, or can fancy it.
In Princeton live a few good farming people,
Like spectres in a church-yard, while a steeple
Is pretty nigh the village, and one inn
Which Sam. Carr keeps, lonely and cool within,
One of the country taverns built before
Our recollection, shortly after Noah.
Here Boston sportsmen stop with dog and gun,
To bag shy Woodcock, and have quiet fun,
A ruddy, cheerful race, who interfere
Never with you, in truth know not you are.
No perfumed dandies smirch the lonely roads,
No artists wander with their sketchy loads,
'Tis then a proper place for us to go,
Who love old solitude and hate new show.
I think it a good spot without this hill
Wachusett, — a small mountain, cool and still
As Princeton. To the summit is easy,
With scattered outlooks picturesque and breezy,
Not as flat level as a Salem beach,
And yet within a feeble body's reach.
A pleasant ramble up a rocky steep,
'Neath shady woodlands, where some Woodgods sleep,
Where maples, shad-barks, silver birches shine,
Second-growth forest where gay trees combine.

It has no grandeur like the proud White Hills,
No cataract's thunder, steal no crystal rills
Like those which line the Catskills half the way,
And furnish comfort in a summer's day,
But the road up is dry as Minot's tongue,
Or city people chance together flung.
And off the summit one sees villages,
Church spires, white houses, and their belts of trees,
Plenty of farmers' clearings, and some woods,
But no remote Sierra solitudes.
I never counted up the list of towns,
That I can see spread on the rolling downs,
Or sought for names of mountains on the map,
As Jackson might who is a Scenery-trap,
But to my notion there is matter here,
As pleasant as if larger or severe.
'Tis plain New England, neither more nor less,
Pure Massachusetts-looking, in plain dress;
From every village point at least three spires,
To satiate the good villagers' desires,
Baptist, and Methodist, and Orthodox,
And even Unitarian, creed that shocks
Established church-folk; they are one to me,
Who in the different creeds the same things see,
But I love dearly to look down at them,
In rocky landscapes like Jerusalem.
The villages gleam out painted with white,
Like paper castles are the houses light,
And every gust that o'er the valley blows,
May scatter them perchance like drifting snows.
The little streams that thread the valleys small,
Make scythes or axes, driving factories all,
The ponds are dammed, and e'en the petty brooks,
Convert to sluices swell the River's crooks,
And where the land is so poor, it will not pay
For farming, winds the Railroad's yellow way.

If in the Student's eye, this Yankee vein
Of pure utility is but pure pain,
If he shall ask for august Palace wall,
Or figured arch, or learned College hall;
If he seek Landscape gardens midst those trees,
Where hammers trip it like the hum of bees,
Instead of corn-land for the shaven Lawn,
Or one sane man who will his life adorn,
Not a dry rank of Grocers, or of shops,
Or women sometime conversant with mops,
He asks for that Wachusetts does not see,
A watch-tower guarding pure utility.
Why does the Student question what there is?
Grant it not Grecian, it is surely his;
Born in New England in her useful mood,
Let him not feel as if in solitude;
The child of railroads, Factories, and farms,
Let him not stand beside them with closed arms.
Dwells not within the Locomotive's heart
One of the purest ministries of Art,
Can Poet feign more airy character,
This burdened train few drops of water stir.
Hear how it thunders down the iron road,
Invulnerable horse, who drags a load,
No matter what its shape, or weight, to him,
Gallops by noon, and speechless midnight dim,
Careless across the trembling, sunken moors,
Under the mountains, past the people's doors,
Through forest-thickets where the Partridge drums,
Along the sea-beach where the salt spray comes,
Hurled by the exercise of human thought,
The man-created beast shows matter nought.
Within his magic mind, a dreamy boy
Converts this iron to a living toy,
Shuts in a moment power of distances,
Bids granite dance, and iron axles wince.
Who cares what is the weather, good or bad,
Within the Rail-car pleasant can be had,—
Who cares where is the city, by his door,
Rolls the swift engine, circling countries o' er.

The Student grants it thus,—but selfish trade
Along the fair inventions closely laid,
Converts the country to a cunning town,
Nothing can stand save beating prices down.
Man's temple is the market, and his God
Is money, fall of dollars Jovian nod.
Society is leagued against the poor,
Monopolies close up from most the door
To fortune, Industry has come to be
Competitive, all,—aristocracy;
Work is monotonous, a war for wealth,
The universe is plainly out of health.
See from this mountain in the dusty towns,
A people sorely burdened, for smiles,—frowns,
No lovely groups of rustics dig the soil,
Alone each farmer ploughs, his greedy toil
Not shared with them about him, but his hand
Closed against those, who may the nearest stand.
A piteous sight, there is the Poor-house wall,
A frightful thing, there is the Prison's hall,
The courts of Justice fatten on the broil,
The church lamps feed on poor men's sweaty oil,
Where shall this misery end, has God forsook
The dwellers in these valleys, from the Book
Of Life their names forever razed; I see
Nothing around us but deep misery.

