

## The Project Gutenberg eBook of Later Poems, by Bliss Carman

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**Title:** Later Poems

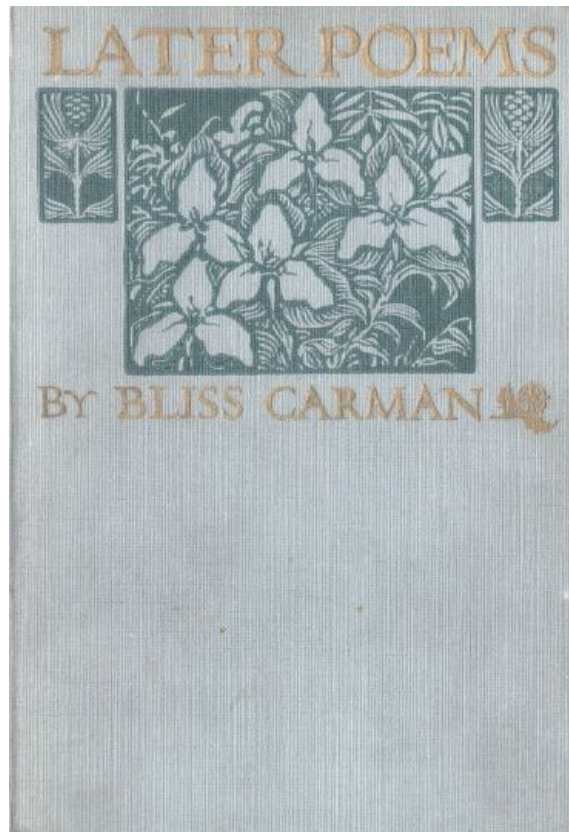
**Author:** Bliss Carman

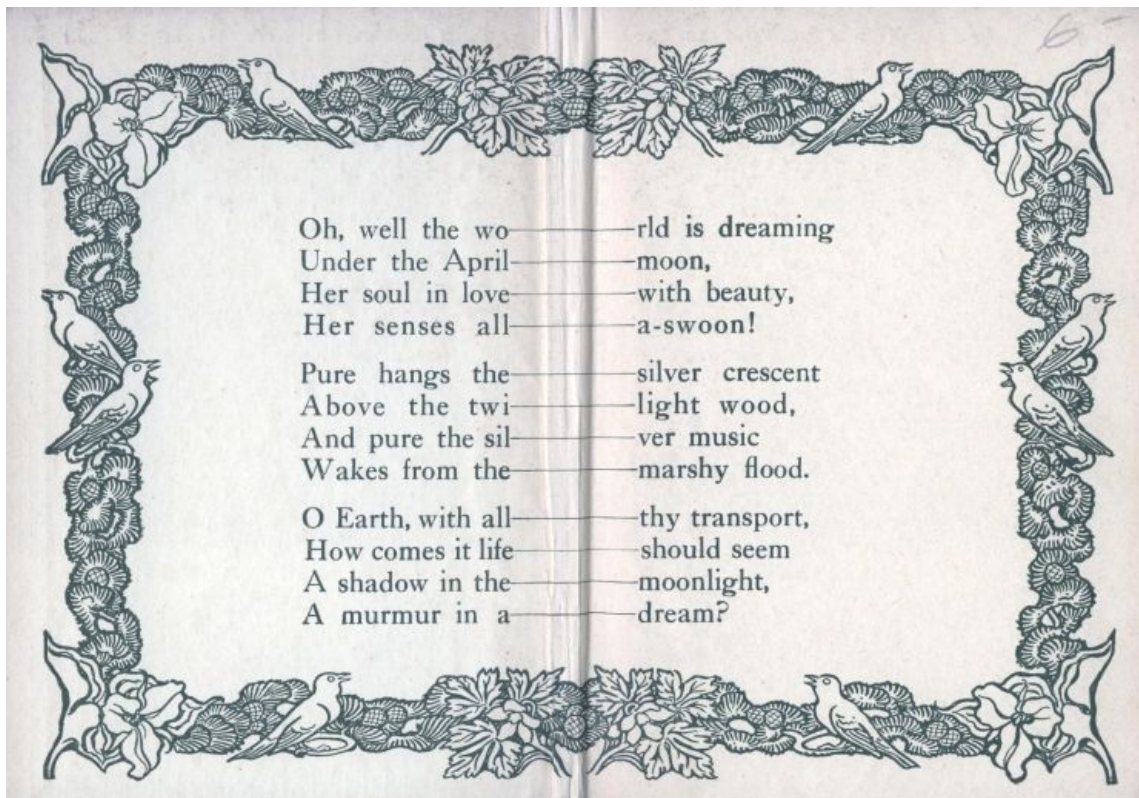
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\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LATER POEMS \*\*\*





