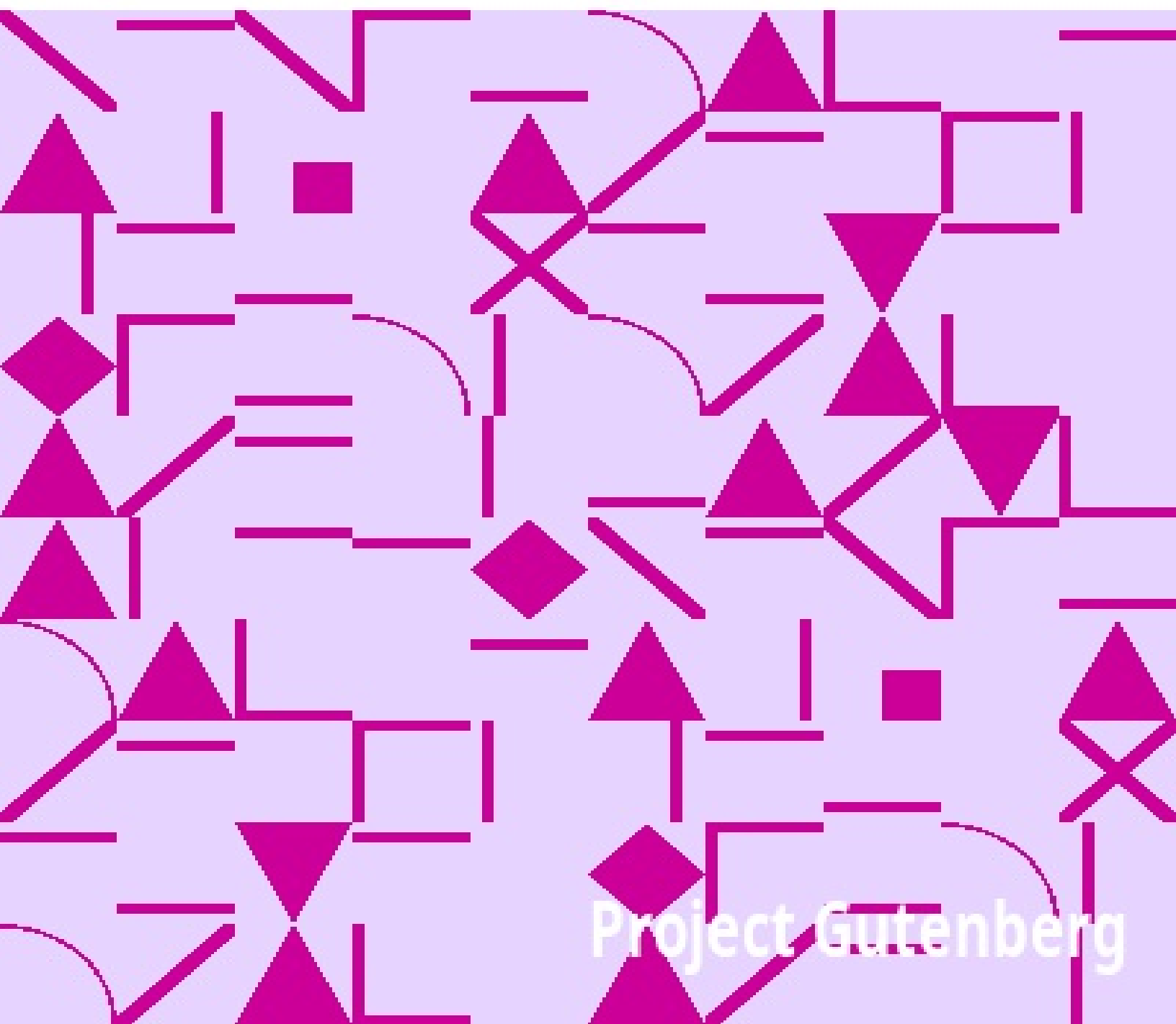


Memorial Day, and Other Verse (Original and Translated)

Helen Leah Reed



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MEMORIAL DAY

AND OTHER VERSE

(ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED)

BY

HELEN LEAH REED

AUTHOR OF SERBIA; A SKETCH
NAPOLEON'S YOUNG NEIGHBOR
THE BRENDA SERIES, ETC.

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This book is sold for the benefit of work for blinded soldiers

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TO THE MEMORY OF
THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON
SOLDIER, SCHOLAR, FRIEND

The author thanks the editors of the following publications for the right to reprint certain poems of hers that they first published:

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PATRIOTIC AND SERIOUS

MEMORIAL DAY

No warrior he, a village lad,
 needing nor words nor other prod
To point his duty; he was glad
 to tread the path his fathers trod.
Week days he worked in wood and field;
 with homely joys he decked his life;
The sword of hate he would not wield,
 nor take a part in cankering strife.
On Sunday in the little choir
 he sang of Peace and brotherly love,
And as his thoughts soared higher and higher,
 they reached unmeasured heights above.

A cry for Freedom rent the Land—
 "Our Country calls, come, come, 'tis War;
Together let us firmly stand;"
 he answered, though his heart beat sore
At leaving home, and kin, and one
 in whose fond eyes too late he read
That life for her had but begun
 with the farewells he sadly said.

A half a century has passed—
 and more—since all those myriads fell;
For he was one of those who cast
 sweet life into a Battle's hell.
The village has become a town,
 brick buildings the old graveyard gird;
Of him who fought not for renown,
 no one now hears a spoken word,
But on the Monument his name
 in gold is lettered with the rest.
Without a sordid thought of fame
 he to his Country gave his best.

Strew flowers, then, Memorial Day
for him, for all who for us fought.
With speech and music honors pay;
teach what our brave defenders taught.
And now our sons are setting out;
the call for Right rings to the sky,
"Our Country! Freedom!" hear them shout,
re-echoing their Grandsires' cry.

FLOWERS FOR BRAVE SOLDIERS

Flowers for brave soldiers,
Flowers for those who gave us
A Country undivided.
Flowers for the dead!

With flags we are marking
Their last earth-dwelling.
Our hearts are bending
In gratitude,
While we are praying
That this our Nation
Pass safe through peril,
Through deadly war.

Flowers for brave soldiers—
Flowers for those who loved us,
Flowers to their memory,
This fair spring day!

HIS MONUMENT

From top to pedestal you scan it lightly—
Capped head to lettered base—and you are smiling.
What see you there to set your lips a-quiver?

An awkward figure cut from ugly granite,
Aye, roughly hewn, as if unhelped by chisel,
This peaceful man of war, sculptured grotesquely.
Still—there is metal in the gun he is holding,
And in the cannon balls piled up before him—
The artist's symbols of a real soldier.
Yet jeer no longer!
Before you is a soldier of the Union,
Crowned with the tears and prayers of many mourners.
The Village set him here for all to honor,
Here, in the centre of their foot-worn common,
Where on long, summer evenings boys at baseball
May gaze and gaze, and make him an example;
A hero they would follow.
Beholding him I see no granite figure,
But face a man who fought to save his country,
Whose heart was pierced when wife, and child and mother
Clung to him closely in that tearful parting.
Yet brave he marched away while flags were fluttering,
Though in his soul he knew that never, never,
Might he again see those he loved so dearly,
Nor look again upon the old white steeple,
Upon the little streets and shabby buildings
Straggling unevenly toward the Common;
Or if he came back, he'd be maimed and battered,
Subject to hateful pity.
Therefore I smile not at the queer, gaunt figure,
The tilted cap—the wide and baggy trousers,
The long loose overcoat, the dangling knapsack,
This is the man who fought to save our country!
Who, in his millions, marched from every village,
From every city of our mighty Nation;
Who heard the drums and trumpets blithely playing—
"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching."
So there it stands—thank-offering of a people—
Whether of rough-hewn stone, or bronze, or marble—
Proving our debt to those who saved the Union,
Pointing the way for those who'd like to follow—
Who to the death would fight were we in peril—
The Soldier's Monument!

Sing of America, sing of our Country!

Land of two oceans, of palm-tree and pine!

Firm as the rock of her towering mountains,

Free as her rivers from Heaven-born fountains,

Unafraid as her eagle,—as true to the line;

Sing of our Country,—your Country and mine!

Sing of America,—self-governed Country!

Dear Land, thou to tyranny never wilt bow;

Ever with thee the oppressed have had haven;

While Freedom droops, thy true sons are not craven;

Look! They are fighting to honor thee now,

With Victory and Peace to bejewel thy brow.