So spoke the Student; in his eye swam tears,
A sincere man, whose mournful, thoughtful years,
Have run away in longings for that good,
Which finds he only in some solitude,
'Where swing in sunny distances the trees,
And squirrels chirp in frolic to the breeze,
And o'er the grass the green snake winds along,
Curving himself in like the Brook's clear song,
Where pigeons glance about the murmuring boughs,
And beetles hum, and the tall Pine-tree soughs.—
Dear student, in that life, so sad to thee,
Is better Nature, than all this to me.
Thou dost not feel the sweetness of the art,
When strikes the farmer in the earth his heart;
His crops are wise instructions of the power,
Which off his fingers reels the fruitful hour;
With a father's fondness, o'er his rich Fields
He looks content, and what the out-door yields,
Within his bosom meets its answering tone,
Nor is he satisfied to hold alone
This credit of the world, but with his friend
Who owns yon meadow, does his harvest blend
In fair exchanges, as the honest earth
For his just thoughts alone its crop gives birth.
The neighbor in his mind, has his fit place,
And trade is the keen Wizard's shifting mace
By which he deals in untold craftiness
With those about him; they in turn confess
The profit which this prudent Industry
Has made for them, and kept their wits at sea.
'Tis always the concealed, mysterious thought
Which in his bargains somewhere shall be caught;
This competition is the mystic thing,
He does not know its strength or power of wing,
And only on his neighbor tries its force,
Who can for him interpret its true source.—
What is the cheer within the village street,
Which makes the Court, the Jail, the Church complete,
Save that each day 'tis a new birth of mind,
And these new men experiments can find?
So like a laboratory smells the town,
These villagers the chemists,—skill the crown
Which decks the royal head,—he is a King,
Who from his cunning competence can bring.
Shall witty scheme or formula compare
With Nature's secret force, which can prepare
Each hour new tactics for this village war,
So gently waged, so little do they jar.
And who do tenant then the Poor-house wall,
And who are fastened in the Prison’s hall,
But those that baulk kind Nature in her play,
Who thus has laid them up, and stored away.
Is trade no happier than the game of old,
When iron muscles played the trick for gold,
When Barons led their fierce retainers forth,
Like Kurroglou and battered down the earth,
When no man’s life was safe in wood or street,
And the whole neighborhood a martial beat.
Much I prefer to sit on Princeton hill,
And see around me the results of skill,
Where Mind does own the making of the thing,
The age of muscle having had its swing.
Are there no dear emotions in the vale,
Does not the Maiden hear the lover’s wail,
Breathe gently forth below the Chesnut shade,
Does not her bosom heave, and blushes fade
Momently on her cheek, like shadows flying
Across the woodlands while soft day is dying
Upon that range of Hampshire hills, — does age
No sweet respect from its young heirs engage,
Sounds not the running Schoolboy's chorus cry,  
And village girls do they not smile and sigh;  
Are not the wrinkles in that old man's brows,  
The fruit of battle with the winter snows,  
Or honest strokes beneath the summer's sun,  
Of his swift scythe, those curvatures have run;  
Are there no merry parties for the lakes,  
And nutting frolicks in the forest's brakes;  
The horse, the cow, and dog play merry part,  
The humblest village beats with cheery heart.  
Within the plainest School-house lore is writ  
As good as Bible-story, part of it;  
The city claims a visit every year,  
The Cattle-show is held each season near,  
A thousand books fly everywhere about,  
Of which the secret quickly is torn out,  
Sweet bread, rich milk, and apples weigh the board,  
The village, by its trade, doth spend not hoard.  
He who has craft, he gets respect from all,  
He who has none, by his deserts doth fall  
To his true level, and Nature dwelling here  
Pours out her sacred Instinct strong and clear.
The Student said, — If all this, truly so,
A stagnant element cakes deep below,
The threadbare relic of the elder age,
The heirloom of Judea, that sad page
Recording the fantastic miracles
Done in that day, which read like jugglers' spells,
Or incantations in a tiresome play,
Which later editors might crib away.
How sadly serious is Religion now,
That Seraph with her sparkling, crystal brow,
In whose deep humane eyes the world should read,
Tenderest consolation, and not bleed
At their cold, spectral, grim, forlorn replies,
Like one who stares at us with mere glass eyes.
What awkward repetitions of a Creed,
The pulpit and the minister, indeed,
Where congregations meet for gossipping,
Or boys for show, and girls to learn to sing.
Is this Religion, — Nature's other self,
Or the last issue of the thirst for pelf,
How cold to me the worn church-service is,
I wonder that some people do not hiss. —
O Student learn a wiser lore than thine,
Deem me presumptuous, do not call it mine;
A lore I read upon the steel-blue lakes,
And in the piled white clouds, this soft wind takes
Like sailing navies, o'er the Atlantic heaven,
A lore by Spirits to this mortal given,
That teaches in whate'er our souls revere,
Is the pure oxygen of that atmosphere,
Which God presents our race to freely breathe,
Which he does finely through our beings wreathe,
And that we reverence has power sublime,
Whether it be the birth of olden time,
Or the last Spirit-prophecy of him
Who dwelt on earth, a mild-eyed Seraphim.
O Jesus, if thy spirit haunts that vale
Whence softly on the air, the Church-bells wail,
Swells up this silent mount, a prophecy;
That thou didst teach our souls could never die;
If to some lonely heart, thy memory brings
The healing of thy Beauty on its wings,
And to this gentle heart its truth does say,
That thou wert mild and gentle, pure alway;
Does promise after that hath left this shore,
And when no longer sounds this hurried roar
Of eager life, a rest in sacred camps,
Where holy Angels tend unfading lamps,
Where all that here this lowly heart did love,
Dwells in the sunshine of that sphere above;
Where never sorrow, and where never pain
Creep o'er the mind, as on the flowers the rain
Of early winter, crossing out their flame;
Where music sounds perpetual the name
Of an eternal Beauty, and where day
Dies not in shadow on a mournful way;
Where shall that lowly heart meet better earth
Than here was present, where shall a new birth,
Quicken her faculties low lying sere,
And thought's rich Compensation shall appear;
If thus to one pure heart in any vale,
Above which now these vast white clouds do sail,
Thy lesson comes, though taught by miracles,
And in the dark contrivances of spells,
Yet shall each Church to me an altar seem,
Of sculpture lovely as a maiden's dream,
The lowly Hymn-book claim my gratitude,
The least frail office chain my darkest mood,
For I must feel such souls do dwell on earth,
Who look afar for an immortal birth,
And thou, serenest Jesus, art to them,
The lustrous mild-eyed, blissful Seraphim.

It is a busy mountain, — the wind's song
Levels so briskly the oak-tops along,
Which light October frosts color like wine,
That ripens red on warm Madeira's line.
I hear the rustling plumes of these young woods,
Like young cockerels crowing to the solitudes
While o'er the far horizon trails a mist,
A kind of autumn smoke or blaze, — I list,
Again, a lively song the woods do sing,
The smoke-fire drifts about painting a ring
Sublime, the centre of which is the mountain;
It rises like the cloud of some dark fountain
At even-song; the Indian summer's voice,
Bids me in this last tropic day rejoice.
How brown the country is, what want of rain,
But no crops growing, no one will complain.
The Indian summer, wan and waste and tame,  
Like the red nation whence it takes its name,  
Some relic of the season, a faint heat  
Which momentarily must into Winter fleet,  
The dying of the year,—the Indian time,  
How well they name it, how it suits the clime.  
The race who on this mountain once might stand,  
The country's monarchs wide on either hand,  
Bold as the July heats, and vigorous  
As August tempests, and more glorious  
Than splendid summer Moonlights, where are they?  
Ah, like this summer, they did fade away  
Into the white snows of that winter race,  
Who came with iron hands and pallid face,  
Nor could the Indian look within his eye;  
They turned, their frosts had come, their blight was nigh;  
Some praise their stately figure, or their skill,  
They straight submitted to the White man's will,  
Their only monument, a fading week,  
The Indian summer; like the hectic cheek
Of a consumptive girl who ere her time,
In some gay anguish half renews her prime,
Shines in one summer moment, e'er the frost
Crimsons her foliage before all is lost.

