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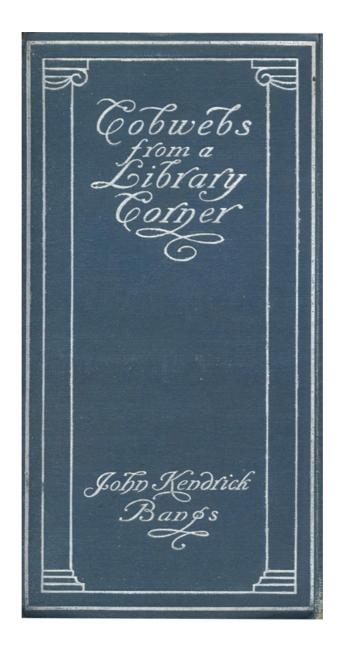
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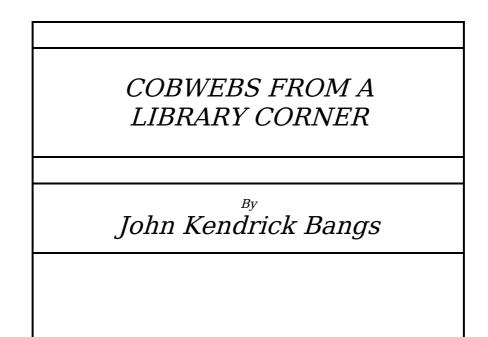
These verses of Mr. Bangs's have appeared from time to time in the various Harper Periodicals, and elsewhere.

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OUT IN THE COLD





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TO SISTER ANNE

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BOOKISH

A PESSIMISTIC VIEW

A LITTLE bit of Thackeray, A little bit of Scott,

A modicum of Dickens just

To tangle up the plot,

A paraphrase of Marryat, Another from Dumas—

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You ask me for a novel, sir, And I say, there you are.

The pen is greater than the sword, Of that there is no doubt.

The pen for me whene'er I wish An enemy to rout.

A pen, a pad, and say a pint Of ink with which to scrawl, To put a foe to flight is all That's needed—truly all.

That 3 needed—truty an.

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But when it comes to making up A novel in these days You do not need a pen at all

To win the writer's bays.

A pair of sharpened scissors and A wealth of pure white page

Will do it if you have at hand A pot of mucilage.

So give to me the scissors keen, And give to me the glue, And I will fix a novel up That's sure to startle you.

The good ideas have all been worked, But while we've gum and paste

There shall be books and books and books To please the public taste.

THE MASTER'S PEN—A CONFESSION

IN my collection famed of curios I have, as every bookman knows, A pen that Thackeray once used. To be amused, I thought I'd "take that pen in hand," And see what came of it—what grand Inspired lines 'twould write, One Sunday night. I dipped it in the ink, And tried to think, "Just what shall I indite?" And do you know, that pen went fairly mad; A dreadful time with it I had. It spluttered, spattered, scratched, and blotted so, I had to give it up, you know. It really wouldn't work for me, And so I put it down; but last night, after tea, I took it up again, And equally in vain. The hours sped; I went to bed, And in my dreams the pen came up to me and said: "Here is the list of Asses who have tried To take up pens the master laid aside; Look thou!" I looked, and lo!-perhaps you've guessed-

My name, like Abou Ben's, led all the rest!

BOOKWORM BALLADS A LITERARY FEAST

My Bookworm gave a dinner to a number of his set. I was not there—I say it to my very great regret. For they dined well, I fancy, if the menu that I saw Was followed as implicitly as one obeys the law.

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"'Twill open," he observed to me, "with quatrains on the half. They go down easy; then for soup"—it really made me laugh— "The poems of old Johnny Gay"—his words were rather rough— "They'll do quite well, for, after all, soup's thin and sloppy stuff.

"For fish, old Izaak Walton; and to serve as an *entrée*, I think some fixed-up morsel, say from James, or from Daudet; The roast will be Charles Kingsley—there's a deal of beef in him. For sherbet, T. B. Aldrich is just suited to my whim.

"For game I'll have Boccaccio—he's quite the proper one; He certainly is gamey, and a trifle underdone; And for the salad, Addison, so fresh and crisp is he, With just a touch of Pope to give a tang to him, you see.

"And then for cheese, Max Nordau, for I think you'll find right there Some things as strong and mushy as the best of Camembert; And for dessert let Thackeray and O. Khayyám be brought, The which completes a dinner of most wondrous richness fraught.

"For olives and for almonds we can take the jokes of *Punch*— They're good enough for us, I think, to casually munch; And through it all we'll quaff the wines that flow forever clear From Avon's vineyards in the heart of Will of Warwickshire."

IDEAS FOR SALE

I'M in literary culture, and I've opened up a shop, Where I'd like ye, gents and ladies, if you're passing by to stop. Come and see my rich assortment of fine literary seed That I'm selling to the writers of full many a modern screed.

I've bacilli for ten volumes for a dollar, in a bag— Not a single germ among 'em that's been ever known to drag. Not a single germ among 'em, if you see they're planted right, But will grow into a novel that they'll say is out of sight.