Sing of America,—loving humanity!

"Avenge ye the slaughtered!" Heed ye her decree;

Ye who have reaped of the father's brave sowing,

High hold your flag when the war winds are blowing!

Safe for all men keep the path of the sea;

Secure in their rights help small Nations to be.

Fight for America, noble America!

Liberty, Justice, and Truth—the divine,—

Carrying onward,—her lamp proudly burning—

Craving no empire, intrigue ever spurning,

Over the Earth shall her beacon-light shine!

Fight for our Country, your Country and mine!

THE GRAND ARMY PASSES

Behold a long procession passing proudly,

And yet no glittering pomp adorns its way,

Only the emblems of our States and Nation,

Only the flags that floated on the day

These men, our men, trod upon fields of glory;—

The tattered flags that this Grand Army bore

For the Republic—flags that furled and faded

To their old vividness our hearts restore.

The line of veterans once firm and crowded,

The long, long line is wavering and thin;

With faltering steps Old Age speaks mutely to them

Youth marched abreast when they were mustered in.

Oh, Comrades of the Campfire and the Council,
Oh, Comrades who in peril won your fight!
Honor to you and to your dead companions,
You risked your all for Liberty and Right!
Fraternity and Charity your watchwords,
And Loyalty to this our own dear Land!
Our flag you have, the brazen star, the eagle
Undying symbols for your gallant band.
Look at them, youths and maidens, as they pass you,
While old-time war-tunes break upon the air,
And staring crowds applaud; read ye the message
That from the past these veterans nobly bear,
"Our gift—the gift of Freedom to the Nation,
Our great Republic would entrust to you,
Cherish it fondly, keeping it untarnished,
That, in the Future, looming on our view,
You with the World may share your gift of Freedom."

This is the message that our youth must con,
While the Grand Army, answering its last roll-call
And laying down life's weapons, passes on.

THE HARVARD REGIMENT

We saw the Regiment, alert and strong,
In marching line, on Soldiers' Field today,
Ah! ready they to battle with the wrong;—
This flower of youth—eager and brave and gay.

And we, on-looking, cheered them as they passed,
And we, down-hearted, prayed a silent prayer,
Gazing upon them with a grim forecast,
And many a sad-eyed mother watched them there.

Proudly they turned, and at attention stood,
Or shouldered arms while war-like music thrilled.
"Alas!" we listened in unhappy mood!
"Why should these boys in martial ways be skilled?"

No comfort for our grieving was revealed,

Until we looked across the valiant line
To the old College, far beyond this Field
That honors men who fell at Freedom's shrine.

"Oh, ancient College, that so long hast bred
Son after son to heed his Country's call.
The answer to our questionings is read—
In yonder Tower of your Memorial Hall."

SUMMER IN LONDON

Oh, the noise of Piccadilly—its rumble and its roar!
A tide of life's broad ocean surging toward the shore.
Who once has listened, ever can hear its long refrain
With haunting echo drowning or dirge or flaunting strain.
Who heeds it, in his vision may see a world-throng pass—
And over there the Green Park with laughing lad and lass;
While weary men and women and careless youth go by,
Where windows glow and glitter, and in the evening sky
A crescent moon is watching the laughing lass and lad.
The long, warm London twilight! Happy they are, though sad.
With kiss and tear they are parting. 'Tis late—the rush and roar—
The life of Picadilly is waning—is no more.

Ah, the dark, the cold, the stillness of the trenches in the night,
Where freezing men are crouching in the lull before the fight.
Then for one the calm is broken by the rumble and the roar
Of far-off Picadilly, and in dreams, as oft before,
He sees her who wept at parting. What was that? A whining shell?
Once a man—that huddled horror! He was smiling as he fell.

Summer has returned to London. Now the Green Park gleams anew.
Cheers and tears together mingle—but the breaking heart beats true.
Blare of trumpet!—blood and fire!—so her hero marched away.
Happy lad and lass they parted—now the pitying sky is gray.
Blood and fire! Through its heroes shall a nation live again.
Blare of trumpet! But in silence aching hearts must bear their pain.
Ah, the stillness of the trenches! ah, the rumble and the roar!
Cheers and tears by England offered for the lads who come no more.

SERBIA

Serbia, valiant daughter of the Ages,
Happiness and light should be thy portion!
Yet thy day is dimmed, thine heart is heavy;
Long hast thou endured—a little longer
Bear thy burden, for a fair to-morrow
Soon will gleam upon thy flower-spread valleys,
Soon will brighten all thy shadowy mountains;
Soon will sparkle on thy foaming torrents
Rushing toward the world beyond thy rivers.
Bulgar, Turk and Magyar long assailed thee.
Now the Teuton's cruel hand is on thee
Though he break thy heart and rack thy body,
'Tis not his to crush thy lofty spirit.
Serbia cannot die. She lives immortal,
Serbia—all thy loyal men bring comfort
Fighting, fighting, and thy far-flung banner
Blazons to the world thy high endeavor,
—This thy strife for brotherhood and freedom—
Like an air-free bird unknowing bondage,
Soaring far from carnage, smoke and tumult,
Serbia—thy soul shall live forever!
Serbia, undaunted is, immortal!

A CANADIAN TROOPER TO HIS HORSE

Rest here, my horse, the night is dull,—the blood-sick stars are gone,
Listen, for thou like me wert bred in far Saskatchewan.
And this September night at home, under a happier sky,
The bursting yellow sheaves upon the unbounded prairie lie.
Bread, bread—the staff and stay of life—'tis what the wheatlands yield;
But only death and agony are gathered from this field.

There's respite now, but ah! good friend, before another day,
Although our bodies may be here, we, we, how far away!
We've ridden many a weary mile, together we have fought

For Freedom, honor and the right, and anything we've wrought
Our Country to the Empire will still more closely bind.
Ah! where the reddened maple leaf is fluttering in the wind,
There is my heart, oh noble horse, and may we gallop free
Some day again in Canada, our Land of Liberty.

The night drags on toward the dawn, and far on yonder plain
I hear the throb of musketry, I feel its echoing pain.
I see the star-shells breaking, and nearer than their flare,
A wreath of deadly smoke points out that once a town was there.
Look, brother horse, the night is past, and glorious is the dawn,
Away with peril! We'll ride on for our Saskatchewan.
With day comes hope, and though again the sky with blood is red,
We'll ride against the enemy, for Victory lies ahead,
Aye! for the Empire—Victory that thou shalt help to bring.
And for the Allies Victory—on earth what greater thing!

THE CRY OF THE WOMEN

A new year dawning on a warring world!
And many fight, and many pray for peace;
But yet the roar of battle will not cease,
Still man against his brother man is hurled.

So we who wait—we women in our woe,
Who wait and work—who wait, and work, and weep—
For us there is no rest, for us no sleep,
As our sad thoughts are wandering grim and slow,

Across those dreary fields where far away
Our hero myriads bleed and burn and die,
We lift our hearts toward the pitying sky—
Dawns there no hope upon this New Year's day?

1915

CASSANDRA

Of all the luckless women ever born,
Or ever to be born here on our earth,
Most pitied be Cassandra, from her birth
Condemned to woes unearned by her. Forlorn,
She early read great Ilium's doom, and tried,
Clear-eyed, clear-voiced, her countrymen to warn.
But—she Apollo's passion in high scorn
Had once repelled, and of his injured pride
The God for her had bred this punishment,—
That good, or bad, all things she prophesied
Though true as truth, should ever be decried
And flouted by the people. As she went
Far from old Priam's gates among the crowd,
To save her country was her heart intent.
Pure, fearless, on an holy errand bent,
They called her "mad," who was a Princess proud.
"Alas, the City falls! Beware the horse!
Woe, woe, the Greeks!" Ah! why was she endowed
With this sad gift? Able to pierce the cloud
That veils the future,—in its wasting course
She could not stop the storm. Bitter the pain
When those she loved and trusted—weak resource—
Her prophecies believed not; when the force
Of all her pleading spent itself in vain.
Poor Maid! She knew no greater agony
When dragged a slave in Agamemnon's train.
And though she fell—by Clytemnestra slain—
She smiled on Death who eased her misery.
For oh—what grief to one of faithful heart
It is—to know the evils that must be.
Helpless their doom to make the imperilled see,
Unskilled to shield them from the fatal dart!