Now the veiled sun is drooping to his fall,
Weaving the western landscape a thick pall
From the gigantic Air-smoke, through it slant
His stretching beams, the mighty figures daunt
The eye, far-shading level smoke that side,
While eastward the white towns in sunshine ride.
But all around this wonderful, wild haze,
Like a hot crucible wherein the days
And nights are melted by a giant hand,
A terrible world, neither sea nor land,
As if at last old earth had caught on fire,
And slowly mouldering, sank into the pyre.
To the dull north, a skeleton so dim,
Is gray Monadnoc's head, and half of him,
Looming out vaguely, as Gibraltar's rock
Off Estepona, when the east wind's shock
After a long gale from the sparkling west,
Comes coldly down, but warms the seaman's breast,
Anxious to fly Mediterranean calm,
And clasp the ocean with his daring palm.
Beneath the sun, like Saladin's bright blade,
One glittering lake cuts golden the wide shade;
And on some faint-drawn hill-sides fires are burning,
The far blue smoke their outlines soft in-urning,
And now half-seen the Peterboro' hills,
Peep out like black-fish, nothing but their gills.
Each feature of the scene itself confounded.
Like Turner's pallet with strange colors grounded,
It seems to gain upon me, shut me in,
Creeps up to the brown belfry where I spin
My fancies, like that last Man Campbell painted,
Who finally 't is to be hoped was sainted.

Who can be sad and live upon this earth,
A scene like this would make a Hermit mirth,
And turn mankind to Painters, or forswear
All sympathies save with this landscape-air,
While comes the breeze as gently as caress
Of pensive lovers in first blessedness.
A yellow tone sweeps southward the horizon,
The sun to weaving deeper shadows plies on,
More mountains loom, and hills burst up like isles
Shot in the sea by Earth's galvanic piles;
One clear black spot hangs o'er the valley there,
A solitary Hawk balanced on air;
Banks of gray squall-clouds swell below the sun,
The lake turns steel, another sketch begun,
Each instant changes everywhere the scene,
Rapid and perfect turns the Indian screen.
There comes a firmer yellow to the North,
The sun just opening showers more glories forth,
A lakelet dazzles like a bursting star,
The landscape widens in that Hampshire far,
The swelling lines of nearer hills arise,
The greater mountains ope their dreamy eyes;
Out bursts the sun, turns villages to gold,
Blazons the cold lake, burns the near cloud's fold,
Drops splendidly a curtain of warm tints,
And at an apple-green divinely hints.
What land is this, not my New England drear?
'Tis Spain's south border, or warm Naples' cheer,
Sweet Provence smiles upon the western side,
And Azores' velvet on the molten tide.
I see in front the great Savannahs lie,—
The endless deserts burnt by Afric's eye,
Shine in that dusky land the Moor's delight;
'Tis Tangiers yonder and dark Atlas' height,
Or Mauritania with her sable skins,
And gold-dust rivers, elephants and kings,
And yonder looms the sandy Arab coast,
With yellow tassels of the Palm all crost,
And in that valley bakes a torrid Fez;
He is not right, who our New England says
Is a dread, cold inhospitable realm,—
Guides not the South this glowing landscape's helm?

I hear the cawing of some drifting crows,
Beneath in villages the watch-dog blows
His bayings to the scene, and King-birds shriek,
And stronger breezes fan the happy cheek,
While purest roseate turns the western sky,
Laughing to think that night has drawn so nigh.
And like a ball of melted iron glows
The sinking sun, leaves his last veil, and throws
Upon the Eastern hills a gentle red,
Upon those skies his rosy pencil spread,
Then dies within that stormy mountain cloud,
That masks him proudly in a leaden shroud.
Each day, new Treasure brings him for his store,
So rich he is he never shall be poor,
His lessons nature reads him o'er and o'er,
As on each sunny day the Lake its shore.

Though others pine for piles of glittering gold,
A cloudless Sunset furnishes him enough,
His garments never can grow thin or old,
His way is always smooth though seeming rough.

Even in the winter's depth the Pine-tree stands,
With a perpetual Summer in its leaves,
So stands the Poet with his open hands,
Nor care nor sorrow him of Life bereaves.
For though his sorrows fall like icy rain,  
Straightway the clouds do open where he goes,  
And e'en his tears become a precious gain;  
'Tis thus the heart of Mortals that he knows.

The figures of his Landscape may appear  
Sordid or poor, their colors he can paint,  
And listening to the hooting he can hear,  
Such harmonies as never sung the saint.

And of his gain he maketh no account,  
He's rich enough to scatter on the way;  
His springs are fed by an unfailing fount,  
As great Apollo trims the lamp of day.

'Tis in his heart, where dwells his pure Desire,  
Let other outward lot be dark or fair;  
In coldest weather there is inward fire,  
In fogs he breathes a clear celestial air.

So sacred is his Calling, that no thing  
Of disrepute can follow in his path,  
His Destiny too high for sorrowing,  
The mildness of his lot is kept from wrath.
Some shady wood in Summer is his room,
Behind a rock in Winter he can sit,
The wind shall sweep his chamber, and his loom
The birds and insects weave content at it.

Above his head the broad Skies' beauties are,
Beneath, the ancient carpet of the earth;
A glance at that, unveileth every star,
The other, joyfully it feels his birth.

So let him stand, resigned to his Estate,
Kings cannot compass it, or Nobles have,
They are the children of some handsome fate,
He, of Himself, is beautiful and brave.
TO THE PAST.

These locks so light and thin,
Once waved luxuriant o'er a playful brow;
The sunlight sends these eyes no pleasure now,
Their harvests gathered in.

Not one is spared to me,
They all have fallen in Life's narrow field,
Green waves the grass, their ashes are concealed,
Remains their history.

They fell not in the fight,
Like steel-girt Warriors in the castle's breach,
Their deeds did nothing high or mighty teach,
A battle for the Right.
But cold Forgetfulness,
And ceremony with a tedious eye,
And worldly Wisdom aping courtesy,
And sickly stinginess;

These were their enemies, —
Farewell! though I am sad, yet in my heart
There burns the splendor of a better part,
That which ye cannot prize.
I.

There in the old gray house whose end we see,
Half-peeping through the golden Willow's veil,
Whose graceful twigs make foliage through the year,
My Hawthorne dwelt, a scholar of rare worth;
The gentlest man that kindly nature drew,
New England's Chaucer, Hawthorne fitly lives.