I have motifs by the thousand, motifs sad and motifs gay. You can buy 'em by the dozen, or I'll serve 'em every day: I will serve 'em in the morning, as the milkman serves his wares; I will serve 'em by the postman, or I'll leave 'em on your stairs.

When you get down to your table with your head a vacuum, You can say unto your helpmeet, "Has that quart of ideas come That we ordered served here daily from that plot-man down the street?"

And you'll find that I've been early my engagement to complete.

Should you want a book of poems that will bring you into fame, Let me send a sample packet that will guarantee the same, Holding "Seeds of Thought from Byron, Herrick, Chaucer, Tennyson."

Plant 'em deep, and keep 'em watered, and you'll find the deed is done.

I've a hundred comic packets that would make a Twain of Job; I have "Seeds of Tales Narcotic; Tales of Surgeons and the Probe." I've a most superb assortment, on the very cheapest terms, Done up carefully in tin-foil, of my A 1 "Trilby Germs."

So perchance if you're ambitious in a literary line, Be as dull as e'er you can be, you will surely cut a shine, If you'll only take advantage of this opportunity, When you're passing by to stop in for a little chat with me.

You may ask me, in conclusion, why I do not seek myself

All the laurel and the glory of these seeds I sell for pelf. I will tell you, though the confidence I can't deny is rash, I'm a trifle long on laurels, and a little short of cash.

THE AUTHOR'S BOOMERANG

HE frowns with reason; he has always said, "The public has no knowledge of true art; The book of worth these days would not be read; 'Tis trash not truth that goes upon the mart."

And then was published his belovéd work— Some twenty-six editions it has had— And he his own conclusion cannot shirk: With such success as this it must be bad!

TO AN EGOTISTICAL BIOGRAPHER

I've read your story of your friend's fine life, But really, gentle sir, I fail to see, Why you have named it "Blank, and Jane his wife," When you had better called it simply "Me."

NO COPYRIGHT NEEDED

I've penned a score of essays bright, In Addison's best style; I've taken many a lofty flight, The Muses to beguile.

Of novels I have written few— I think no more than ten; With history I've had to do, Like several other men.

And still, to my intense regret, Through all my woe and weal, I've never penned a volume yet, A foreigner would steal.

INGREDIENTS OF GREATNESS

The style of man I'd like to be, If I could have my way, Would be a sort of pot-pourri Of Poe and Thackeray;

Of Horace, Edison, and Lamb; Of Keats and Washington, Gérôme and blest Omar Khayyám, And R. L. Stevenson;

Of Kipling and the Bard of Thrums, And Bonaparte the great—

If I were these, I'd snap my thumbs Derisively at Fate.

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CHARLES LAMB is good, and so is Thackeray, And so's Jane Austen in her pretty way; Charles Dickens, too, has pleased me quite a lot, As also have both Stevenson and Scott. I like Dumas and Balzac, and I think Lord Byron quite a dab at spreading ink; But on the whole, at home, across the sea, The author I like best is Mr. Me.

A "first" of Elia filled my soul with joy. A Meredith de luxe held no alloy. And when I found *Pendennis* in the parts A throb of gladness stirred my heart of hearts. A richly pictured set of Avon's bard Upon my liking bounded pretty hard; But none brought out that cloying sense of glee That came from that first book by Mr. Me.

And so I beg you join me in the toast To him that I confess I love the most. He does not always do his level best, But no one lives who can survive that test. His work is queer, and some folks call it bad, And some aver 'tis but a passing fad; But I don't care, the fact remains that he Has won my admiration—dear old Me.

THEIR PENS

The poet pens his odes and sonnets spruce With quills plucked from the ordinary goose, While critics write their sharp incisive lines With quills snatched from the fretful porcupines.

AN UNSOLVED PROBLEM

IF Bacon wrote those grand inspiring lines At which alternately man weeps and laughs, Who was it penned those chirographic vines We know these times as Shakespeare's autographs?

THE BIBLIOPHILE'S THREAT

IF some one does not speedily indite A volume that is worthy of my shelf, I'll have to buy materials and write A novel and some poetry myself.

MY TREASURES

My library o'erflows with treasures rare: Of "Dickens' firsts," a full, unbroken set; And in a little nooklet off the stair The whole edition of my novelette.

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HE writes bad verse on principle, E'en though it does not sell. He thinks the plan original— So many folk write well.

THE POET UNDONE

HE was a poet born, but unkind Fate Once doomed him for his verses to be paid, Whereon he left the poet-born's estate And wrote like one who'd happened to be made.

A WANING MUSE

"WHY art thou sad, Poeticus?" said I.
So blue was he I feared he would not speak.
"Alas! I've lost my grip," was his reply—
"I've writ but forty poems, sir, this week."

MODESTY

"WHAT hundred books are best, think you?" I said, Addressing one devoted to the pen. He thought a moment, then he raised his head:

"I hardly know—I've written only ten."