SONG OF SPRING

On every bush are roses blooming, everywhere the nightingale
To his love again is warbling plaintively his oft-told tale.
Now within our balmy garden dances the tall cypress tree,
And the poplar never ceases clapping his slim hands in glee.

From the height of every bough-tip you can hear the turtle sing,
With loud voice proclaiming gaily the glad coming of the spring.
On the head of the narcissus gleams as bright his diadem,
As the crown of China's Emperor decked with many a costly gem.
Here the west wind, there the north wind, in true token of their love,
At the feet of yonder rose lay treasure poured down from above.
All the earth with musk is scented, and musk-laden is the air.
Everything proclaims that daily now draws nearer spring the fair.

(Versified from a Persian paraphrase.)

LIFE AND DEATH

"Death after life" shall we sigh as we say it,
Sigh as if death were the end for us all,
Pale at the thought, as in silence we weigh it,
Yield our dull souls to it, bending in thrall?

"Life after death"—look ahead, weakling spirit—
Sure is the way to a world that is ours.
Death is fruition, why then should we fear it?
Death—the fruition of life's budding powers.

MAN OF TODAY

For thee he thought,
The Greek, who by the sea
Lay in his lithe-limbed grace, as dreamily
He gazed upon the sky begemmed with stars,
And pondered mysteries. Ah, few the bars
To stop that lofty spirit in its flight
Compared with those that lock our souls in night.
For thee he thought!
For thee he wrought,
The Tyrian, who of old
His rich web wove of purple dye and gold;
Whose little bark, outstanding many a storm,

To ruder lands the spirit and the form
Of Eastern culture bore. Ah! what we owe
To him today, let sage and poet show.
For thee he wrought!
For thee he fought!
The Saxon, who upheld
The freedom of our race; whose broad-ax felled
Imperial legions in the forest dim
Where loud his war-cry rang—a noble hymn
For manhood's victory over regal pride,
On the sad day when mighty Varus died.
For thee he fought!
For thee He taught!
The Nazarene who bore
The burden of the world, who by the shore
Of Galilee His words of wisdom spake
Whose life a pattern for our life we'd take,
Whose words, re-echoing to remotest time,
Shall lead us on toward a height sublime.
For thee He taught!
Man—man! thou heir of all the ages, thou,
Man of today! uplift thy drooping brow!
Think, work, fight, teach—thine heritage pass on
Tenfold increased. He'll reap who has foregone
Life's little, limited delights,—in measure
As selfless he has sown his earthly treasure.

THE FADING VISION

The vision fades—dome, pinnacle and tower,
All the white beauty of the lake-side dream,
The artist's ideal, the poet's theme
Vanish away. Yet for no fleeting hour

Was this proud fabric raised. The crumbling wall
Entombs not memory's treasure, and we hold
This truth dear as the miser his loved gold,
Dome, pinnacle and tower cannot fall.

No marvel this, that memory holds fast
Such beauty, passing beauty seen before,

The grace and charm of every clime and shore,
Strength of today, the glories of the past,

All met in one great whole—for not alone
Man's hand the wonder wrought, but soaring high
His spirit, like the bird that cleaves the sky,
Knew naught of obstacle from zone to zone.

Deathless his work. Age shall repeat to age
The story of the city by the Lake.
And as the waves that on the near sands break
Reach far-off shores, so on the pictured page

Throughout remotest time, serene in pride,
Wearing her crown of glory, shall be seen
Stately and fair, Chicago, Western queen,
With all the Nations gathered at her side.

Gladly they met, each teaching and each taught,
Light-skinned or dark-skinned from the West or East.
Peoples unlike, as at a loving feast,
Distant no more, united in a thought.

Columbia! this thy lesson, learn it well—
The comity of Nations; this the plan
Of God from time's first dawn, that man with man,
Bound in one brotherhood in peace should dwell.

Great Voyager, whose caravels outsped
Man's swiftest fancy in those earlier days!
If, looking far beyond the curving bays
Of this new world thy glowing spirit read

That here there stretched a mighty continent
Where a sure haven for mankind should be,
Small didst thou count thy peril on the sea,
Well knowing what thy sufferings had meant.

For it was thine to turn toward the West
The worn old-world, and westward as the star
Of Power moves, nor tyranny nor war
Its fires sustains—it shines for the oppressed.

The vision fades—dome, pinnacle and tower—
Yet fades not like the substance of a dream—

Nation to Nation, State to State shall seem
Drawn to each other closer through its power.

1893

THE TITANIC

Out of the misty North
A stealthy foeman stole;
Far from the haunted Pole
On the wide sea went he forth,

And he met a giant ship
As he scoured the sea for toll
It cannot reach its goal
Crushed in his icy grip.

"Of every four just three"
This was his deadly dole.
Unseen he called the roll
Ah! a cold grave is the Sea.

Yet the Sea is not the end,
And Life is not the whole.
Over each heroic soul
Shall Eternity extend.

IF LOVE WERE ALL

If Love were all, how dark the world!
What sorrow for the stricken heart!
If Love were all, with Love grown cold—
No tempest raging bleak and bold,
Its icy fury ever hurled
As madly as the storms that dart
Across the soul when Love is dead.
Poor soul, on bitter passion fed,

Seeing in Earth or Heaven—no bliss,
When Love has died in Love's last kiss.
If Love were all!

If Love were all, how fair the earth!
What joy in every heart-throb here!
If Love were all, and Love were kind,
Love's message, blown on every wind,
Thrilling the soul, would give small worth
To cringing caution, or the jeer
Of those who murmur "Love must die"
When Love's alight from eye to eye,
Life is a happy holiday.
"Where's Winter?" Ah, 'twere ever May,
If Love were all!

THE ROVER

That it be love, I dare not say,
I only know when he's away,
Dark as the night, so dark the day.

But still he'll rove, and still I'll try
Some light to see in yon grim sky.

For I will prove if power there be
To lead him through the night to me
In that soul-star,—fair Constancy.

AH! LITTLE LAKE

Ah! little lake, though fair thou art,
A sapphire flashing to the sky,
Thy charm is only for the eye,
Thy beauty cannot hold my heart.

Green hill-sides bending to thy shore
Gleam clear in the autumnal light,
While far above, Monadnock's height
Keeps rugged guard thy waters o'er.

And yet these very beauties cloy;
As in a prison I am bound,
Though fair the walls that gird me round,
My housemate is no longer joy.

Thy loveliness breeds discontent,
For far my foolish heart would be,
It longs for the unquiet sea,
And with desire is sorely rent.

Hateful the walls that me debar
From happier things that haunt me so,
Even my weary thoughts are slow
To reach the great, great world afar.

I half believe there is no world
Those cruel hill-tops there beyond.
Oh—for the wizard Merlin's wand!
That all these mountain curves uncurled.

I might behold the shore I love,
Might hear the roaring of the tide,
Might see the ocean, reaching wide
And boundless as the sky above.

One hour beside that sea-kissed beach
Quick throbbing to its love's caress,
Would yield to me more happiness
Than a whole life-time here could teach.

SEVERUS SPEAKS

"For nearly eighteen years upon my head
The crown of Empire heavily has set.
The burden on my shoulders I have borne
Of an estate encumbered far and wide

With debts I had to pay. Ah! everywhere
Murmurs, revolts, or wars assailed my throne.
Now quiet comes—even in Britain here,
The most disturbing Province of them all.
Yet I must go, the profits I must leave
To others to enjoy—to hold with ease
What I with bitter travail have obtained.
Peace there must be, and mutual amity,
The one support to hold the Empire firm,
To keep the Glory of the Empire bright.
Discord would be the ruin of the pile,
That my poor hands have built so painfully.
Only when Peace prevails may we behold
How small things grow to greatness.

—Now I die

And all the issue of the coming days
I leave to my successor, and my son,
Though he has been a cruel son to me.
Bassanius I name your Emperor,
The new-made Antoninus, who long tried
To get that title by the sword,
Who sought my death, the dangers knowing not
That always must surround a diadem,
Forgetting that the places of the great
Are guarded well by Envy and by Fear.
Blind is ambition, for it cannot see
That though a sovereign's power large may seem
To others, by himself the things possessed
Are counted small enough, aye small they *are*.
For titles cannot make a happy man.
While his thin thread of life must waver so,
His might is laid upon a weak support.
So men may point to me, and say 'Behold—
A man who once was all things in this world,
Yet now is nothing. For like meaner men
He paid his debt to nature. His exploits
He left behind.' Aye, friends I leave my deeds
For you to register. Reproach or praise
The shadowing pencil of oblivion
At last will blot. And yet that all the care
That I have taken for the general good
May bring forth happy fruits when I am dust,
This would I make my one, my last request,
—Assist my sons with counsel and with aid,
That they may rule according to the law,

And you obey according to the right.
So, through you both—my legions and my sons—
The Empire shall be held in high respect."