Oh, well the wo—rld is dreaming  
Under the April—moon,  
Her soul in love—with beauty,  
Her senses all—a-swoon!

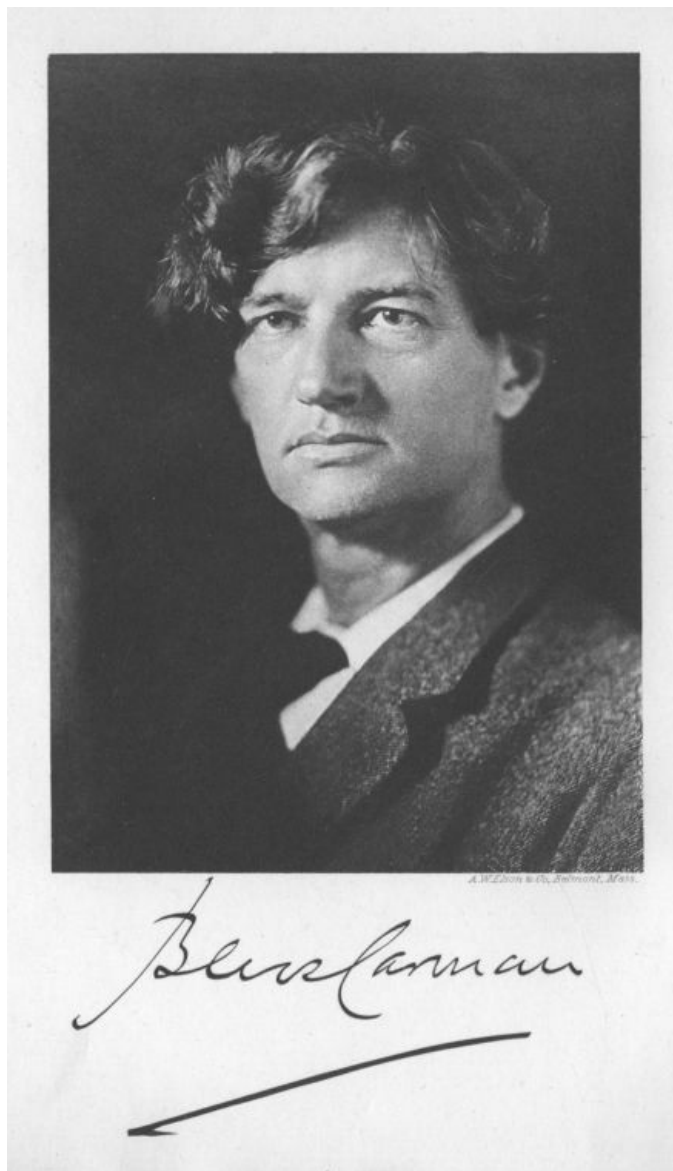
Pure hangs the—silver crescent  
Above the twi—light wood,  
And pure the sil—ver music  
Wakes from the—marshy flood.

O Earth, with all—thy transport,  
How comes it life—should seem  
A shadow in the—moonlight,  
A murmur in a—dream?

Oh, well the world is dreaming  
Under the April moon,  
Her soul in love with beauty,  
Her senses all a-swoon!

Pure hangs the silver crescent  
Above the twilight wood,  
And pure the silver music  
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**Bliss Carman**

## **LATER POEMS**

**BY BLISS CARMAN**

**WITH AN APPRECIATION  
BY R. H. HATHAWAY**

*And decorations by J. E. H. MacDonald A.R.C.A*

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### Publisher's Note

The present volume is made up of poems from Mr. Carman's three latest books, *The Rough Rider*, *Echoes from Vagabondia*, and *April Airs*, together with a number of more recent poems which have not before been issued in book form.