MY LORD THE BOOK

A BOOK is an aristocrat: 'Tis pampered—lives in state; Stands on a shelf, with naught whereat To worry—lovely fate!

Enjoys the best of company; And often—ay, 'tis so— Like much in aristocracy, Its title makes it go.

THE BIBLIOMISER

HE does not read at all, yet he doth hoard Rich books. In exile on his shelves they're stored; And many a volume, sweet and good and true, Fails in the work that it was made to do. Why, e'en the dust they've caught since he began Would quite suffice to make a decent man!

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I GOT a tome to-day, and I was glad to strike it, Because no other man can ever get one like it. 'Tis poor, and badly print; its meaning's Greek; But what of that? 'Tis mine, and it's unique.

So Bah! to others, Men and brothers— Bah! and likewise Pooh! I've got the best of you. Go sicken, die, and eke repine. That book you wanted—Gad! that's mine!

A READER

DAUDET to him is e'er Dodett; Dumas he calls Dumass; But prithee do not you forget He's not at all an ass;

Because the books that he doth buy, That on his shelf do stand, Hold not one page his eagle eye Hath not completely scanned.

And while this man's orthoepy May not be what it should, He knows what books contain, and he "Can quote 'em pretty good."

FATE!

I FEEL that I am quite as smart As Edward Bulwer Lytton, Bart.

I'm also every bit as bright As Walter Scott, the Scottish knight;

And in my own peculiar way I'm just as good as Thackeray.

But, woe is me that it should be, They got here years ahead of me,

And all the tales I would unfold By them already have been told.

A PLEASING THOUGHT

THEY speak most truly who do say We have no writing-folk to-day Like those whose names, in days gone by, Upon the scroll of fame stood high. And when I think of Smollett's tales, Of waspish Pope's ill-natured rails, Of Fielding dull, of Sterne too free, Of Swift's uncurbed indecency, Of Dr. Johnson's bludgeon-wit, I must confess I'm glad of it!

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A volume's just received on vellum print. The book is worth the vellum—no more in't. But, as I search my head for thoughts, I find One fact embedded firmly in my mind.

That's this, in short: while it no doubt may be Most pleasant for an author small to see A fine edition of his work put out, No man who's sane can ever really doubt

That products of his brain and pen can live Alone for that which they may haply give! And though on vellum stiff the work appears, It cannot live throughout the after-years,

Unless it has within its leaves some hint Of something further than the style of print And paper—give me Omar on mere waste, I'll choose it rather than some "bookish taste,"

Expended on a flimsy, whimsey tale, Put out to catch a whimsey, flimsy sale. I'd choose my Omar print on grocer's wraps Before the vellum books of "bookish" chaps.

A CONFESSION

My epic verse, my pet production, which I deemed Sufficient to advance me to the highest peak

Of difficult Parnassus, goal of which I've dreamed For many a weary year, came back to me last week.

The Editor I cursed, that he should stand between

My dear ambition and my scarcely dearer self; Whose unappreciation forced to blush unseen

My one dear book, to gather dust upon my shelf. That night in sleep an Angel fair came to my side,

And in her hand she held a scroll; in lines of flame

The name of him I'd cursed was writ; and when I cried, "What portent this?" the rare celestial dame

Replied:

"Read here, O Ingrate base, the name of him thou'st cursed. The very man of all men who should be the first Thy love and lasting gratitude to know, since he Still leaves the path Parnassian open unto thee— A path which thou with halting rhyme, most ill composed, Against thyself hast sought to keep forever closed. *Read thou thy lines again!*"

Ah! bitter was the cup.

I read, withdrew the curse—and tore the epic up.

THE EDITION DE LOOKS

How very close to truth these bookish men Can be when in their catalogues they pen

The words descriptive of the wares they hold To tempt the book-man with his purse of gold!

For instance, they have Dryden—splendid set— Which some poor wight would part with wealth to get.

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'Tis richly bound, its edges gilded—but— Hard fate—as Dryden well deserves—*uncut!*

For who these days would think to buy the screed Of dull old dusty Dryden just to read?

In faith if his editions had been kept Amongst the rarities he'd ne'er have crept!

And then those pompous, overwhelming tomes You find so oft in overwhelming homes,

No substance on a Whatman surface placed, In polished leather and in tooling cased,

The gilded edges dazzling to the eye And flaunting all their charms so wantonly.

These book-men, when they catalogue their books, Call them in truth *édition de luxe*.

That's all they have, most of 'em, just plain shape, With less pure wine than any unripe grape.

But tomes that travel on their "looks" indeed Are only good for those who do not read;

And, like most people clad in garments grand, Seem rather heavy for the average hand.

WISE AND OTHERWISE

NAPOLINI'S ERROR

PIETRO NAPOLINI DI VENDETTA PASQUARELLE Deserted balmy Italy, the land that loved him well, And sailed for soft America, of wealth the very fount, To earn sufficient dollars there to make himself a count. Alas for poor Pietro! he arrived in winter-time, And marvelled at the poet who observed in tripping rhyme How this New World was genial, and a sunny sort of clime.