And then the dying Emperor feebly turned
Toward the urn wherein so soon must lie
His ashes—and he cried "So shalt thou hold
What the whole world one time could not contain."
Thus died Severus.

TOWN AND COUNTRY

About the country they may talk who will,
Who praise it ever to the town's despite.
Let him extol the charms of wood and hill
Who finds them peerless. None disputes his right.

For me the town! Each well-worn footway old
To me is dearer than your grass-grown lane.
Not all who struggle here contend for gold;
Green-growing things quit not the soul of pain.

"God made the country." Ay, and God made man.
Working through man His power He displays,
And in the city's mazes His great plan
Is writ as clear as in calm country ways.

STRENGTH RENEWED

Antæus, as the ancient poets sing,
Though in his contest with the God of Power
Doomed to be conquered, stayed the fatal hour,
And the onlookers set to wondering.
For overborne, to Earth he'd closely cling,
Until he rose again, a mighty tower.
Thus could the Earth with strength her lover dower,

And very near to victory could bring.
So when I feel thy tender hand in mine,
I, too, dear love, against the world could stand,
Courage divine comes with thy lightest touch.
Afar from thee Antæus-like I pine,
But strength returns now as I clasp thy hand.
Ah! that so slight a thing should mean so much.

AT MIAMI

Here, where the proud hibiscus blooms in flame,
Where swaying palms nod lightly to the sea,
Where each azalea towers—a stately tree—
And orange blossoms charm, today I came
Upon a little flower unknown to fame,
Half hid in the scant sward, white as this shell
From yonder beach, and I can hardly tell
What drew me to it, murmuring its name.

"Bred in cool meadows, vagrant from the North,
Fair Dewberry, what art thou doing here?
Or chance, or purpose started thee to roam?
And yet whatever power sent thee forth,
Still it is thine to call the sudden tear,
To stir the trembling heart with thoughts of home."

WHICH

Who then is rich, who poor? I'll tell you now
Of one, a meagre life who had to live,
Wear dingy garb, and scarcely could allow
Himself what men call comfort; yet to give
Was his delight,—to give full-heartedly.
Though Fate had hampered him, he always knew
Some one still poorer. In humility
He thus gave hope to him who had small view

Of happier things;—solace to him who wept;—
And to the beaten courage to endure.
He shared his little with the starved, and kept
His best for those who needed most. Though poor,
By giving he grew richer day by day
In all that brightens life's uncertain way.

There was another who had never known
A wish unsatisfied. For everything
That luxury could offer was his own.
Thus all that learning, all that wealth could bring
Adorned his life. The many him would praise,—
For this world loves the prosperous,—and still
Close to himself he hugged his all. To raise
A helping hand he never had the will.
He never heard the cries of men in need.
Of all he had he would not give a part.
For "I" and "mine" was ever his one creed.
No balm had he for any aching heart.
Mean was his life (as was the other's great)
Despite the splendor of his high estate.
And now in yonder world I wonder which—
For both are dead—is counted poor—or rich.

THE BLESSED DEAD

They loved life, even as we, who went away
From their dear dwelling-place to one unknown
To us who linger here. They could not stay,
Nor we go with them, so they went alone.

Although their beating hearts with ours kept time,
Although their clinging hands we fondly held,
We could not walk the path they had to climb,
Hardly we heard the death-call when it knelled.

Trustful, or fearful of the way ahead,
They had to journey from this throbbing life,
And we—we know they are the blessed dead,
For they have gone away from pain and strife.

We cannot see the land where they have gone.
Our eyes are dim, and they are hid in light,
But we are following them toward the dawn,
Who knows when it will break upon our sight!

OAK-LEAVES

Crinkled oak-leaves, twinkling in the sun,
Splashed by midday showers, dripping cold—
Serrate oak-leaves, silvered by the sun
That has brushed yon dull brown grass with gold.

Green and crinkled oak leaves, tremble now—
Strong you would be, strong would be and bold,
Ah! green oak-leaves, you are trembling now—
By the saucy wind deceived—cajoled!

Trembling oak leaves—you are soon to fall,
Soon to hide the earth with yellowing mould
Twinkling, crinkling oak-leaves, soon you'll fall
For the autumn sun is shining cold.

SELF-SATISFIED

Well satisfied with all his own, he stands
Holding a trembling balance in his hands;
On one scale—wealth and ease, men's praises, too—
Whatever charms the soul, and keeps it true.
But on the other scale—lo—the foul street
Where pallid children play, where poor folk greet,
And crowded houses dirty, dimly lit,
On whose dull walls all misery is writ,
Houses wherein the herded cannot fight
The ambushed evil lurking day and night.
Has he—contented one—who counts his gain,
Balanced the cost—the wretchedness and pain

Of those who help him hoard his heap of gold?
Ah, human life may be too dearly sold!
For see, the one scale weighs the other down.
His gold, his ease, his honors—by Heaven's frown
Withered to nothing, now, behold he stands—
Broken his scales—reaching imploring hands.

MY VIGIL

Companioned by the lonely hours,
My vigil with the stars I keep,—
The happy stars that never weep,—
The wakeful stars that never sleep,
Spirit of me that frets and cowers,
Ah, what am I, that I should be
And breathe in this Infinity?

Unburdened of the weight of self,
Toward the highest heights I am borne,
Below lies Earth, begrimed and worn,
Far, far from me her praise, her scorn,
Her joys, her woes, her loss, her pelf,
One with the happy stars am I!
Our limits the unbounded sky!

TO MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE

Dear Lady of Tranquillity, Ah! lightly have the years
Their music on thy heart-strings played, and all the smiles and tears
That mark the joy of living, that sound the depths of pain
For thee make one great harmony—a happy heart's refrain.

(On her eighty-sixth birthday.)

THE SOARER

There soars a warbler toward high Heaven,
His course seems sure and straight;—
So speeds an arrow from the bow-string,
Yet who can read his fate!

For while he carols like a seraph
Bound for a radiant star
Mayhap the fowler's eye, relentless,
Has doomed him from afar.

A longer life the crawling snail hath
Than thou—O wanderer bright—
Ah, let the sluggard crawl in safety,
Thine is the realm of light!

Like thee a soaring soul's in peril,
Yet its one hour is worth
A whole Eternity of grovelling
Closer to grimy earth.

A FANCY

The world of dreams is all my own,
Wherein I wander—free, alone;—
And each weird, fervid fantasy
Is dearer than earth's joys to me.
The waking world I share with you;
And yours, as mine, is the ocean's blue.
For us both spring's early flowers are fair,
Or the cold stars gleam through the frosty air.

But in the world of dreams I rove
Over sunny fields, or in shaded grove,—
Such beauty your eyes never saw—
And all is mine without let or law.
Ah! the hopes and fears that come and go
With my flying fancy, none may know;

Though unsubstantial, it seems
My real world—this world of dreams.

THE SHRIEKING WOMAN AT MARBLEHEAD

'Twas a Spanish galleon sailed the seas,—
Two centuries since have rolled—
Laden with silver and gems to please
Gay dames and gallants bold.

But villainous pirates seized the ship
As homeward she was bound;
Ah, she has made her last long trip
For they ran her soon aground.

From Oakum Bay into Marblehead
They brought one lady fair,—
Her husband, alas, and his crew are dead,
And her they will not spare.

Loud, loud she shrieked in the pirates' arms,
"Oh, save me—Jesu, save!"
Cruel echo mocked at her wild alarms,
As they dug her a nameless grave.

Yet once a year when the night has come
That saw her dreadful death,
You can hear her above the ocean's boom
Shriek out with her dying breath.

THE HUGUENOT LOVERS

Sorrowful pleading on her face is written
With love commingled, and my heart throbs fast,
Flooded with currents of a deep emotion
Stirred by the memory of that awful past.

Note the sad gaze of him who bends above her,
What say his eyes in answer to her own?
What did he think as tenderly he kissed her?
What was the meaning of his whispered tone?
Spoke he of honor's claim poor love's outweighing,
Or did her circling arms so well enfold
That the white kerchief wearing-badge of safety—
He passed the lurking foe with spirit bold.