### Bliss Carman: An Appreciation

How many Canadians—how many even among the few who seek to keep themselves informed of the best in contemporary literature, who are ever on the alert for the new voices—realise, or even suspect, that this Northern land of theirs has produced a poet of whom it may be affirmed with confidence and assurance that he is of the great succession of English poets? Yet such—strange and unbelievable though it may seem—is in very truth the case, that poet being (to give him his full name) William Bliss Carman. Canada has full right to be proud of her poets, a small body though they are; but not only does Mr. Carman stand high and clear above them all—his place (and time cannot but confirm and justify the assertion) is among those men whose poetry is the shining glory of that great English literature which is our common heritage.

If any should ask why, if what has been just said is so, there has been—as must be admitted—no general recognition of the fact in the poet's home land, I would answer that there are various and plausible, if not good, reasons for it.

First of all, the poet, as thousands more of our young men of ambition and confidence have done, went early to the United States, and until recently, except for rare and brief visits to his old home down by the sea, has never returned to Canada—though for all that, I am able to state, on his own authority, he is still a Canadian citizen. Then all his books have had their original publication in the United States, and while a few of them have subsequently carried the imprints of Canadian publishers, none of these can be said ever to have made any special effort to push their sale. Another reason for the fact above mentioned is that Mr. Carman has always scorned to advertise himself, while his work has never been the subject of the log-rolling and booming which the work of many another poet has had—to his ultimate loss. A further reason is that he follows a rule of his own in preparing his books for publication. Most poets publish a volume of their work as soon as, through their industry and perseverance, they have material enough on hand to make publication desirable in their eyes. Not so with Mr. Carman, however, his rule being not to publish until he has done sufficient work of a certain general character or key to make a volume. As a result, you cannot fully know or estimate his work by one book, or two books, or even half a dozen; you must possess or be familiar with every one of the score and more volumes which contain his output of poetry before you can realise how great and how many-sided is his genius.

It is a common remark on the part of those who respond readily to the vigorous work of Kipling, or Masfield, even our own Service, that Bliss Carman's poetry has no relation to or

concern with ordinary, everyday life. One would suppose that most persons who cared for poetry at all turned to it as a relief from or counter to the burdens and vexations of the daily round; but in any event, the remark referred to seems to me to indicate either the most casual acquaintance with Mr. Carman's work, or a complete misunderstanding and misapprehension of the meaning of it. I grant that you will find little or nothing in it all to remind you of the grim realities and vexing social problems of this modern existence of ours; but to say or to suggest that these things do not exist for Mr. Carman is to say or to suggest something which is the reverse of true. The truth is, he is aware of them as only one with the sensitive organism of a poet can be; but he does not feel that he has a call or mission to remedy them, and still less to sing of them. He therefore leaves the immediate problems of the day to those who choose, or are led, to occupy themselves therewith, and turns resolutely away to dwell upon those things which for him possess infinitely greater importance.

"What are they?" one who knows Mr. Carman only as, say, a lyrist of spring or as a singer of the delights of vagabondia probably will ask in some wonder. Well, the things which concern him above all, I would answer, are first, and naturally, the beauty and wonder of this world of ours, and next the mystery of the earthly pilgrimage of the human soul out of eternity and back into it again.

The poems in the present volume—which, by the way, can boast the high honor of being the very first regular Canadian edition of his work—will be evidence ample and conclusive to every reader, I am sure, of the place which

The perennial enchanted  
Lovely world and all its lore

occupy in the heart and soul of Bliss Carman, as well as of the magical power with which he is able to convey the deep and unending satisfaction and delight which they possess for him. They, however, represent his latest period (he has had three well-defined periods), comprising selections from three of his last published volumes: *The Rough Rider*, *Echoes from Vagabondia*, and *April Airs*, together with a number of new poems, and do not show, except here and there and by hints and flashes, how great is his preoccupation with the problem of man's existence—

the hidden import  
Of man's eternal plight.