No chance had he for music that's developed by a crank, No chance had he at sculpture, nor a penny in the bank. The pea-nut trade was languid, and for him too full of risk; He thought the work on railways for his blood was rather brisk. The sole profession left him to assuage his stomach's woe, It struck him in meandering the city to and fro, Was surely that of shovelling away the rich man's snow.

And then P. Napolini di Vendetta Pasquarelle Sought out a city thoroughfare, the swellest of the swell. He stole a shovel, and he found a broom he thought would do, Then rang the massive front-door bell of Stuyvesant Depew. "I wanta shov' da snow," he said, when there at last appeared Fitzjohn Augustus Higgins, who in Birmingham was reared, A man by all in low estate much hated and much feared.

"Go wi," said Fitz, with gesture bold. "Yer cahn't do nothink ere, Yer bloomin', hugly furriner!" he added, with a sneer. "Hi thinks as 'ow you dagoes is the cuss o' this 'ere land, With wuthy citizens like me 'most starved on every 'and. Hi vows hif I'd me wi at all hi'd order hout a troop, Hand send the bloomin' lot o' yer 'ead over 'eels in soup.

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Git hout, yer nahsty grabber yer; hewacuate the stoop."

Then when the snow had melted off, Fitzjohn Augustus went And humbly asked his master for two dollars that he'd spent In paying Napolini di Vendetta Pasquarelle; While Nap went back to Italy, the land that loved him well, Convinced that when he sailed that time his country to forsake, He must have got aboard the ship when he was half awake, And got to London, not New York, by some most odd mistake.

MY COLOR

My best-loved color? Well, I think I like A soft and tender dewy green—for grass. Sometimes a pink my fancy too will strike— In lobster *purée* or a Sauterne glass.

Blue is a color, too, I greatly love.It's sort of satisfying to my eyes.'Tis their own color; and I'm quite fond of This hue also for soft Italian skies.

For blushes, give me red, nor hesitate To pile it on; I like it good and strong Upon the cheeks of her I call my Fate, The loveliest of all the lovely throng.

On golden-yellow oft my fancy dwells. 'Tis almost godlike, as it sparkles through The effervescent fizz; and wondrous spells It casts o'er me when coined in dollars, too.

Hence, friend, it is I cannot specify What hues particular my joys enhance. I like them all; their popularity

At special times depends on circumstance.

CONTENTMENT IN NATURE

I would not change my joys for those Of Emperors and Kings. What has my gentle friend the rose Told them, if aught, do you suppose— The rose that tells me things?

What secrets have they had with trees? What romps with grassy spears? What know they of the mysteries Of butterflies and honey-bees, Who whisper in my ears?

What says the sunbeam unto them? What tales have brooklets told? Is there within their diadem A single rival to the gem The dewy daisies hold?

What sympathy have they with birds Whose songs are songs of mine? Do they e'er hear, as though in words 'Twas lisped, the message of the herds Of grazing, lowing kine?

Ah no! Give me no lofty throne, But just what Nature yields.

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Let me but wander on, alone If need be, so that all my own Are woods and dales and fields.

THE HEROIC GUNNER

When the order was given to withdraw from battle for breakfast, one of the gun-captains, a privileged character, begged Commodore Dewey to let them keep on fighting until "we've wiped 'em out."—*War Anecdote in Daily Paper.*

At the battle of Manila, In the un-Pacific sea, Stood a gunner with his mad up Just as far as it could be— Stood a gunner brave and ready For the hated enemy.

Near the Isles of Philopena Raged the battle all the morn, And the plucky Spanish sailors By the shot and shell were torn; And the flag that floated o'er them To oblivion was borne.

Every cannon belched projectiles, Every cannon breathed forth hell, Every cannon mowed the foeman From the deck into the swell, When amid the din of battle

Rang the silvery breakfast-bell.

"Stop your shooting! Come to breakfast!" Cried the gallant Commodore. "After eating we will let them

Have a rousing old encore. Stow your lanyards, O my Jackies; Let the cannon cease to roar."

Then upspake the fighting gunner: "Dewey, don't, I beg of you. What's the use of drinking coffee Till we've put this scrimmage through? If there's any one who's hungry,

Won't this Spanish omelet do?

"Farragut would not have done it When through Mobile Bay he sped. Why then, Dewey, should we breakfast Till we've plunked 'em full of lead? Let our motto be as his was—

Damn the fishballs! Go ahead!"

THE PATHETIC TALE OF THE CADDY BOY

"Come here," said I, "oh caddy boy, and tell me how it haps You cling so fast unto these links; not like the other chaps, Who like to dally on the streets and play the game of craps?

"Is it that you enjoy the work of carrying a bag While others speed the festive ball o'er valley, hill, and crag? And do your spirits never seem to falter or to flag?