Ah, they are vanished now—the maid and lover,
Their history the wisest cannot tell.
Mayhap upon that night of cruel slaughter,
Eager to meet the zealot's hate he fell.
Mayhap in some fair corner of the Kingdom,
Under the gentler rule of brave Navarre,
They showed the kerchief to their children's children,
And told the story of the unholy war.

TO JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE

Gay Summer sees the flowering
Of buds that were the gift of Spring;
And Winter counts the ripened sheaves
That Autumn harvested. Who grieves
When he at length has won the race,
Or backward then his way would trace?

Oh, honored Poet, Wit, and Sage,
This birthday marks an open page,
And here before its record's writ,
These words we would inscribe on it.
"Thou, upon whom thy years fourscore
So lightly sit, thou hast a store
Of memories such as they alone
May have whose hearts all truth have known.
Now may this year bring thee no less
Than all the past of happiness!"

(On his eightieth birthday.)

WEED OR FLOWER

"'Tis but a common thing," one coldly said,
"Nay, call it not a flower—this little weed,
If plucking it, I kill it, root and seed—
Better the world were if it lay there dead."

"Ah—rather let it live!" a second cried,
"Weed it may be, and yet it has its use,
Here in its healing essence its excuse
For blooming lies, and here its only pride."

"Destroy it not!" another pled, "Behold
This tapering leaf—this soft and tender green,
Upon my canvas it shall bloom serene—
This tiny chalice-fleck of living gold."

Then one bent over it, "Ah, flowret bright!
For only flowers in this garden grow,—
His earth, His sunshine made thee, o'er thee blow
His winds, frail thing! In thee He shows His might."

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON (IN MEMORY)

Sage of the silver pen!
Wherever thy thought was heard,
Thou wert a leader of men.
Poet of honored word!
Knight of the eagle glance,
Piercing the depths of wrong,
"Justice" thy cry, and thy lance
True in its aim, and strong.

Man of the ruddy heart
Beating warm for our kind!
Thine was the hero's part;
Eyes wert thou to the blind:
Thou a staff to the weak,
Here we our tribute lay—

Homage thou didst not seek—
Twined with a wreath of bay,
A garland woven of love,
Woven of love and tears,
Pure as the note of a dove,
Voicing thy peaceful years.

(Read at the Memorial Meeting Nov. 20, 1911.)

LIGHTER VERSE

FRIGHTENED

Today I had the awfulest time,
Dear mother, in the wood.
That hill out there we were to climb,
And we'd been very good.
But nurse was walking up the hill,
When little Anne and I,
We had to stop and stand quite still,
And Anne began to cry.

For something moved behind the trees,
We felt so all alone—
Said I to Anne, "Stop crying, please,
I'll hit it with a stone."
Cried Anne, "Oh, listen, hear it growl."
Said I, "I'm not afraid
Of bears or lions." "Now don't scowl.
You look so cross," she said.
So then I had to smile and smile, for Anne was crying all the while.
And if we didn't *hear* a bear, I'm sure, dear mother, one was there.

Boys always must take care of girls,
You see you've told me so.
That's why I tried to pat Anne's curls,
And walked with her real slow.
But when we heard nurse calling out,

"Come, children, come along!"
"Come, Nurse," you should have heard me shout—
Anne says my voice is strong.
"Run, Anne," I cried, "I'm almost five, and I'll kill any bear alive."
And if we didn't *see* a bear, I truly think that one was there.

How glad I was when Nurse turn'd round,
For everything seemed queer.
The trees looked strange, and then that sound
We didn't like to hear.
Nurse laughed when we had told her all
About the bear we saw.
"I came as quick's I heard you call,
And it's against the law
For bears to live where people stay. They are five hundred miles away."
But if we didn't *meet* a bear, I'm sure that *almost* one was there.

THE CHRISTMAS LETTER

I'm always glad when Christmas comes, and yet I'd like it better;
If mother wouldn't bother me to write a Christmas letter
To uncle John and Cousin Kate and dear old Grand-aunt Gray,
And all whose presents come to me from places far away.
Of course I love my presents, and if givers should forget her,
No little girl, my mother says, need write a Christmas letter.
For oh! my ink makes awful blots, though I try to do real well,
And when you write them out of school, all words are hard to spell.
I mean to mind my mother, she's so kind I would not fret her,
But when she says, "Stop playing, dear. Come, write this Christmas letter,"
That's just the thing I hate to hear, and if I dared, I wouldn't
Remember how to hold a pen, I'd make believe I couldn't.

A VICTIM

My Auntie has a camera, and when I'm out at play
And see her coming with it, I try to hide away.

For oh, it is so bothersome to hear her, with a laugh,
Call, "Stand just where you are, dear; I'll take a photograph."

Sometimes, an angry lion, I have just begun to roar,
And all the children run from me to sneak behind the door,
When Auntie to our forest comes—why does she stop our fun?
I'd like to shoot that camera there with my wooden gun.

Perhaps, a fire engine, I am rushing to a fire,
While people loudly call for help as flames rise higher and higher.
I hurry toward the hydrant here, for oh! the flames are hot!
When Auntie with her camera cries, "What a fine snapshot!"

But then it doesn't seem to snap, so I must be polite,
And when she says, "Oh please, stand still, the sun is not just right,"
I have to pull up where I am, and see that house burn down,
For Auntie doesn't understand, even when I twist and frown.

She only says, "Don't squirm, my pet! Oh, what a cunning pose!
Your scowl is better than a smile,"—so that's the way it goes—
A p'liceman or an admiral, no matter what I am,
I have to face that camera as quiet as a lamb.

JACK FROST

Oh! it is little Margery who has a garden-bed,
Wherein grow purple pansies and geraniums white and red,
With feverfew and dahlias, and delicate pink phlox,
And grandmother's fair favorites, old-fashioned hollyhocks.

One night we feared Jack Frost might come to blight the tender flowers—
We almost felt his cruel breath in the early evening hours;
So Margery took coverings and spread them, thick and warm,
To shield the flowers, as blankets wrap a sleeping baby's form.

Then in the morning, when we looked across the dewy grass,
And saw the traces Jack Frost leaves where he is wont to pass—
For each spreading tree and slender bush had felt his chill caress,
And some had drooped, and some had blushed in crimson loveliness—

We hastened to the garden-bed, and there, in bright array,

The little flowers looked blithely up to greet the smiling day.
Safe hid from Jack Frost's piercing breath, he never saw them there,
And the flowers still bloom for Margery, to thank her for her care.

A CURIOSITY

I knew a little boy, not very long ago,
Who was as bright and happy as any boy you know.
He had an only fault, and you will all agree
That from a fault like this a boy himself might free.

"I wonder who is there, oh, see! now, why is this?"
And "Oh, where are they going?" and "Tell me what it is?"
Ah! "which" and "why" and "who," and "what" and "where" and "when,"
We often wished that never need we hear those words again.

He seldom stopped to think; he almost always knew
The answer to the questions that around the world he threw.
To children seeking knowledge a quick reply we give,
But answering what he asked was pouring water through a sieve.
Yet you'll admit his fate was as sad as it was strange.
Our eyes we hardly trusted, who slowly saw him change.
More curious grew his head, stemlike his limbs, and hark!
He was at last a mere interrogation-mark!

THE FIRST LIE

I'm sure I did not break this cup;
It just fell down,—I know it did—
For I was only climbing up,
 Why do they keep the cake-box hid?—
I wanted such a little bit!
And then I heard that creaking door,
I can't tell what it was I hit,
Nor how that cup got on the floor.

The shelf it stood on was too high,
That cup my mother loved the most!
Oh dear! I never told a lie,
And mother whispered, "Do not boast,"
The day I said I never could.
(But there's that broken cup!)—and then
I promised that I never would—
So—I'll not tell a lie—*again*.

THE PARASOL

You are the loveliest parasol
I ever saw,—and all my own,—
What frilly frills! I feel as tall
As mother now. Here! take my doll.
Dolls are for children—ladies grown
Have parasols, and fans, and rings,
And all those pretty, shiny things.

Nurse calls you "sunshade," but I think
That is too plain a word, for see!
You are so satiny and pink
And there is such a curly kink
Here in your handle, there could be
No name too fine, I love you so,
I'll take you everywhere I go.