His tall compacted figure, ably strung
To urge the Indian chase or guide the way,
Softly reclining 'neath the aged elm,
Like some still rock looked out upon the scene,
As much a part of Nature, as itself.
The passing Fisher; saw this idle man
Thus lying solitary 'neath the elm,
And as he plied with lusty arms his oar,
Shooting upon the tranquil glass below
The old red Bridge, and further on the stream
To those still coves where the great prizes swim,
Asked of himself this question, why that man
Thus idly on the bank o'erhung the stream?—
Then by the devious light at twilight's close,
He read the Twice-told Tales, nor dreamt the mind
Thus idly musing by the River's side,
Had gathered and stored up from Nature's fields
This golden grain, and sweet nutritious fare,
Nor saw within the blind man's eye that boy,
The Gentle Boy, float o'er the tranquil tide.

Softly from out the well-stored sunny brake,
Or where the great Fields glimmer in the sun,
Such mystic influence came to Hawthorne's soul,
That from the air, and from the liquid day,
He drank the subtle image of deep life.
And when the grand and cumbrous Winter rose,
Sealing the face of Nature as with stone,
He sat within the Manse, and filled the place
With all the wealth of Summer like a sun. —
Yet were these plains more sacred in my eyes,
That furnished treasure for his Kingly purse.

II.

To thy continual Presence in me wrought,
Vainly might I, a fallen creature, say,
That I partake the blessedness of day,
To thee, thou essence of Creation's thought.
That on my verse might fall thy healing dew,
And all its faults obscure, its charms renew.
I praise Thee not, because Thou needest praise,
What were my thanks, thou needest not my lays,
Yet will I praise thee, for thou art the fire
That sparkles on the strings of my dark lyre.
Sole majesty, yet 'round us softly flowing,
Unseen, yet in the common Sunset glowing,
The fate of Universe, the tide of things,
Sacred alike to all beneath thy wings,
If Passion’s trance lay on the writing clear,
Then should I see thee evident and near,
Passion, that breath of instinct, and the key
Of thy dominions, untold Mystery.
It was the summer, and in early June,
When all things taste the luxury of health,
With the free growth of foliage on the trees,
And o'er the fields a host of Clover blooms,
And through the life and thought of the fresh world,
Unsorrowing peace, and Love like softest air.
'Twas then I took my way along the hills,
Upon the sandy road that devious winds;
At last, I came to happy Meredith.
This beauteous spot is circled in with heights,
And at a little distance Gunstock stands,
A bare, bold mountain looking o'er the lake,
That shines like glass within the emerald meads.

Much was I pleased, to mark the simple life
That man yet leads among the mountain shades,
Nor failed to see a Farmer, who was born
Upon the side of Gunstock, where his sire
Had tilled the fertile soil, — himself a son
Of Nature, framed to love the heights and fields.
The meaning of the landscapes in his heart,
Shone with a rural splendor, and his eye
Trembled with Humor as it roved abroad,
Gladdened by each familiar scene of youth;
While in his mind the Words of men were stored,
Quaint phrases, and wise sayings manifold.
Not often have I met thus wise a man,
Not often heard such merry words, and learned
That Nature pours her wealth unstinted forth,
Upon the unknown, careless, and remote.

IV.

The day has past, I never may return;
Twelve circling years have run since first I came,
And kindled the pure truth of Friendship's flame,
Alone remain these ashes in the urn;
Vainly for light the taper may I turn,
Thy hand is closed, as for these years, the same,
And in the substance nought is but the name,
No more a hope, no more a ray to burn.
But once more in the pauses of thy joy,
Remember him who sought thee in his youth,
And with the old reliance of the boy,
Asked for thy Treasures in the guise of truth;
The air is thick with sighs,—the shaded sun
Shows on the Hill-side, that the day is done.

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v.

Tomorrow comes; dost say my friend Tomorrow?
Far down below those Pines the Sunset flings
Long arching o'er, its lines of ruddy light,
And the wind murmurs little harmonies,
And underneath their wings the tender birds
Droop their averted heads,—silent their songs.
But not a word whispers the moaning wind,
Nor when in faint array the primal stars
Trail with the banners of the unfurled night,
Nor even when the low-hung moon just glints
And faintly with few touches seres the wood,
Not there, nor then, doth Nature idly say
Nor whisper idly of another day;
That other morn itself its morrow is,
That other day shall see no shade of this.

vi.

A green and vaporous cloud of buds, the Larch
Folds in soft drapery above the glade,
Where deeper foliaged Pines high over-arch,
And dignify the heavy, stooping shade,
There yellow violets spring, in rarest show,
And golden rods in secret clusters blow.
There piping Hylas fill the helpless air,
And chattering Black-birds hold their gossip by,
And near I saw the tender maiden-hair,
With the fine, breeze-born, white anemone;
The Glade, though undisturbed by human art,
Has richer treasures than the busy mart.

VII.

As in some stately Grove of singing pines,
One tree more marked than all, decisive rears
Its grand aspiring figure to the sky,
Remote from those beneath, and o'er whose top
The first, faint light of dawn familiar plays,
So in Count Julian's face there was the soul
Of something deeper, than the general heart,
Some memory more near to other worlds,
Time's recollection, and the storied Past.
His pure slight form had a true Grecian charm,
Soft as the willow o’er the River swaying,
Yet sinewy and capable of action;
Such grace as in Apollo’s figure lay,
When he was moving the still world with light,
So perfect balanced, and convinced with art.
About his forehead clustered rich black curls,
Medusa-like, they charmed the student’s eye.
Those soft, still hazel orbs Count Julian had,
Looked dream-like forth on the familiar day,
Yet eloquent, and full of luminous force,
Sweetly humane that had no harshness known,
Unbroken eyes where Love forever dwelt.
This art of Nature which surrounded him,
This made Count Julian what he was to me,
Which neither time, nor place, nor Poet’s pen,
Nor Sculptor’s chisel can e’er mould again.

VIII.

O band of Friends, ye breathe within this space,
And the rough finish of a humble man,
By your kind touches rises into Art.
I cannot lose a line ye bend to trace;
Your figures bear into the azure deeps,
A little frail contentment of my own,
And in your eyes I read, how sunshine lends
A golden color to the dusty weed,
That droops its tints where the soiled Pilgrims tread.

IX.

Believe, that thus a humble worshipper,
Who in soiled weeds along this pathway's going,
To one of Nobler kind may minister,
His lowly hope in such faint words bestowing;
O Lady, that my words for thee were more,
But I have not the right to richer store.
Thou art of finer mould, thy Griefs are proof,
Only those nearest to the sun do burn,
While we sit merry underneath the roof,
And vainly to those larger empires turn;
Had I been heir of brightness such as thou,
Then might a Sorrow seal my rounded brow.
x.