"I've watched you many a day, my lad, and puzzled o'er the fact That you are so attentive to the game; your every act

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Doth indicate perfection—there's been nothing you have lacked.
"And I would know just why it is that you so perfect seem— In all my golfing days you've been the very brightest gleam— Or am I lying home in bed and are you just a dream?"
"Oh, sir," said he, "I caddy here because I love my pa; I cling unto these gladsome links because I love my ma; In short, I love my parents, sir, and these my reasons are:
"Twas but a year ago, good sir, when first this ancient sport Came in the portals of our home—home of the sweetest sort; When golf came through the window, sir, why home went through the port.
"My father first he took it up, and many a weary night My mother with us children waited up by candle-light, In hopes that he'd return and free us from our lonely plight.

> "Then mother she went after him—alas! that it should be— And shortly learned the game herself—she plays it famously— Which left us children orphans, I and all my brothers three.

"They play it here, they play it there, they play it everywhere; No matter what the weather, be it wet or be it fair, And for the cares of golf they've dropped their every other care.

"And so it is that we poor lads are forced to leave our home, And join the ranks of caddy boys who o'er the fields do roam In search of little golf-balls in the sunlight and the gloam;

"For some day we are hoping that our eyes again will see Our most beloved parents on some putting-green or tee; A sight to gladden all our hearts if it should ever be."

And lo—I looked upon that boy—his face was sweet and sad, And to my heart there came a twinge, for in that little lad I recognized my eldest son—*I* was that wicked dad!

And now together we are out on links at home and far. He and his three small brothers with their shamed, repentant pa, A-looking here and looking there to find their dear mamma.

GARRULOUS WISDOM

I KNOW a wondrous man—my neighbor he; He's ripe in years, and great in understanding.
He's versed in art, and in philosophy He shows a mind that's verily commanding.
He'll stand before a painting, and without A single instant's thought, or hesitation, He'll tell the painter's name, nor any doubt Is there he gives the proper information.
The rocks, the hills and valleys, hold from him No secret that is past a man's revealing.

He knows why some are stout and others slim; He comprehends all kinds of human feeling.

The records of the stars he knows, and each Romance that round about the heavens lingers. At dinner-time he oft delights to preach On which was made the first, or forks or fingers.

Indeed, all things he knows, or high or low— The things that fly on wing, or go a-walking— Except one thing he never seems to know, And that's when he should stop his endless talking.

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WHEN I was twenty-one, I swore, If I should ever wed,The maiden that I should adore Should have a classic head;Should have a form quite Junoesque; A manner full of grace;A wealth of hirsute picturesque Above a piquant face.

But I, alas! am perjured, for I've wed a dumpy lass
I much despised in days of yore, Of quite the plainest class,
Because each maiden of my dream, Whose favor I did seek,

Was so opposed unto my scheme I married Jane in pique.

MAID OF CULTURE

Maid of culture, ere we part, Since we've talked of letters, art, Science, faith, and hypnotism, And 'most every other ism, When you wrote, a while ago, Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπώ,

Let me tell you this, my dear: Though your lettering was clear, Though the ancient sages Greek Would be glad to hear you speak, They would be replete with woe At your μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπώ.

For, dear maiden most astute, You have placed the mark acute O'er omega. Take your specs. See? It should be circumflex. Still I love you, even though You have written ἀγαπώ.

NOT PERFECT

HER eyes are blue—a lovely hue For eyes; her cheeks are pink, And for the cheek, 'twixt me and you, That color's right, I think.

Her fingers taper prettily, Her teeth are white as pearls— Her hands seem softer far to me Than any other girl's.

Her figure's trim—it is petite— I like them just that way, And truly, maiden half so sweet You'd not find every day.

And yet, alas! she's not my choice, This creature of my rhyme— Because her soft and rich-toned voice Is going all the time.

I LOVE the leaf of the old oak-tree, I love the gum of the spruce,

I love the bark of the hickory, And I love the maple's juice.

On the walnut's grain I fondly dote, On the cherry's fruit I'd dine, And I love to lie in a narrow boat, And scent the odor of pine.

Ah, me! how I wish some power grand Would invent some single tree With all these points well developed, and Would send that tree to me!

I'd plant it deep in the jardinière That stands in this flat of mine; I'd give it the sweetest, tenderest care,

And water its roots with wine.

WHERE ARE THEY?

WHAT has become of the cast-off coats That covered Will Shakespeare's back? What has become of the old row-boats Of Kidd and his pirate pack?

Where are the scarfs that Lord Byron wore? Where are poor Shelley's cuffs? What has become of that wondrous store Of Queen Elizabeth's ruffs?

Where are the slippers of Ferdinand? Where are Marc Antony's clothes? Where are the gloves from Antoinette's hand?

Where Oliver Goldsmith's hose?

I do not search for the ships of Tyre— The grave of Whittington's cat Would sooner set my spirit on fire— Or even Beau Brummel's hat.

And when I reflect that there are spots In the world that I can't find, Where lie these same identical lots, And many of this same kind,

I'm tempted to give a store of gold To him that will bring to me

A glass, Earth's mysteries to unfold, And show me where these things be.

MEMORIES

Yon maiden once a jester did adore, Who early died and in the church-yard sleeps. Once in a while she reads his best jokes o'er And sits her down and madly, sorely weeps.