Next Sunday when to church I walk,

Above my head I'll hold you high,
Oh! how the other girls will talk,
And maybe some of them will mock,
"How proud she feels," as I pass by—
I'd hold you up, straight down the aisle,
If only people wouldn't smile.

A MODERN GRANDMOTHER

I want to see a grandmother like those there used to be,
In a cosy little farm-house, where I could go to tea;
A grandmother with spectacles and a funny, frilly cap,
Who would make me sugar cookies, and take me on her lap,
And tell me lots of stories of the days when she was small,
When everything was perfect—not like today at all.

My grandmother is "grandma," and she lives in a hotel,
And when they ask "What is his age?" she smiles and will not tell.
Says she doesn't care to realize that she is growing old;
Then whispers—"But you're far too big a boy for me to hold."
Her dresses shine and rustle, and her hair is wavy brown,
And she has an automobile, that she steers, herself, down town.

My grandmother is pretty. "Do I love her?" Rather—yes;
Our Norah calls her stylish, and on the whole I guess
She's better than the other kind, for once, when I was ill,
She helped my mother nurse me, and read to me until
I fell asleep; and stayed with me, and wasn't tired, and then
She played nine holes of golf with me when I got out again.
Yet, because I've never seen one, just once I want to see
A real old-fashioned grandmother, like those there used to be.

SIGNS FOR THE SERIOUS

He has a taste that's superfine who flouts at every subway sign,
He reckons not that some there be, who cannot tell, unless they see

Spelled plain before them on the wall, what things their own they ought to call
For instance, when I come to town, whom you may dub a country clown—
How should I know what things to buy, if not a subway sign were nigh
To show—the pills I ought to take my all-consuming thirst to slake;—
The hair restorer that will soothe my infant son with his first tooth;—
The ruddy catsup that is sure all family jars and ills to cure;—
The dollar watch that daintily we'll serve, wound-up, for early tea;—
The window-screens that will not hide our failings from the country-side;—
What breakfast-food is our true friend, the dime cigars that I should send
My wife to cure her racking cough. The hooks and eyes that won't come off
Ah! hats, and soaps, and castor-oil, and cocoa that we need not boil;—
And well-made suits and patent soup, and phonographs.—But what a dupe
Of every city tradesman I, if all these vendibles I'd try
To purchase by my native wit! Yet what the subway "best" has writ
In flaming words, with weird device—that make I mine,—and pay the price.

TRIMMING

When your father, long ago, tried to train you—and you know
He thought mornings meant for school, and not for swimming—
How your heart beat loud in dread as relentlessly he said,
"You'll *remember*—when you've had another trimming."

When your daughter buys a hat, and you're wondering thereat,
As before the glass she stands, its beauty hymning;
Ah! the mischief in her eyes, as she pleads, "Show no surprise
At the *cost*. One has to pay for *pretty trimming*."

When the butcher brings your bill, and you stare at it until
Your tongue with fervid words is fairly brimming,
Then you hear him meekly say, as your anger you display,
"It seems high, because there's so much *waste* in trimming."

So when politicians try your votes to beg or buy
With their sophistry—your common sense that's dimming—
Just *remember* then the *cost* (and the *waste*, should all be lost),
Of the smooth-tongued, wordy trimmer's *pretty trimming*.

THE ANNEX

"Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage"
High halls do not a College make, nor book-lined shelves a sage.
So might I follow haltingly these olden words to show
That even in this newer home the Annex may not know
A greater zeal for learning than the old house could bestow.
But comparisons are odious, so I'll merely try to say
That cherished deep within the hearts of many here today
Is the memory of that early home in the classic Appian Way.
There first did the young Annex (whose real Christian name
Contains as many syllables as it has liens on fame)
Win laurels even brighter than its friends had hoped to claim.
And there, too, in their search, for intellectual recreation
Its students formed the short-lived *Appian Way Association*
Of which this later Club is but an "Idler" imitation.
Just where the interloper dwelt was long a mystery.
In the past to Harvard students and to townsmen equally,
Till they cried, "There is no Annex—believe we only what we see!"
Now the Annex and its mission every year are better known,
From the smallest of beginnings strong and powerful it has grown:
Only Harvard Freshmen speak of it in supercilious tone,
Although custom would forbid us as we are passing near,
To salute the ancient building with a rousing Annex cheer,
We need no sign like this to prove that still we hold it dear.
Now the students who have profited by their foreseeing care
Fondly thank the Annex founders who knew not the word "despair."
Its best home was the hearts of those who planned the structure fair.

(*Read at a College celebration.*)

A LIBERTY BOND

A liberty bond! What a queer contradiction!
Although truth, as you've heard, may be stranger than fiction.
For Liberty should from all fetters release us,
While bonds hold one fast, whether pauper or Cræsus.
Yet a Liberty Bond—I'd advise you to buy it—
Will ensure you your freedom—you'll see when you try it.

'Twill aid you to conquer foes cruel, despotic,
'Twill help save your Country, come, be patriotic!
A Liberty Bond—I'd advise you to buy one—
Will ensure you your freedom—rejoice when you try one!

A HERO

Like many another I have crossed
Oftener than once the broad Atlantic,
And—feeling qualms when tempest-tossed,
Have shuddered at the waves gigantic,
Fearing that really nevermore
I'd find myself again ashore.

Then when—upset—and scarce awake,
In moments of perturbed reflection,
My wandering thoughts would slowly take
Time and again the same direction.
I'd think of that adventurous man,
Who crossed the sea—first of my clan.

'Tis not for me to hope to find
Upon my family tree's broad branches
Ancestors wholly to my mind;
I know that I am taking chances
In digging them up from the past
To deck this hardy tree at last.

Indeed I would not waste my breath,
And even less my ink and paper,
To prove from Queen Elizabeth
Is my descent (*some* cut this caper),
Nor in King Alfred root my tree—
Here's jocund genealogy.

A Governor or two, of course,—
Or even a Colonial preacher
I'd not despise,—nor yet perforce
A good Selectman, stern of feature,
Provided they came early here.
Such ancestors to me are dear.

Yet of them all the man I hold
A mighty hero—none seems greater—
Is he—that honest man and bold—
Whether Psalm-singer, or bear-baiter,
First of my name to reach the strand,
Of this almost unpeopled land.

He may have been of high estate,
He may have been a simple yeoman,
Undaunted by an adverse fate,
Brave was he as the bravest Roman.
At naught he quailed, his heart was stout,
When he for the New World set out.

Compared with mine—a little skiff
His boat was, on the untracked ocean,
Comforts were scarce, and breezes stiff—
No luxuries,—though I've a notion
Billows were just as high as now,
While Danger sat upon the prow.

Just where would be his landing-place.
He hardly knew when waves he tossed on
While my woes at sea efface
By merely murmuring, "Home is Boston."
Yet he had left his all behind
In the new world his all to find.

"R-E-E-D"—"E-I"—"E-A,"
Just how we spell it need not matter.
The name we honor here today
Each clan may claim with equal clatter
British, euphonious, clear and short,
Rede me a name of better sort!

Read at a meeting of a Genealogical Society.

THE RIVALS

Said the Bicycle to the Automobile:

"How high and mighty and gay you feel;
Yet I can remember the day when I
Would let no other one pass me by
Cart horse and roadster and racehorse too,
Far ahead of them all I flew.
Now my tires are unpumped and my warning bell
The attention of nobody can compel.

"Though you maim your thousands where I hurt one,
Though ten times my farthest is your day's run,
Still I have been learning while lying here,
That a rival's coming for you to fear.
I have heard them talk of a wonderful thing,
That can fly in the air like a bird on the wing,
That can carry a man over land, over sea;
In a twinkling he is where he wishes to be.

"So swiftly it speeds, in a week and a day
One may girdle the globe, I have heard them say,
While you are contented from dawn to dark
With a few score miles to have made your mark."
The giant, throughout his quivering frame,
Felt the truth that was mixed with his rival's blame.
"I'll never be such a clod as you,"
He sputtered as off on the road he flew;
And his end the Bicycle never knew.

FROM THE ODES OF HORACE

TO MÆCENAS. III-29

Mæcenas, scion of Tyrrhenian rulers,
A jar, as yet unpierced, of mellow wine
Long waits thee here, with balm for thee made ready
And blooming roses in thy locks to twine.

No more delay, nor always look with favor

The sloping fields of Æsula upon;
Why gaze so long on ever marshy Tibur
Near by the mount of murderer Telegon?