Ye mournful walls, that with a look of woe,
Idly stand gazing in each other's face;
Ye eager, soulless crowds that coldly pass
Forever 'neath those walls darkly contrived,
And streets that are the wards of Misery;
Thou poor, and hunger-stricken, needless Town,
That I delved lonely on some sea-washed moor,
Delved with a hand of Pain the barren sands,
All day beneath the scorching eye of Heaven,
Or vacantly stood cold within the wind,
Where rugged Winter nursed his rugged child,
Yea! on some bleak, bare, desolate place of rock,
Yea! anywhere but here, in these dim shades,
Within your shades, you high and gloomy walls.
For I have been a walker in the fields,
Oft in the woodland arches have I played,
Seen many times the golden Day-god roll
His round, expanded eyelids in the West,
And bravely flaming, bid the world good-night,
And to my ear the soft, pearl-handed Moon
Hath played her ivory songs beneath the fringe,
That night hangs over edged about with stars,
But thou, sad City, thou art not for me.
THE FADED FLOWERS.

See these modest little Flowers,
They were nursed by summer's rain,
Many a day broad, sunlight hours
Kept them free from chilling pain;
    They that shall never feel again.

Their little stems are broke away,
Their bells so proud are withering,
Child of dust, poor Child of clay,
To thee does it no feeling bring,
    Does it no shadow on thee fling?

Mind me, in a certain hour,
Hour when coming know not I,
Like a little modest Flower
Thou shalt wither, soon to die,
    Friends, near thee musing with wet eye.
Then a bell shall toll I ween,
Of the old Church sad and high,
And they shall put thee 'neath the green
Thick grass on the worn Hill-side nigh,
Where many a year may thy bones lie.

And a good Legend may be graved
Upon the marble white and bold,
Hoping that thou may'st be saved,
Thy pure Virtue there enrolled,
While thou sleepest in Death's large fold.

Then shall modest, cheerful Flowers,
Scatter their sweet colors on thee,
All the livelong summer hours,
Keep thee pleasant company,
Gentle memories be to thee.

Life's mystery is fearful large,
What grows,—decays, is now,—then gone,
Of thee, then let the Flowers keep charge,
Small guardians not quite forlorn,
And we will sit, and sing, and mourn.
TO READERS.

Dear reader! if my verse could say,
How in my blood thy Nature runs,
Which manifesteth no decay,
The fire that lights a thousand suns,
   How Thou and I art freely lent,
   A little of that element.

If I could say what landscape says,
And human pictures say far more,
If I could twine the sunny days
With the rich colors on the floor
   Of daily Love, how thou and I
 Might be refreshed with charity.
TO READERS.

For grateful is the softened smile
Of Winter sunset o'er the snow,
And blessed is the spheric isle,
That through the unknown void must go
The current of the stream is sweet,
Where many waters closely meet.
THE WINTER LANDSCAPE.

So pure and cold, the bleachèd Snow
That loads the pine, and crowds the wood,
That even as I lonely go,
I feel no touch of Solitude.

This drapery hangs so loosely o'er
The leafless boughs, a passing breeze
Shakes down a tribute to the floor,
For life the Seasons cannot freeze.

And merry sounds the passing Sleigh,
In this bright Winter's softened air,
For Nature ever will be gay,
Her seeds, soft Blossoms ever bear.
You could not frown or scowl abroad,
  Whate'er your indoor malice plied,
So bountiful this winter Lord,
  So splendidly his thought supplied.

Like marble pillars are the tall
  Straight, oaken boles that close the lane,
And alabaster carves the wall,
  The very path is free from stain.

What if this wondrous purity
  Should pass within the human Will?
But Winter will not always be,
  And Summer smiles above that hill.
TO MY COMPANIONS.

Ye heavy-hearted Mariners
Who sail this shore,
Ye patient, ye who labor,
    Sitting at the sweeping oar,
And see afar the flashing Sea-gulls play,
On the free waters, and the glad bright day,
Twine with his hand the spray,
    From out your dreariness,
    From your Heart-weariness,
I speak, for I am yours
    On these gray shores.

In vain, — I know not, Mariners,
What cliffs these are
That high uplift their smooth dark fronts,
And sadly 'round us bar;
I do imagine, that the free clouds play
Above those eminent heights, that somewhere Day
Rides his triumphant way,

Over our stern Oblivion,
But see no path thereout
To free from doubt.
A WOODLAND THOUGHT.

The crashing Tree, the merry call
Of woodmen in the frosty air,
The voices of the drovers clear,
And ringing axes here and there,
These occupy the lonely ground,
And scatter Human life around.

No more that charming solitude
Where swinging branches roar and sigh,
For level is the Church-like wood,
Its spires no longer pierce the sky,
The partridge and the red deer fled,
Where treads the swain, and creaks the sled.
The oak shall never shed again
That fawn-like Harvest in the fall,
Nor acorns in the Autumn rain,
From its deep clefts the squirrels call,
But far away it rolleth free,
And soon is planted in the sea.

And when the frowning Tempest drives
Those pinioned planks like dry leaves down,
And when the billows wildly rage,
And Men by death are quickly sown,
'T is Autumn in the ocean's tide,
And men to Acorns are allied.
If we should rake the bottom of the Sea
For its best treasures,
And heap our measures;
If we should ride upon the Winds, and be
Partakers of their flight
By day, and through the night,
Intent upon this business to find gold,
Yet were the story perfectly untold.

Such waves of wealth are rolled up in thy soul,
Such swelling Argosies,
Laden with Time's supplies;
Such pure, delicious wine shines in the bowl,
We could drink evermore,
Upon the glittering shore,
Drink of the Pearl-dissolvèd brilliant cup,
Be madly drunk, and drown our thristing up.

This vessel richly chased about the rim,
With golden emblems is
The utmost art of bliss,
With figures of the azure Gods who swim
In the enchanted sea,
Contrived for deity,
Floating in rounded shells of purple hue,
The Sculptor died in carving this so true.

Some dry uprooted sapling we have seen,
Pretend to even
This grove of Heaven;
A sacred forest where the foliage green,
Breathes Music like mild lutes,
Or silver-coated flutes,
Or the concealing winds that can convey,
Never their tone to the rude ear of day.

Some weary-footed mortals we have found
Adventuring after thee;
They,—rooted, as a tree
Pursues the swift breeze o'er a rocky ground;
Thy grand, imperial flight,
Sweeping thee far from sight,
As sweeps the movement of a Southern blast,
Across the heated Gulf, and bends the mast.