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I KNOW a man in Real Estate, Whose pride of self's sublime. He'd like to be a poet great But "can't afford the time."

AD ASTRA PER OTIUM

As I read over old John Dryden's verse, The rhymes of men like William Blake, and Gay, The stuff that helped fill Edmund Waller's purse, And that which placed on Marvell's brow the bay,

It doth appear to me that in those times The Muses quaffed not sparkling wine, but grog, And that to grow immortal through one's rhymes Was 'bout as hard as falling off a log.

CONSOLATION

SHAKESPEARE was not accounted great When good Queen Bess ruled England's state, So why should I to-day repine Because the laurel is not mine?

Perhaps in twenty-ninety-three Folks will begin to talk of me, And somewhere statues may be built Of me, in bronze, perhaps in gilt,

And sages full of quips and quirks Will wonder if I wrote my works. So why should I repine to-day Because my brow wears not the bay?

SATISFACTION ON READING "NOT ONE DISSATISFIED," BY WALT WHITMAN

GOD spare the day when I am satisfied! Enough is truly likened to a feast that leaves man satiate. The sluggishness of fulness comes apace; the dulness of a mind that knows all things. The lack of every sweet desire; no new sensation for the soul! To want no more? What vile estate is that? What holds the morrow for the soul that's satisfied? What holds the future for the mind content? Is aspiration worthless? Is much-abused ambition then so vile? What is the essence of the joy of living? Must yesterday, to-morrow, and to-day all be the same, With nothing to be hoped for? Is not a soul athirst a joyous thing? Where lies content to him whose eye doth rest on higher things? What satiation can compare to hope? Yet who among the satisfied hath need of hope? What can he hope for if he's satisfied? 'Tis but conceit, and nothing more, to prate of satisfaction! God spare the day when I am satisfied!

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I do not want the earth, Yet nothing less will leave me quite content; And once 'tis mine, I'm very sure you'll find me roaming off After the universe!

TO A WITHERED ROSE

THY span of life was all too short— A week or two at best— From budding-time, through blossoming, To withering and rest.

Yet compensation hast thou—aye!— For all thy little woes; For was it not thy happy lot To live and die a rose?

THE WORST OF ENEMIES

I do not fear an enemy Who all his days hath hated me.

I do not bother o'er a foe Whose name and face I do not know.

I mind me not the small attack Of him who bites behind my back:

But Heaven help me to the end 'Gainst that one who was once my friend.

JOKES OF THE NIGHT

BLESSED jokes of my dreams! Your praises I'd sing. No mirth can compare to the mirth that you bring. I've read London *Punch* from beginning to end, On all comic papers much money I spend, But naught that is in them can ever seem bright Beside the rich jokes that I dream of at night.

How I laugh at those jests of my brain when at rest, The gladdest and merriest, sweetest and best! And how, when I wake in the morning and try To call them to mind, oh how bashful, how shy They seem, how they scatter and hide out of sight— Those jokes of my dreamings, those jests of the night!

Take the one that came to me to-day just at dawn: The Cable-Car turns and remarks to the Prawn, "The Crowbar is seasick; but then what of that, As long as the Camel won't wear a silk hat?" I laughed—why, I laughed till my wife had a fright For fear I'd go wild from that joke of the night.

And they're all much like that one—elusive enough, Yet full of facetious, hilarious stuff— Stuff past comprehension, stuff no man dares tell; For nocturnal jests, e'en told ever so well— 'Tis odd it should be so—are not often bright, Except to the dreamer who dreams them at night.

A LEAF fell in love with the soft green lawn, He deemed her the sweetest and best, And then on a dreary November dawn He withered and died on her breast.

THE COUNTRY IN JULY

WHERE glistening in the softness of the night The vagrant will-o'-wisps do greet the sight; Where fragrance baffling permeates the breeze That gently flouts the grasses and the trees; Where every flying thing doth seem to be Instinct with sweetly sensuous melody; Where hills and dales assume their warmest phase, With here and there a scarf of opal haze To soften their luxuriant attire; Where one can almost hear the elfin choir Across the meadow-land, down in the wood, In songs of gladness—there are all things good. Ah! ye who seek the spot where joys abide, Awake! Awake! Seek out the country-side, And through the blue-gray July haze see life All free from care, from sorrow, and from strife.

MAY 30, 1893

IT seemed to be but chance, yet who shall say That 'twas not part of Nature's own sweet way,

That on the field where once the cannon's breath Lay many a hero cold and stark in death,

Some little children, in the after-years, Had come to play among the grassy spears,

And, all unheeding, when their romp was done, Had left a wreath of wild flowers over one

Who fought to save his country, and whose lot It was to die unknown and rest forgot?

THE CURSE OF WEALTH

"WHAT shall I put my dollars in?" he asked, in wild dismay. "I've fifty thousand of 'em, and I'd like to keep 'em too. I'd like to put them by to serve some future rainy day, But in these times of queer finance what can a fellow do?