This is manifest most in certain of his earlier books, for in these he turns and returns to the greatest of all the problems of man almost constantly, probing, with consummate and almost unrivalled use of the art of expression, for the secret which surely, he clearly feels, lies hidden somewhere, to be discovered if one could but pierce deeply enough. Pick up *Behind the Arras*, and as you turn over page after page you cannot but observe how incessantly the poet's mind—like the minds of his two great masters, Browning and Whitman—works at this problem. In "Behind the Arras," the title poem; "In the Wings," "The Crimson House," "The Lodger," "Beyond the Gamut," "The Juggler"—yes, in every poem in the book—he takes up and handles the strange thing we know as, or call, life, turning it now this way, now that, in an effort to find out its meaning and purpose. He comes but little nearer success in this than do most of the rest of men, of course; but the magical and ever-fresh beauty of his expression, the haunting melody of his lines, the variety of his images and figures and the depth and range of his thought, put his searchings and ponderings in a class by themselves.

Lengthy quotation from Mr. Carman's books is not permitted here, and I must guide myself accordingly, though with reluctance, because I believe that in a study such as this the subject should be allowed to speak for himself as much as possible. In "Behind the Arras" the poet describes the passage from life to death as

A cadence dying down unto its source  
In music's course,

and goes on to speak of death as

the broken rhythm of thought and man,  
The sweep and span  
Of memory and hope  
About the orbit where they still must grope  
For wider scope,

To be through thousand springs restored, renewed,  
With love imbrued,  
With increments of will  
Made strong, perceiving unattainment still  
From each new skill.

Now follow some verses from "Behind the Gamut," to my mind the poet's greatest single

achievement;

As fine sand spread on a disc of silver,  
At some chord which bids the motes combine,  
Heeding the hidden and reverberant impulse,  
Shifts and dances into curve and line,

The round earth, too, haply, like a dust-mote,  
Was set whirling her assigned sure way,  
Round this little orb of her ecliptic  
To some harmony she must obey.

And what of man?

Linked to all his half-accomplished fellows,  
Through unfrontiered provinces to range—  
Man is but the morning dream of nature,  
Roused to some wild cadence weird and strange.

Here, now, are some verses from "Pulvis et Umbra," which is to be found in Mr. Carman's first book, *Low Tide on Grand Pré*, and in which the poet addresses a moth which a storm has blown into his window:

For man walks the world with mourning  
Down to death and leaves no trace,  
With the dust upon his forehead,  
And the shadow on his face.

Pillared dust and fleeing shadow  
As the roadside wind goes by,  
And the fourscore years that vanish  
In the twinkling of an eye.

"Pillared dust and fleeing shadow." Where in all our English literature will one find the life history of man summed up more briefly and, at the same time, more beautifully, than in that wonderful line? Now follows a companion verse to those just quoted, taken from "Lord of My Heart's Elation," which stands in the forefront of *From the Green Book of the Bards*. It may be remarked here that while the poet recurs again and again to some favorite thought or idea, it is never in the same words. His expression is always new and fresh, showing how deep and true is his inspiration. Again it is man who is pictured:

A fleet and shadowy column  
Of dust and mountain rain,  
To walk the earth a moment  
And be dissolved again.

But while Mr. Carman's speculations upon life's meaning and the mystery of the future cannot but appeal to the thoughtful-minded, it is as an interpreter of nature that he makes his widest appeal. Bliss Carman, I must say here, and emphatically, is no mere landscape-painter; he never, or scarcely ever, paints a picture of nature for its own sake. He goes beyond the outward aspect of things and interprets or translates for us with less keen senses as only a poet whose feeling for nature is of the deepest and profoundest, who has gone to her whole-heartedly and been taken close to her warm bosom, can do. Is this not evident from these verses from "The Great Return"—originally called "The Pagan's Prayer," and for some inscrutable reason to be found only in the limited *Collected Poems*, issued in two stately volumes in 1905 (1904)?

When I have lifted up my heart to thee,  
Thou hast ever hearkened and drawn near,  
And bowed thy shining face close over me,  
Till I could hear thee as the hill-flowers hear.

When I have cried to thee in lonely need,  
Being but a child of thine bereft and wrung,  
Then all the rivers in the hills gave heed;  
And the great hill-winds in thy holy tongue—

That ancient incommunicable speech—  
The April stars and autumn sunsets know—  
Soothed me and calmed with solace beyond reach  
Of human ken, mysterious and low.

Who can read or listen to those moving lines without feeling that Mr. Carman is in very truth a poet of nature—nay, Nature's own poet? But how could he be other when, in "The Breath of the Reed" (*From the Green Book of the Bards*), he makes the appeal?