Give up thy luxury—it palls upon thee—
Thy tower that reaches yonder lofty cloud;
Cease to admire the smoke, the wealth, the uproar,
And all that well hath made our Rome so proud.

Sometimes a change is grateful to the rich man,
A simple meal beneath a humble roof
Has often smoothed from care the furrowed forehead,
Though unadorned that home with purple woof.

Bright Cepheus now his long-hid fire is showing,
Now flames on high the angry lion-star,
Now Procyon rages, and the sun revolving
Brings back the thirsty season from afar.

Seeking a cooling stream, the weary shepherd
His languid flock leads to the shady wood
Where rough Sylvanus reigns, yet by the brookside.
No truant breeze disturbs the solitude.

Ah, who but thee is busy now with statecraft?
Thou plannest for Rome's weal, disquieted,
Lest warring Scythian, Bactrian, or Persian
Should'st plunge the city into awful dread.

A prudent deity in pitchy darkness
The issue of futurity conceals,
And smiles when man beyond the right of mortals,
His fear about the time to come reveals.

Thou should'st concern thee only with the present,
All else progresses as the river flows,
Which gliding at one time in middle channel
Toward the Tuscan Sea unruffled goes;

Or at another time, herds, trees, and houses,
And broken rocks to one destruction drags,
When wild the flood provokes the quiet current
With noise from neighboring woods and distant
crag.

Happy he lives, and of himself is master,
That man who can at night with truth declare,
"I have lived to-day, to-morrow let the Father
Make as he will my sky or dark or fair,

"It is not his to render vain and worthless
My happy past—the bliss has dearer grown
That the fleet-footed hour carried with it;
The joys that once have been are still my own.

"Now upon me, again on others smiling,
Fortune rejoices in her savage trade
Of shifting thus at will uncertain honors,
As stubbornly her mocking game is played.

"I praise her when she stays, but if she leave me,
Fluttering her airy wings in hasty flight,
I yield her what she gave, and wrapped in virtue,
In dowerless Poverty find my delight.

"Although the mast may crack beneath the South
wind,
I will not rush with many a doleful prayer
To barter thus my vows, lest all my treasure
From Tyre and Cyprus should become a share

"Of what the greedy sea has in possession;
Nay! then, protected in my two-oared boat,
With favoring winds, and with twin Pollux guiding
Safe through the Ægean tempests I will float."

*(This version won, in 1890, the Sargent Prize, offered annually to students of
Harvard University and Radcliffe College.)*

TO LEUCONOË. I-11

Seek not to learn—Leuconoë,—a mortal may not know—
What term of life on you or me our deities bestow.
The Babylonian soothsayer consult not; better bear
Whatever comes, whether to you more winters Jove shall spare,
Or whether this may be the last, grinding the Tuscan sea

On yonder rocks. Even as we talk, time envious shall flee.
Filter your wine, be wise, and clip your hopes to life's brief span.
Then seize today; to-morrow trust as little as you can.

TO NEOBULÉ. III-12

Ah! Unhappy are the maidens, who love's game are kept from playing,
Nor in mellow wine may wash away their cares;
Who, scared by scolding uncles' tongues, their terror are displaying,—
But from you, though, Neobulé, Cupid bears
Your basket and your webs, yet all the zeal you have been showing
For industrious Minerva, is the prey
Of fair Hebrus, Liparæan, when his shoulders, oiled and glowing,
He has bathed in Tiber's waters. Let me say
As a horseman, than Bellerophon he's really something greater;
Never worsted in a hand-fight, nor a race.
Skilled to shoot the flying stag-herd in the open,—swift he later
Snares the boar, close-hidden in a shady place.

THE HARDY YOUTH. III-2

The hardy youth, my friends, in bitter warfare
To narrow poverty must learn to bend,
And, for his spear a horseman to be dreaded,
Courageous Parthians into flight must send.
And he must try all dangerous adventures,
His life out in the open he must pass;
The warring tyrant's wife and growing daughter
Him spying from their hostile walls, "Alas,"
They sigh—for fear the royal husband,
Unskilled in warlike arts, should dare attack
This lion, fierce to touch, whom bloody anger
Into the midst of slaughter has dragged back.
'Tis sweet and fit to perish for one's country,
Death follows fast upon the man who flees,
Nor spares the coward backs of youth retreating,

Nor saves them trembling on their timid knees,
Valor, of shabby failure all unconscious,
Gleams with untarnished honor where she stands,
Assuming not, nor laying down her emblems,
As now the gaping populace demands.
Valor, when opening Heaven to those, who dying
Deserve not death, by paths no other knows
Points out the way, and still while she is soaring,
Her scorn for crowds and humid earth she shows.
And there's a sure reward for loyal silence.
Him I'll forbid under my roof to sit
Who has divulged the Elusinian mysteries,
Nor in my fragile shallop shall he flit
Often great Jupiter, when once neglected,
The wicked near the innocent has put,
But punishment to overtake the guilty
Has rarely failed, though she is lame of foot

TO THE STATE. I-14

Oh! Ship of State! fresh billows to sea will bear thee back,
Then turn about and bravely toward the harbor tack,
Thou see'st that thy naked sides defending oarsmen lack.

Behold! thy mast lies shattered before the swift south wind,
Listen! the yards are creaking, the ropes no longer bind,
Strength to endure the boisterous waves thy keel can hardly find.

Now all thy sails are ragged; the gods are swept away
To whom, borne down by peril, thy quaking soul would pray.
Though lofty be thy lineage, its pride is vain today.

The power and name thou boastest are now of no avail,
Thy stern is gayly painted, and still thy seamen quail,
Beware lest thou art made the sport of every idle gale.

Ah! dearly loved, my country; my fond yet heavy care!
Thy discords lately wearied me, but now I breathe a prayer
That thee the tides of faction, the glittering rocks may spare.

TO APOLLO. I-31

What prays the poet of enshrined Apollo?
What is he asking for with lifted hands,
Pouring a fresh libation from his flagon?—
Not fertile crop from rich Sardinian lands,—
Not the fair herds of sultry, damp Calabria,—
Not even Indian ivory and gold;—
Nor meadows that the Liris, silent river,
With sluggish flow has nibbled, as it rolled.
Let those whom Fortune has endowed with vineyards,
With the Calenian knife their grapevines trim,
Let the rich merchant from his golden goblet
Drink wine by Syrian traffic bought for him.
Dear to the very gods he three times yearly,
Yes four times, travels the Atlantic Sea
Unharm'd. But I—I feed myself on olives,
Ay, succory and soft mallows are for me.

Let one enjoy sound health and my possessions—
Son of Latona, grant to me, I pray,
With a sane mind an old age all unsullied,
Nor let my gift—my lyre—be taken away.

TO DIANA. III-22

Diana, Protector of mountain and wood,
Who when three times invoked, hast so well understood,
And young mothers in child-birth hast rescued from death,
Goddess, triply endowed!
Let this tree overhanging my house here, this pine
Be for thee, that each year I shall consecrate thine,
Happy still—with the blood of a boar, whose last breath,
Planned a side-long attack.

TO MELPOMENE. IV-3

Oh, him whom at birth you with favor regarded
Melpomene! never an Isthmian game
Shall render renowned, though he's skilled as a boxer,
Nor shall a swift horse lead him onward to fame.
Though a victor he rides in a chariot Achaian,
Not him shall the fortune of war ever show.
In the Capitol wearing the garland of laurel
Because the proud threatenings of kings he laid low.
But every stream flowing over the country
Fertile Tibur around, and so every grove
With its thick-growing leaves shall ennoble the poet,
In Æolian song he ennobled shall prove.
The offspring of Rome, that is Queen among cities,
Me have deemed as a bard to be worthy a place
In her glorious choir, and less and less keenly
Already the sharp bite of Envy I trace.
Oh—Pieris! oh Muse, who the sweet tone controllest
Of the golden-tongued lyre, able too, to endow
The dumb fishes as well, if it happen to please thee,
With the notes of the swan, 'tis from thee it comes now,
That I by the finger of those who are passing
The Lord of our own Roman lyre am shown,
For all inspiration, for all that is pleasing,
If it happen to please, thou hast made it my own.

HORACE AND LYDIA. III-9

"One time when I was pleasing to you, Lydia,
And when no other youth, preferred to me,
Your snowy neck could with his arms encircle,
Then happier I than Persia's King may be."