"A railway bond is picturesque, and the supply is great, But strangely like a novel that upon occasion drags, Of which the critics of the time in hackneyed phrases state, 'The work has certain value, but the int'rest often flags!'

"The same is true of railway shares, 'tis safer to invest In ploughshares, so it seems to me, in this unhappy time. Some think great wealth a blessing, but it cannot stand the test; He's happier by far than I who's but a single dime.

"He does not lie awake at night and fret and fume, to think

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Of bank officials on a spree with what he's toiled to get. He is not driven by his woe quite to the verge of drink By wondering if his balance in the bank remains there yet.

"He does not pick the paper up in terror every night To see if V.B.G. is up, or P.D.Q. is down; It does not fill his anxious soul with nerve-destroying fright To hear the Wall Street rumors that are flying 'bout the town.

"Ah, better had I ta'en that cash that I have skimped to save, And spent it on my living and my pleasures day by day! I would not now be goaded nigh unto my waiting grave,

By wondering how the deuce to keep those dollars mine for aye.

"I'd not be bankrupt in my nerves and prematurely old, These golden shackles must be burst; I must again be free. What Ho without! My ducats—to the winds with all my gold, That I may once again enjoy the rest of poverty."

THE RHYME OF THE ANCIENT POPULIST

IT was an ancient populist, His beard was long and gray, And punctuated by his fist, He had his little say: "This is the age of gold," he said, "'Tis gold for butter, gold for bread, Gold for bonds and gold for fun; Gold for all things 'neath the sun." Then with a smile He shook his head. "Just wait awhile," He slyly said. "When we get in and run the State We'll tackle gold, we'll legislate. We'll pass an act And make a fact By which these gold-bugs will be whacked Till they're as cold As is their gold. We're going to make a statute law by which 'twill be decreed That standards are abolished, for a standard favors greed. This is the country of the free, and free this land shall be As soon as we the 'people' have our opportunity, And he who has to pay a bill Can pay in whate'er suits his will. The tailor? Let him take his coats And pay his notes; Or if perchance He's long on pants, Let trousers be His £. s. d. The baker! Let his landlord take His rent in cake, Or anything the man can bake. And if a plumber wants a crumb, He may unto the baker come And plumb. A joker needing hats or cloaks Can go and pay for them with jokes, And so on: what a fellow's got Shall pay for things that he has not. If beggars' rags were cash, you'd see No longer any beggary; In short, there'd be no poverty." "A splendid scheme," quoth I; "but stay! What of the nation's credit, pray?"

"Ha-ha! ho-ho!" he loudly roared.

"We'll leave that problem to the Lord. And if He fails to keep us straight Once more we'll have to legislate, And so create, Confounding greed, As much of credit as we need."

ONE OF THE NAMELESS GREAT

I KNEW a man who died in days of yore, To whom no monument is like to rise; And yet there never lived a mortal more Deserving of a shaft to pierce the skies.

His chiefest wish strong friendships was to make; He cared but little for this poor world's pelf; He shared his joys with every one who'd take, And kept his sorrows strictly to himself.

IN FEBRUARY DAYS

FAIR Nature, like the mother of a wayward child Who needs must chide the offspring of her heart, Disguiseth for a season all the sweet and mild Maternal softness for an austere part.

And 'neath her frown the errant earth in winter seems Prostrate to lie, and petulant of mood; Restrained in icy fetters all the babbling streams, Like naughty babes who're learning to be good.

Then, in this second month, most motherlike again, The frown assumed gives now and then a place To soft indulgent glances, lessening the pain, And hints of spring and pardon light her face.

A CHANGE OF AMBITION

HORATIUS at the bridge, and he Who fought at old Thermopylæ;

Great Samson and his potent bone By which the Philistines were slone;

Small David with his wondrous aim That did for him of giant frame;

J. Cæsar in his Gallic scraps That made him lord of other chaps;

Sweet William, called the Conqueror, Who made the Briton sick of war;

King Hal the Fifth, who nobly fought And thrashed the foe at Agincourt;

Old Bonaparte, and Washington, And Frederick, and Wellington,

Decatur, Nelson, Fighting Joe, And Farragut, and Grant, and, oh,

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A thousand other heroes I Have wished I were in days gone by—

Can take their laurels from my door, For I don't want 'em any more.

The truth will out; it can't be hid; The doughty deed that Dewey did,

In that far distant Spanish sea, Is really good enough for me.

The grammar's bad, but, O my son, I wish I'd did what Dewey done!

MESSAGE FROM MAHATMAS

ONSET BAY, MASSACHUSETTS, *May 24, 18*—.—Theosophists and others at Onset Bay Camp Grounds have been greatly excited of late by a message which has been received from the Mahatmas, Koot Hoomi, and his partner, who are summering in the desert of Gobi. The message is of considerable length, and contains much that is purely personal.—*Daily Newspaper*.