Make me thy priest, O Mother,  
And prophet of thy mood,  
With all the forest wonder  
Enraptured and imbued.

As becomes such a poet, and particularly a poet whose birth-month is April, Mr. Carman sings much of the early spring. Again and again he takes up his woodland pipe, and lo! Pan himself and all his train troop joyously before us. Yet the singer's notes for all his singing never become wearied or strident; his airs are ever new and fresh; his latest songs are no less spontaneous and winning than were his first, written how many years ago, while at the same time they have gained in beauty and melody. What heart will not stir to the vibrant music of his immortal "Spring Song," which was originally published in the first *Songs from Vagabondia*, and the opening verses of which follow?

Make me over, mother April,  
When the sap begins to stir!  
When thy flowery hand delivers  
All the mountain-prisoned rivers,  
And thy great heart beats and quivers  
To revive the days that were,  
Make me over, mother April,  
When the sap begins to stir!

Take my dust and all my dreaming,  
Count my heart-beats one by one,  
Send them where the winters perish;  
Then some golden noon re cherish  
And restore them in the sun,  
Flower and scent and dust and dreaming,  
With their heart-beats every one!

That poem is sufficient in itself to prove that Bliss Carman has full right and title to be called Spring's own lyrist, though it may be remarked here that not all his spring poems are so unfeignedly joyous. Many of them indeed, have a touch, or more than a touch, of wistfulness, for the poet knows well that sorrow lurks under all joy, deep and well hidden though it may be.

Mr. Carman sings equally finely, though perhaps not so frequently, of summer and the other seasons; but as he has other claims upon our attention, I shall forbear to labor the fact, particularly as the following collection demonstrates it sufficiently. One of those other claims is as a writer of sea poetry. Few poets, it may be said, have pictured the majesty and the mystery, the beauty and the terror of the sea, better than he. His *Ballads of Lost Haven* is a veritable treasure-house for those whose spirits find kinship in wide expanses of moving waters. One of the best known poems in this volume is "The Gravedigger," which opens thus:

Oh, the shambling sea is a sexton old,  
And well his work is done.  
With an equal grave for lord and knave,  
He buries them every one.

Then hoy and rip, with a rolling hip,  
He makes for the nearest shore;  
And God, who sent him a thousand ship,  
Will send him a thousand more;  
But some he'll save for a bleaching grave,  
And shoulder them in to shore—  
Shoulder them in, shoulder them in,  
Shoulder them in to shore.

In "The City of the Sea" (*Last Songs from Vagabondia*) Mr. Carman speaks of the seabells sounding

The eternal cadence of sea sorrow  
For Man's lot and immemorial wrong—  
The lost strains that haunt the human dwelling  
With the ghost of song.

Elsewhere he speaks of

The great sea, mystic and musical.

And here from another poem is a striking picture:

... the old sea  
Seems to whimper and deplore  
Mourning like a childless crone  
With her sorrow left alone—  
The eternal human cry  
To the heedless passer-by.

I have said above that Mr. Carman has had three distinct periods, and intimated that the poems in the following collection are of his third period. The first period may be said to be represented by the *Low Tide* and *Behind the Arras* volumes, while the second is displayed in the three volumes of *Songs from Vagabondia*, which he published in association with his friend Richard Hovey. Bliss Carman was from the first too original and individual a poet to be directly influenced by anyone else; but there can be no doubt that his friendship with Hovey helped to turn him from over-preoccupation with mysteries which, for all their greatness, are not for man to solve, to an intenser realisation of the beauty and loveliness of the world about him and of the joys of human fellowship. The result is seen in such poems as "Spring Song," quoted in part above, and his perhaps equally well-known "The Joys of the Road," which appeared in the same volume with that poem, and a few verses from which follow:

Now the joys of the road are chiefly these:  
A crimson touch on the hardwood trees;  
  
A vagrant's morning wide and blue,  
In early fall, when the wind walks, too;  
  
A shadowy highway cool and brown,  
Alluring up and enticing down  
  
From rippled waters and dappled swamp,  
From purple glory to scarlet pomp;  
  
The outward eye, the quiet will,  
And the striding heart from hill to hill.