The circles of thy Thought, shine vast as stars,
No glass shall round them,
No plummet sound them,
They hem the observer like bright steel wrought bars,
And limpid as the sun,
Or as bright waters run
From the cold fountain of the Alpine springs,
Or diamonds richly set in the King's rings.

The piercing of thy Soul scorches the thought,
As great fires burning,
Or sunlight turning
Into a focus; in its meshes caught
Our palpitating minds,
Show stupid like coarse hinds,
So strong and composite through all thy powers,
The Intellect divine serenely towers.
The smart and pathos of our suffering race
Bears thee no harm,
Thy muscular arm
The daily ills of living doth efface;
The sources of the spring
From whence thy instincts wing,
Unsounded by the lines of sordid day,
Enclosed with inlaid walls thy Virtue's way.

This heavy Castle's gates no man can ope,
Unless the lord doth will
To prove his skill,
And read the Fates hid in his horoscope;
No man may enter there,
But first shall kneel in prayer,
And to superior Gods orisons say,
Powers of old time, unveiled in busy day.

Thou need not search for men in Sidney's times,
And Raleigh fashion,
And Herbert's passion;
For us, they are but dry preserved limes;
There is ripe fruit to-day
Hangs yellow in display,
Upon the waving garment of the bough;
The graceful Gentleman lives for us now.

Neither must thou turn back to Angelo,
Who Rome commanded,
And single-handed
Was Architect, Poet, and bold Sculptor too;
Behold a better thing,
When the pure mind can sing,
When true Philosophy is linked with verse,
When moral Laws in rhyme themselves rehearse.

In city’s street, how often shall we hear,
It is a period,
Deprived of every God;
A time of Indecision, and doom’s near;
When foolish altercation
Threatens to break the nation,
All men turned talkers, and much good forgot,
With score of curious troubles we know not.
By this account their learning you shall read,
Who tell the story,
So sad and gory,
People that you can never seek in need;
The pigmies of the race
Who crowd the airy space,
With counterfeit presentments of the Man,
Who has done all things, all things surely can.

We never heard thee babble in this wise,
The age creator,
And clear debater
Of that which this good Present underlies;
Thy course is better kept,
Than where the dreamers slept,
Thy sure meridian taken by the sun,
Thy compass pointing true as waters run.

In vain, for us to say what thou hast been
To the occasion,
The flickering nation,
This stock of people from an English kin;
And he who led the van,
ODE.

The frozen Puritan,
We thank thee for thy patience with his faith,
That chill delusive poison mixed for death.

So moderate in thy lessons, and so wise,
To foes so courteous,
To friends so dutious,
And hospitable to the neighbor's eyes;
Thy thoughts have fed the lamp
In learning's polished camp,
And who suspects thee of this well-earned fame,
Or meditates on thy renowned name.

Within thy Book, the world is plainly set
Before our vision,
Thou keen Physician;
We find there wisely writ, what we have met
Along the dusty path,
And o'er the aftermath,
Where natures once world-daring held the scythe,
Nor paid to Superstition a mean tithe.
Great persons are the epochs of the race,
When royal Nature
Takes form and feature,
And careless handles the surrounding space;
The age is vain and thin,
A pageant of gay sin,
Without heroic response from the soul,
Through which the tides diviner amply roll.

The pins of custom have not pierced through thee,
Thy shining armor
A perfect charmer;
Even the hornets of Divinity,
Allow thee a brief space,
And thy Thought has a place,
Upon the well-bound Library's chaste shelves,
Where man of various wisdom rarely delves.—

When thou dost pass below the forest shade,
The branches drooping
Enfold thee, stooping
ODE.

Above thy figure, and form thus a glade;
The flowers admire thee pass,
In much content the grass,
Awaits the pressure of thy firmest feet,
The bird for thee sends out his greetings sweet.

And welcomes thee designed, the angry Storm,
When deep-toned thunder
Steals up from under
The heavy-folded clouds, and on thy form
The lightning glances gay
With its perplexing ray,
And sweep across thy brow the speeding showers,
And fills this pageantry thy outward hours.

Upon the rivers thou dost float at peace,
Or on the ocean
Feelest the motion;
Of every Natural form thou hast the lease,
Because thy way lies there,
Where it is good or fair;
Thou hast perception, learning, and much art,
Propped by the columns of a stately heart.
From the deep mysteries thy goblet fills,
The wines do murmur,
That Nature warmed her,
When she was pressing out from must the hills,
The plains that near us lie,
The foldings of the sky,
Whate'er within the horizon there is,
From Hades' cauldron, to the blue God's bliss,

We may no more; so we might sing force'er,
Thy Thought recalling,
Thus waters falling
Over great cataracts, from their lakes do bear,
The power that is divine,
And bends their stately line;
All but thy Beauty, the cold verses have,
All but thy Music, organ-mellowed nave.
HYMN OF THE EARTH.

My highway is unfeatured air,
My consorts are the sleepless Stars,
And men, my giant arms upbear,
My arms unstained and free from scars.

I rest forever on my way,
Rolling around the happy Sun,
My children love the sunny day,
But noon and night to me are one.

My heart has pulses like their own,
I am their Mother, and my veins
Though built of the enduring stone,
Thrill as do theirs with godlike pains.
The forests and the mountains high,
The foaming ocean and the springs,
The plains,—O pleasant Company,
My voice through all your anthem rings.

Ye are so cheerful in your minds,
Content to smile, content to share,
My being in your Chorus finds
The echo of the spheral air.

No leaf may fall, no pebble roll,
No drop of water lose the road,
The issues of the general Soul
Are mirrored in its round abode.
AUTUMN.

Once more I feel the breezes that I love
Of Spanish autumn stabbing leaf and flower,
Cold cuts the wind, the gray sky frowns above,
The world enjoys a gloomy hour.

I love thee, Autumn, ruthless harvester!
Thou dost permit my stagnant veins to flow,
And in my heart a Poet's feelings stir,
To thee a Poet's fruits I owe.

My boughs shall hang with ripened tribute due,
I will repay the life that in me lies,
The cold wind shakes off fruits the which if true,
Must gathered be by those sweet eyes.
MARIANA.

He loves me not, — she stands as if entranced,
He loves me not, and I am all alive,—
Around her waist her floating tresses dance,
I gave, — she said, — what woman has to give,
My life, my love, my heart, and I am now,
The crimson leaf upon the frozen Bough.

I gave, such agonies are in that thought,
The jewels of an Empire for his song,
The vestments that by purity were wrought,
Which should of right to Princes high belong,
I stand a beggar now beneath the throne,
I am a wanderer forsaken, and alone.
Would the calm Hope of childish sleep was mine,
Would I went gathering flowers across the fields,
When innocence did the pure sense confine,
And the enjoyment that young nature yields,
I see upon the landscape a dull cloud,
The shadow of a weary Heart, and shroud.