Sound the timbrel, beat the drum! Word from the Mahatma's come. Straight from Hoomi Koot & Co. Comes the note to us below, Full of joy and gossiping. Hoomi Koot is summering In the desert waste of Gobi, In a cottage of adobe. All the little Koots are well. Tommy Koot has learned to spell. Mrs. Koot is busy on Papers on "The Great Anon," Which by special cable soon, From her workshop in the moon, Will be sent to us below By grand Hoomi Koot & Co.

We are told that Maggie Koot Looks well in her golfing suit; And her brand-new Astral Bike Is the best they've seen this cike— Cike is slang for cycle, so I have learned from Koot & Co. Soon she's going to take a run Out from Gobi to the sun, After which she thinks to race For the Championship of Space, And a trophy given by The Grand High Pasupati.

Baby Koot has learned to walk, And likewise, 'tis said, to talk; But, to Mrs. Koot's dismay, Seems to have a funny way: Full of questions, "Why and How," All about the sacred cow. Questions of a flippant ilk, Like "Is Buddha made of milk?" Questions void of answers spite Of his parents' second sight. What to do with Baby Koot Worries all the whole cahoot.

Finally the message ends With best love to all our friends. Give our enemies a twist. Let each true theoso-fist Strike a thunder-hitting blow For the firm of Koot & Co.; Strike till black is every eye Doubting our theosophy. And impress on every tribe Now's the season to subscribe. Guard against the coming storm; Keep our astral bodies warm. Give us bonnets for the head; Keep our spirit stomachs fed. Let your glad remittance go Out to Hoomi Koot & Co., Through their Agents on the earth, Men and women full of worth; And when next a message comes From the Koots down to their chums, Those who've paid their money down Will receive a harp and crown.

Step up lively! now's the time For your nickel and your dime, To provide for winter suits For the grand Mahatma Koots. Furthermore, be not too brash, Send it up in solid cash. Astral money, it may be, Circulates in theory; But 'tis best to give us cold, Bilious, drossy, filthy gold.

All our blessings to you go. Yours, for health, H. Koots & Co.

THE GOLD-SEEKERS

GOLD, gold, gold! What care we for hunger and cold? What care we for the moil and strife, Or the thousands of foes to health and life, When there's gold for the mighty, and gold for the meek, And gold for whoever shall dare to seek? Untold Is the gold; And it lies in the reach of the man that's bold: In the hands of the man who dares to face The death in the blast, that blows apace; That withers the leaves on the forest tree; That fetters with ice all the northern sea; That chills all the green on the fair earth's breast, And as certainly kills as the un-stayed pest. It lies in the hands of the man who'd sell His hold on his life for an ice-bound hell. What care we for the fevered brain That's filled with ravings and thoughts insane, So long as we hold In our hands the gold?-The glistening, glittering, ghastly gold

That comes at the end of the hunger and cold; That comes at the end of the awful thirst; That comes through the pain and torture accurst Of limbs that are racked and minds o'erthrown,

The gold lies there and is all our own,

Be we mighty or meek,

If we do but seek.

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For the hunger is sweet and the cold is fair To the man whose riches are past compare; And the o'erthrown mind is as good as sane, And a joy to the limbs is the racking pain, If the gold is there.

And they say, if you fail, in your dying day All the tears, all the troubles, are wiped away By the fever-thought of your shattered mind That a cruel world has at last grown kind; That your hands o'errun with the clinking gold, With nuggets of weight and of worth untold,

And your vacant eyes Gloat o'er the riches of Paradise!

ODE TO A POLITICIAN

ALL hail to thee, O son of Æolus! All hail to thee, most high Borean lord! The lineal descendant of the Winds art thou. Child of the Cyclone, Cousin to the Hurricane, Tornado's twin, All hail! The zephyrs of the balmy south Do greet thee; The eastern winds, great Boston's pride, In manner osculate caress thy massive cheek; Freeze onto thee, And at thy word throw off congealment And take on a soft caloric mood; And from afar, From Afric's strand, Siroccan greetings come to thee! The monsoon and simoom, In the soft empurpled Orient, At mention of thy name Doff all the hats of Heathendom! And all combined in one vast aggregation, Cry out hail, hail, thrice hail to thee, Who after years, and centuries, and cycles e'en, Hast made the winds incarnate! To thee The visible expression in the flesh, Material and tangible, Of all that goes to make the element That rages, blusters, blasts, and blows! And if the poet's mind speaks true, If he can penetrate their purposes at all, It is not far from their intent To lift thee on their broad November wings So high That none but gods can ever hope Again to gaze upon thy face!

SOME ARE AMATEURS

SHAKESPEARE was partly wrong—the world's a stage, This is admitted by the bard's detractors.Had William seen some Hamlets of this age He'd not have called *all* men upon it actors.

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LITTLE BOOKS BY FAMOUS WRITERS

The First Christmas (From "Ben-Hur")	
	By Lew. Wallace
The Story of the Other Wise Man	
	By Henry van Dyke
Two Gentlemen of Kentucky	
	By James Lane Allen
Episodes in Van Bibber's Life	
	By Richard Harding Davis
Good for the Soul	
	By Margaret Deland
Evelina's Garden	
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Cobwebs from a Library Corner (Verses)	
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