"When of another you were less enamored,
Nor ranked me after Chloe in your love,
Then I, your Lydia, of wide reputation,
Than Roman Ilia more renowned could prove."

"Now Thracian Chloe, skilled in mellow measures,
And expert on the harp, holds me her slave,

To die for her would never cause me terror,
If her—my soul—the Fates alive would save."

"'Tis Calais, Ornytus' son, the Thurian,
Who now consumes me with a mutual fire,
Ah! death for him twice over would I suffer,
Would but the Fates not let the boy expire."

"What if our former love to us returning,
Us in a stronger yoke should join again!
Should I unbar the door to cast-off Lydia,
And give up fair-haired Chloe, ah, what then?"

"Though he be lovelier than a constellation,
Though lighter than a cork, my dear, are you,
Than stormy Adriatic more uncertain,
With you I'd love to live, die gladly, too."

TO CENSORINUS. IV-8

With kindly thought I'd give, Oh Censorinus,
Bowls and bronze vases pleasing to each friend;
Tripods I'd offer, prizes of brave Grecians,
And not the worst of gifts to you I'd send
Were I, forsooth, rich in such artist's treasure
As Scopas and Parrhasius could convey,
This one in stone, and that in liquid color,
Skilled here a man,—a god there to portray.
But mine no power like this, nor does your spirit
Or your affairs need luxuries so choice.
Songs we can give, and on the gift set value,
Songs we can give, and you in songs rejoice.
Not marble carved with popular inscriptions
Whereby the spirit and the life return
After their death unto our upright leaders,
Nor Hannibal's swift flight, nor threatenings stern
Thrown back on him, nor flames from impious Carthage,
Ever more clearly pointed out the praise
Of him who, after Africa was conquered,
Acquired a name, than did the Calabrian lays.
And you would lose, if writings should be silent,

The price of all that you so well have done.
And Romulus,—his fame had envy silenced—
Where had he been—great Mars and Ilia's son?
Æacus, rescued from the Stygian waters,
The genius, the favor, and the tongue
Of mighty bards sent to the blessed islands,
He cannot die, whose praise the Muse has sung.
The Muse can deify. So tireless Hercules
In Jove's desired banquets has a share.
And the Tyndaridæ's clear constellation
Of ships wrecked in the lowest depths takes care,
Liber, his brows adorned with living vine-leaf,
Brings to good issue every honest prayer.

TO THALIARCHUS. I-9

You see how our Soracte now is standing
Hoary with heavy snow, and now its weight
To bear the struggling woods are hardly able,
And with the bitter cold the streams stagnate.
The cold melt thou away, oh, Thaliarchus,
By heaping logs upon thy fire, again
Replenishing, and from a Sabine flagon
Wine of a four years' vintage draw thou then.
Leave to the gods the rest; for at the moment
They felled the winds upon the boiling sea
That battled fiercely, then there was not stirring
Or mountain-ash, or ancient cypress tree.
Cease thou to ask what is to be to-morrow,
The day that Fortune gives, score thou as gain.
As when a boy, thou shalt not scorn love's sweetness,
Nor smoothly moving dancers shalt disdain
While crabbed age from thy fresh youth is distant.
Now in the Field and in the Public Square
All the soft whisperings that come at night-fall
Shall at the trysting be repeated there.
Now, too, the tempting laugh from a far corner
That must the maiden lurking there betray!
Also the pledge that she in feigned resistance,
Lest from her arm or hand be taken away!

TO CHLOE. I-23

Ah Chloe, like a fawn you now elude me,
 Seeking its timid dam on lonely hills,
Its dam who not without an idle tremor
 At breezes in the forest thrills.
For if before the breeze the bushes quiver
 With rustling leaves, or if green lizards start
Across the bramble, then it is it trembles,—
 This little fawn—in knees and heart.
But Chloe, I am not a cruel tiger,
 Nor a Gætulian lion, thee to chase;
And now that thou art old enough to marry,
 Beside thy mother take thy place.

TO FUSCUS. I-22

Oh, Fuscus, he whose life is pure and upright,
 Wants not the Moorish javelin nor the bow,
Nor may he need the quiver, heavy laden
 With arrows poisoned for the lurking foe.
Whether he is about to make a journey
 To sultry Libya, or the unfriendly height
Of Caucasus, or to the distant places
 That famed Hydaspes washes in his flight.
For lately me a wolf fled in the forest—
 The Sabine forest, as my Lalage
I sang about,—beyond my boundaries wandering,
 Care-free, unarmed—the creature fled from me.
Apulia, land of soldiers, never nourished
 In her broad woods a monster of such girth,
Nor Mauritania, arid nurse of lions,
 To such a one has ever given birth.
Ah, put me on those plains, remote and barren,
 Where not a tree can feel the summer wind,
And grow again—a land of mist eternal—
 Whereover Jupiter still broods, unkind;

Or place me in that land denied man's dwelling,
Too near the chariot of the sun above,—
Still my own Lalage so sweetly smiling,
My sweetly-speaking Lalage I'll love.

TO VENUS. III-26

Lately was I to gentle maidens suited,
And not without some glory did contend,
But now my weapons and my lute made useless
For contests, on this wall I will suspend,
That guards the left side of our sea-born Venus;
Here, here, place you my gleaming waxen torch,
My levers and my crow-bars that can threaten
The doors that ought to open on this porch.
Oh, Goddess, thou who blessed Cyprus rulest,
And Memphis ever lacking Thracian snow,
My Queen, in passing, with thy whip uplifted
Give to my haughty Chloe just one blow.

A PALINODE. I-16

Oh, daughter, lovelier than your lovely mother,
Whatever punishment you may desire
Give my offending verses; in the fire
Throw them, please you, or in the Adriatic.
Not Dindymene, no, nor even Apollo
So shakes the minds of priests within the shrine;
Nor so disturbing is the God of wine,
Nor Corybantes doubling their shrill cymbals,
As direful fits of anger that are frightened
Neither by Noric sword nor savage flame,
Nor by ship-wrecking seas, nor them can tame
Great Jupiter himself, with all his thunders.
To our original clay, they say Prometheus
Was forced to add a portion he had made

Of bits from every creature, and he laid
In human hearts rage from the furious lion.
With crushing ruin rage destroyed Thyestes;
And as a final cause rage may be known
Why mighty cities fell, quite overthrown,
And why upon their walls a sneering army
Its plowshare drags along. But keep your temper!
Me, too in my sweet youth a frenzied heart
Has tempted sorely, and its maddening dart
Has driven me to write impetuous verses
To change sad things for brighter I am seeking,
And since my offending verses I retract,
I beg of you in turn a friendly act,
That you again to me your heart give over.

LASTING FAME. III-30

A monument outlasting brass I have builded,
Higher than pyramids in their crumbling glory,
That no devouring storm, nor futile North wind
Can overthrow, nor years in long succession,
Nor fleeting seasons. I shall not wholly perish.
In great part I'll escape the funeral pyre;
And lately praised, my praise will go on growing
To latest years. As long as Priest and Vestal
Ascend the Capitol, I shall be mentioned
Where Aufidus fierce rages, and where Daunus
A rustic race rules in an arid country.
Great, though of humble birth, I the first poet
To write in Latin rhythms Æolian lyrics,
Take pride, Melpomene, in well-earned merits,
And crown me willingly with Delphic laurel.

RELIGION. I-34

God's mean and careless servant—while I wander

Deep in the madness of Philosophy,—
Now backward I must set my sail, and ponder
Where my forsaken course retraced shall be.
For Jupiter, who with his glittering fire
So often cleaves apart the threatening clouds,
His wingèd car and thundering horses higher
Toward air has driven where no shadow shrouds.

Whereat the sluggish earth, each vagrant river,—
The Styx, and hated Tænarus' dread abode,
And the Atlantic borders shake and shiver.
Ah—to reverse high things and low, our God
Is able, and the mighty he can lower,
The obscure can raise. From this man Fortune steals
The crown to give to that one;—in her power,
Showing with hissing wings the joy she feels.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES:

Inconsistencies in spelling and hyphenation have been retained from the original.

Inconsistencies between the poem titles in the Table of Contents and the titles of the poems in the text have been retained from the original except:

The Raven in the Table of Contents changed to *The Rover*

Obvious typographical errors have been corrected as follows:

Page 32: *Rememeber* changed to *Remember*

Page 37: *everything* changed to *everything*

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