And I have sat upon a Parent's knee,
Listening to stories of the immortal few
Who in this sinful world were good and free,
Longing to follow and that life pursue;
'T is past, the world contains their form no more,
I am unanchored, distant is the shore.

Repent! how bitterly, I might repent!
It could not give me back my dreams of youth,
It could not bathe me in the element,
The lovely radiance of unspotted Truth;
My love is false, but I am worse than he,
I have no hope,—he has Dishonesty.
THE ISLAND NUKUHEVA.

It is upon the far-off deep South Seas,
The island Nukuheva, its degrees
In vain,—I may not reckon, but the bold
Adventurous Melville there by chance was rolled,
And for four months in its delights did dwell,
And of this Island writ what I may tell.
So far away, it is a Paradise
To my unfolded, stationary eyes,
Around it white the heavy billows beat,
Within its vales profoundest cataracts meet,
Drawn from the breasts of the high purple mountains,
And to those Islanders perpetual fountains.

One vale there is upon this southern Isle,
This seal of velvet on the Ocean's smile,
One vale, all breast in with precipices,
Whose ample side the clinging root caresses,
And from the Ocean to the mountain’s face,
But some few miles their interventions trace:
Within this narrow limit there are men,
Of whom I loved to read, and read again,
Such strange and placid lives there seem to be,
Upon that vale far on the deep South Sea.
There, like our village elm, the Bread-fruit grows,
Its green pavilions in broad circle shows;
The scolloped leaves group splendid in decay,
Their rainbow tints oft parted in display,
Upon the brow of the gay Islanders,
Whose heart more serious business rarely stirs.
And when the fruit shines golden in the sun,
Like citron Melons on the vast vine hung,
The Typee farmers gather in the grain,
That in great forests heaps its verdant wain,
No dusty Ploughman breaks the heavy clod,
But crops in native clusters freely nod.
There the smooth trunks of the tall Cocoa-nut,
Rise in abundance near the graceful hut;
The scarce-seen fruit in Heaven it seems to be,  
But Typee men ascend the slippery tree,  
Where from the centre shoot the waving leaves,  
With rich grain burdened like our Indian sheaves,  
From which is drawn that nectar most divine,  
Nature's blanched vintage of Marquesan wine;  
There, waving Omoos vibrate in the air,  
Bananas spread their yellow clusters fair.  
Along this Typee vale, houses are strown  
At easy distance, separate not alone;  
Of bamboo, reed, and cocoa-nut's fine boughs,  
The hut is built, whose pliant strength allows  
Many reverses,—the interlacing sides  
Of open cane-work, where the windy tides  
Circulate free, and colored Sinnate binds  
With various hues the light ethereal blinds;  
Then, almost to the ground, the sloping roof  
Thatched with Palmetto's tapering leaves, is proof  
Against the rains, while from the modest eave  
Its tassels droop, and thus the eye relieve.  
Two trunks of Cocoa-nut lay polished high  
Within,—upon the ground the mats descry
Which gaily-worked form grateful seats by day,
While there at night, the supple limbs obey
The natural instinct sunk in sleep profound,
Upon the simple couch nearest the ground.
The path that goes by these light cottages,
Was never made for horse to pace with ease,
Broad, dusty, strait, and lined with smooth stone-walls,—
Here, droops the pathway with the vale's deep falls,
Now leaps upon the curving hillock's side,
Then, down the glens in rapid mood doth glide,
Crosses the Brook's flint-channel, then away
Turning stupendous rocks, or where the day 
Rarely descended in Time-hallowed groves,
Where rotting trunks give to the earth their loves,
By shade and flashing sunlight parted oft,
Or gently winded o'er the verdure soft.

King of the Typees, reigned Mehevi tall,
His mighty stature rising above all,
Of Paradise plumes his gorgeous head-dress made,
With the cock's gaudy plumage interbraid,
A semi-circle high in beads is laid.
His neck-lace of Boars-tusks like ivory bright,
Depending freely o'er a breast of might,
His ear-rings fabricate of sperm whale teeth,
The fronting ends freshly-plucked leaves enwreath,
And wrought with odd devices at the other,
Of which the Typee worship is the mother;
His loins girt round with Tappa-cloth in folds,
Dark-colored, clustered tassels,—who beholds
His wrists and ankles, sees the curling hair
Of some dead enemy, in circles there.
His well-carved spear of bright Koar-wood is made,
One end points sharp, one is the flat oar-blade;
His decorate pipe a sinnate loop doth hold,
Hanging from his girdle, painted like red gold
Its slender reed-stem, and the Idol-bowl
Flutters with thinnest Tappa, so the whole.
Over his skin like finest lace-work drawn,
Endless tattooings the great limbs adorn,
And a broad triangle upon his face,
Across his eyes, across his lips finds place.

'T is different, the sweet shape of Fayaway,
To her, the grand Mehevi, night by day.
The Typee maiden with her olive skin,
Through which a soft vermilion shines within,
Her dazzling teeth, like arita's milk-white seeds,
Her soft smooth form contrived for fairy needs.
Upon her naked shoulders flowed her hair
Of deepest brown, which like a mantle rare;
In natural ringlets dressed her in its pride,
Her hands as soft as Countess', — she, the bride
Of Nature, who in captivating mood,
Sculptured this maiden for this solitude.
Her dress at home was a slight belt of bark,
With some leaves, like those Fig leaves (save the mark),
Which our first Parents found, but in this she
Moved like a creature wove of sanctity,
Fell like a sunbeam in that summer world,
Beneath those skies her native grace unfurled.
Her jewels were the small Carnation flowers,
Strung in necklaces, rubies for some hours,
On a slight thread of tappa, — in her ear
One small white bud, its stem behind, a sphere
Of purest pearl, its delicate petals close,
Her bracelets flowers, and anklets, like a rose
Set in a folded circle of sweet things,
Or like a soft Spring hour when one bird sings.

Upon the vale the white snows are not sown,
Winter has never been there, but alone
One endless early Summer reigns content,
Ripens sweet fruits in this fine element.
Temperate live the Islanders, the trees
Themselves prepare their food, their perfect ease
Ever consulted by the passing wind;
They live, like youthful fancies, in the mind.