Some of the finest of Mr. Carman's work is contained in his elegiac or memorial poems, in which he commemorates Keats, Shelley, William Blake, Lincoln, Stevenson, and other men for whom he has a kindred feeling, and also friends whom he has loved and lost. Listen to these moving lines from "Non Omnis Moriar," written in memory of Gleeson White, and to be found in *Last Songs from Vagabondia*:

There is a part of me that knows,  
Beneath incertitude and fear,  
I shall not perish when I pass  
Beyond mortality's frontier;  
  
But greatly having joyed and grieved,  
Greatly content, shall hear the sigh  
Of the strange wind across the lone  
Bright lands of taciturnity.  
  
In patience therefore I await  
My friend's unchanged benign regard,—  
Some April when I too shall be  
Spilt water from a broken shard.

In "The White Gull," written for the centenary of the birth of Shelley in 1892, and included in *By the Aurelian Wall*, he thus apostrophizes that clear and shining spirit:

O captain of the rebel host,  
Lead forth and far!  
Thy toiling troopers of the night  
Press on the unavailing fight;  
The sombre field is not yet lost,  
With thee for star.



Thy lips have set the hail and haste  
Of clarions free  
    To bugle down the wintry verge  
    Of time forever, where the surge  
Thunders and trembles on a waste  
And open sea.

In "A Seamark," a threnody for Robert Louis Stevenson, which appears in the same volume, the poet hails "R.L.S." (of whose tribe he may be said to be truly one) as

The master of the roving kind,

and goes on:

O all you hearts about the world  
In whom the truant gypsy blood,  
Under the frost of this pale time,  
Sleeps like the daring sap and flood  
That dreams of April and reprieve!  
You whom the haunted vision drives,  
Incredulous of home and ease.  
Perfection's lovers all your lives!

You whom the wander-spirit loves  
To lead by some forgotten clue  
Forever vanishing beyond  
Horizon brinks forever new;  
Our restless loved adventurer,  
On secret orders come to him,  
Has slipped his cable, cleared the reef,  
And melted on the white sea-rim.

"Perfection's lovers all your lives." Of these, it may be said without qualification, is Bliss Carman himself.

No summary of Mr. Carman's work, however cursory, would be worthy of the name if it omitted mention of his ventures in the realm of Greek myth. *From the Book of Myths* is made up of work of that sort, every poem in it being full of the beauty of phrase and melody of which Mr. Carman alone has the secret. The finest poems in the book, barring the opening one, "Overlord," are "Daphne," "The Dead Faun," "Hylas," and "At Phædra's Tomb," but I can do no more here than name them, for extracts would fail to reveal their full beauty. And beauty, after all is said, is the first and last thing with Mr. Carman. As he says himself somewhere:

The joy of the hand that hews for beauty  
Is the dearest solace under the sun.

And again

The eternal slaves of beauty  
Are the masters of the world.

A slave—a happy, willing slave—to beauty is the poet himself, and the world can never repay him for the message of beauty which he has brought it.

Kindred to *From the Book of Myths*, but much more important, is *Sappho: One Hundred Lyrics*, one of the most successful of the numerous attempts which have been made to recapture the poems by that high priestess of song which remain to us only in fragments. Mr. Carman, as Charles G. D. Roberts points out in an introduction to the volume, has made no attempt here at translation or paraphrasing; his venture has been "the most perilous and most alluring in the whole field of poetry"—that of imaginative and, at the same time, interpretive construction. Brief quotation again would fail to convey an adequate idea of the exquisiteness of the work, and all I can do, therefore, is to urge all lovers of real poetry to possess themselves of *Sappho: One Hundred Lyrics*, for it is literally a storehouse of lyric beauty.

I must not fail here to speak of *From the Book of Valentines*, which contains some lovely things, notably "At the Great Release." This is not only one of the finest of all Mr. Carman's poems, but it is also one of the finest poems of our time. It is a love poem, and no one possessing any real feeling for poetry can read it without experiencing that strange thrill of the spirit which only the highest form of poetry can communicate. "Morning and Evening," "In an Iris Meadow," and "A letter from Lesbos" must be also mentioned. In the last named poem, Sappho is represented as writing to Gorgo, and expresses herself in these moving words:

If the high gods in that triumphant time

Have calendared no day for thee to come  
Light-hearted to this doorway as of old,  
Unmoved I shall behold their pomps go by—  
The painted seasons in their pageantry,  
The silvery progressions of the moon,  
And all their infinite ardors unsubdued,  
Pass with the wind replenishing the earth

Incredulous forever I must live  
And, once thy lover, without joy behold,  
The gradual uncounted years go by,  
Sharing the bitterness of all things made.