Into the sparkling streams the Maidens spring,
Dash in the cool, clear waters, laugh and sing,
Anoint themselves with "aker," or that oil
Of cocoa-nuts, prepared with pleasant toil,
Shut as it is, within the "moo-tree's" nut,
Which when carnation-tinted then is cut,
The odorous globe within fragrant with rind,
Of a light yellow all perfumed they find;
Then wreathed with flowers their sportive dances try,
Or couched the pipe to their sweet lips apply,
Or to their nostrils put the scarlet reed,
And with soft lullabies their fancies feed.
Some in gay parties with their lovers find,
In the deep groves the bright banana's rind,
And never doomed to labor's slow decay,
Shall these fair Typee maids wear out the day,
But like a band of spirits linked together,
Weave through the landscapes dances in fair weather.

In that sweet vale where Nature serves her lord,
The land is equal, sounds no Tyrant's word;
Upon the doors no padlocks shall you see,
The Warrior's spear stands out against the tree,
The maiden's brooch hangs careless from the roof,
The door is open, but the heart is proof.
There is no prison, neither fence nor road,
The land is but the man's desired abode,
What there is worth is freely shared by all,
No man is sad, and life a festival.
Within the forests ne'er the Lion's hum,
No wild beasts from the mountain-deserts come,
No snakes crawl hissing o'er the fruitful ground,
But sportive lizards golden-hued abound,
And purple-azure birds flit freely by,
Or crimson, white, and black, and gold come nigh,
Fly not at man's approach, and fear no harm,
Sometimes alight upon the extended arm,
But trill no reedy notes in those high woods,
Silent save roar of Falls those solitudes.

And in this happy vale the "Taboo" rites,
Cast a religious awe o'er many sites,
And feasts of Calabash are freely set,
In "Hoolah-Hoolah" grounds the men are met;
The delicate fair maids are all forbid
To enter there, and cannot be Priest-rid.

Ah! lovely vale, why art thou called that name,
The land of Cannibals,—did nature tame
Thy happy groups, and Paradise make thee
In some forgetful moment, savagely
Turning, and for her frolics bid thee eat
Her Happar children, yon the mountain's feet?
THE ICE RAVINE.

Never was the sight more gay,
Down the rapid water flows,
Deep the ravine's Rondelay,
Stealing up the silent snows.

Like an Organ's carved wood-work,
Richly waxed the Ice-tubes stand,
Hidden in them stops do lurk,
And I see the Master's hand.

Swift his fingers strike the keys,
Glittering all with rings of light,
Bubble's break and born with ease,
Sparkle constant, swift and bright.
The Ice Ravine.

Now upon the rocks, the roar
Of the Streamlet beats the bass,
Deeply murmuring through the floor
Of sparse snow and frozen grass.

Red as ruby wine the hue
Of the running Brook that brings,
Through the Ice-ravine this true
Music for the native kings.

Solemn stands the Ash-tree near,
Not one leaf upon his crown,
Still the Barberry, still the clear
Landscape of the meadows down.

Thus they listen every day,
Wind may roar and rain may run,
Clear or dull the Streamlet's play
Sounds that music, All in One.
THE BARREN MOORS.

On your bare rocks, O barren moors,
On your bare rocks I love to lie,—
They stand like crags upon the shores,
Or clouds upon a placid sky.

Across those spaces desolate,
The fox pursuing his lonely way,
Those solitudes can fairly sate
The passage of my loneliest day.

Like desert Islands far at sea
Where not a ship can ever land,
Those dim uncertainties to me,
For something veritable stand.
A serious place distinct from all
Which busy Life delights to feel,
I stand in this deserted hall,
And thus the wounds of time conceal.

No friend's cold eye, or sad delay,
Shall vex me now where not a sound
Falls on the ear, and every day
Is soft as silence most profound.

No more upon these distant wolds
The agitating world can come,
A single pensive thought upholds
The arches of this dreamy home.

Within the sky above, one thought
Replies to you, O barren Moors,
Between, I stand, a creature taught
To stand between two silent floors.
It is not far beyond the Village church,
After we pass the wood that skirts the road,
A Lake,—the blue-eyed Walden, that doth smile
Most tenderly upon its neighbor Pines,
And they as if to recompense this love,
In double beauty spread their branches forth.
This Lake had tranquil loveliness and breadth,
And of late years has added to its charms,
For one attracted to its pleasant edge,
Has built himself a little Hermitage,
Where with much piety he passes life.

More fitting place I cannot fancy now,
For such a man to let the line run off
The mortal reel, such patience hath the lake,
Such gratitude and cheer is in the Pines.
But more than either lake or forest’s depths,
This man has in himself; a tranquil man,
With sunny sides where well the fruit is ripe,
Good front, and resolute bearing to this life,
And some serener virtues, which control
This rich exterior prudence, virtues high,
That in the principles of Things are set,
Great by their nature and consigned to him,
Who, like a faithful Merchant, does account
To God for what he spends, and in what way.
Thrice happy art thou, Walden! in thyself,
Such purity is in thy limpid springs;
In those green shores which do reflect in thee,
And in this man who dwells upon thy edge,
A holy man within a Hermitage.
May all good showers fall gently into thee,
May thy surrounding forests long be spared,
And may the Dweller on thy tranquil shores,
There lead a life of deep tranquility
Pure as thy Waters, handsome as thy Shores
And with those virtues which are like the Stars.
OF KEATS.

'Tis said, a Keats by critics, once was killed,
Alas! they have lacked power to do this thing
In these late days, or else some blood was spilled,
They softly bite to-day, or kick and fling.

Let them pluck courage from the Bravo's knife,
And stick their victims in small streets by dark,
Or somehow skillfully cut out their life,
Do something that must pain them, but not bark.

And most of all let them kill Keats alway,
Or him that can be killed, as sure as steel,
For many Keats's creep about our day,
Who would not furnish Heroes half a meal.

Who writes by Fate the critics shall not kill,
Nor all the assassins in the great review,
Who writes by luck his blood some Hack shall spill,
Some Ghost whom a Musquito might run through.
Of Keats' poetry I have small taste,
But trust some Critics still are in the field,
Whose well-puffed Pills are not composed of paste,
Whose swords of lath with wisdom they do wield.

For me, I trust they will not spare one line,
Or else in frozen silence may abide,
Pray may they hack like butchers at all mine,
And kill me like that Keats if it betide.

Or if they courteous damn me with faint praise,
Let some old Hunter of the pack be set
To track me out, and fasten on my lays
His toothless gums, or let them all forget.

I ope my arms to them, — the world beside, —
O awful God! who over verse dost sway,
Thine eye does scan me, — in thy flowing tide,
I, like a leaf, am eddying whirled away.

Could but the faintest echo from my lyre,
Within Thy ear awake one choral thought,
I then had gained my earnest Heart's desire,
This battle then securely I had fought.