Mention must be now made of *Songs of the Sea Children*, which can be described only as a collection of the sweetest and tenderest love lyrics written in our time—

the lyric songs  
The earthborn children sing,  
When wild-wood laughter throngs  
The shy bird-throats of spring;  
When there's not a joy of the heart  
But flies like a flag unfurled,  
And the swelling buds bring back  
The April of the world.

So perfect and complete are these lyrics that it would be almost sacrilege to quote any of them unless entire. Listen however, to these verses:

The day is lost without thee,  
The night has not a star.  
Thy going is an empty room  
Whose door is left ajar.

Depart: it is the footfall  
Of twilight on the hills.  
Return: and every rood of ground  
Breaks into daffodils.

There are those who will have it that Bliss Carman has been away from Canada so long that he has ceased to be, in a real sense, a Canadian. Such assume rather than know, for a very little study of his work would show them that it is shot through and through with the poet's feeling for the land of his birth. Memories of his childhood and youthful years down by the sea are still fresh in Mr. Carman's mind, and inspire him again and again in his writing. "A Remembrance," at the beginning of the present collection, may be pointed to as a striking instance of this, but proof positive is the volume, *Songs from a Northern Garden*, for it could have been written only by a Canadian, born and bred, one whose heart and soul thrill to the thought of Canada. I would single out from this volume for special mention as being "Canadian" in the fullest sense "In a Grand Pré Garden," "The Keeper's Silence," "At Home and Abroad," "Killoleet," and "Above the Gaspereau," but have no space to quote from them.

But Mr. Carman is not only a Canadian, he is also a Briton; and evidence of this is his *Ode on the Coronation*, written on the occasion of the crowning of King Edward VII in 1902. This poem—the very existence of which is hardly known among us—ought to be put in the hands of every child and youth who speaks the English tongue, for no other, I dare maintain—nothing by Kipling, or Newbolt, or any other of our so-called "Imperial singers"—expresses more truly and more movingly the deep feeling of love and reverence which the very thought of England evokes in every son of hers, even though it may never have been his to see her white cliffs rise or to tread her storied ground:

O England, little mother by the sleepless Northern tide,  
Having bred so many nations to devotion, trust, and pride,  
Very tenderly we turn  
With welling hearts that yearn  
Still to love you and defend you,—let the sons of men discern  
Wherein your right and title, might and majesty, reside.

In concluding this, I greatly fear, lamentably inadequate study, I come to the collection which follows, and which, as intimated above, represents the work of Mr. Carman's latest period. I must say at once that, while I yield to no one in admiration for *Low Tide* and the other books of that

period, or for the work of the second period, as represented by the *Songs from Vagabondia* volumes, I have no hesitation in declaring that I regard the poet's work of the past few years with even higher admiration. It may not possess the force and vigor of the work which preceded it; but anything seemingly missing in that respect is more than made up for me by increased beauty and clarity of expression. The mysticism—verging, or more than verging, at times on symbolism—which marked his earlier poems, and which hung, as it were, as a veil between them and the reader, has gone, and the poet's thought or theme now lies clearly before us as in a mirror. What—to take a verse from the following pages at random—could be more pellucid, more crystal clear in expression—what indeed, could come closer to that achieving of the impossible at which every real poet must aim—than this from "In Gold Lacquer" (page 12)?

Gold are the great trees overhead,  
 And gold the leaf-strewn grass,  
 As though a cloth of gold were spread  
 To let a seraph pass.  
 And where the pageant should go by,  
 Meadow and wood and stream,  
 The world is all of lacquered gold,  
 Expectant as a dream.

The poet, happily, has fully recovered from the serious illness which laid him low some two years ago, and which for a time caused his friends and admirers the gravest concern, and so we may look forward hopefully to seeing further volumes of verse come from the press to make certain his name and fame. But if, for any reason, this should not be—which the gods forbend!—*Later Poems*, I dare affirm, must and will be regarded as the fine flower and crowning achievement of the genius and art of Bliss Carman.

R. H. HATHAWAY.

Toronto, 1921.

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## Later Poems

## **Vestigia.**

*I took a day to search for God,  
And found Him not. But as I trod  
By rocky ledge, through woods untamed,  
Just where one scarlet lily flamed,  
I saw His footprint in the sod.*

*Then suddenly, all unaware,  
Far off in the deep shadows, where  
A solitary hermit thrush  
Sang through the holy twilight hush—  
I heard His voice upon the air.*

*And even as I marvelled how  
God gives us Heaven here and now,  
In a stir of wind that hardly shook  
The poplar leaves beside the brook—  
His hand was light upon my brow.*

*At last with evening as I turned  
Homeward, and thought what I had learned  
And all that there was still to probe—  
I caught the glory of His robe  
Where the last fires of sunset burned.*

*Back to the world with quickening start  
I looked and longed for any part  
In making saving Beauty be....  
And from that kindling ecstasy  
I knew God dwelt within my heart.*

## **A Remembrance.**

Here in lovely New England  
When summer is come, a sea-turn  
Flutters a page of remembrance  
In the volume of long ago.

Soft is the wind over Grand Pré,  
Stirring the heads of the grasses,  
Sweet is the breath of the orchards  
White with their apple-blow.

There at their infinite business  
Of measuring time forever,  
Murmuring songs of the sea,  
The great tides come and go.

Over the dikes and the uplands  
Wander the great cloud shadows,  
Strange as the passing of sorrow,  
Beautiful, solemn, and slow.

For, spreading her old enchantment  
Of tender ineffable wonder,  
Summer is there in the Northland!  
How should my heart not know?

## **The Ships of Yule**

When I was just a little boy,

Before I went to school,  
I had a fleet of forty sail  
I called the Ships of Yule;

Of every rig, from rakish brig  
And gallant barkentine,  
To little Fundy fishing boats  
With gunwales painted green.

They used to go on trading trips  
Around the world for me,  
For though I had to stay on shore  
My heart was on the sea.

They stopped at every port to call  
From Babylon to Rome,  
To load with all the lovely things  
We never had at home;

With elephants and ivory  
Bought from the King of Tyre,  
And shells and silk and sandal-wood  
That sailor men admire;

With figs and dates from Samarcand,  
And squatty ginger-jars,  
And scented silver amulets  
From Indian bazaars;

With sugar-cane from Port of Spain,  
And monkeys from Ceylon,  
And paper lanterns from Pekin  
With painted dragons on;

With cocoanuts from Zanzibar,  
And pines from Singapore;  
And when they had unloaded these  
They could go back for more.

And even after I was big  
And had to go to school,  
My mind was often far away  
Aboard the Ships of Yule.

### **The Ships of Saint John**

Where are the ships I used to know,  
That came to port on the Fundy tide  
Half a century ago,  
In beauty and stately pride?

In they would come past the beacon light,  
With the sun on gleaming sail and spar,  
Folding their wings like birds in flight  
From countries strange and far.

Schooner and brig and barkentine,  
I watched them slow as the sails were furled,  
And wondered what cities they must have seen  
On the other side of the world.

Frenchman and Britisher and Dane,  
Yankee, Spaniard and Portugee,  
And many a home ship back again  
With her stories of the sea.

Calm and victorious, at rest  
From the relentless, rough sea-play,  
The wild duck on the river's breast  
Was not more sure than they.

The creatures of a passing race,  
The dark spruce forests made them strong,  
The sea's lore gave them magic grace,  
The great winds taught them song.

And God endowed them each with life—  
His blessing on the craftsman's skill—  
To meet the blind unreasoned strife  
And dare the risk of ill.

Not mere insensate wood and paint  
Obedient to the helm's command,  
But often restive as a saint  
Beneath the Heavenly hand.

All the beauty and mystery  
Of life were there, adventure bold,  
Youth, and the glamour of the sea  
And all its sorrows old.

And many a time I saw them go  
Out on the flood at morning brave,  
As the little tugs had them in tow,  
And the sunlight danced on the wave.

There all day long you could hear the sound  
Of the caulking iron, the ship's bronze bell,  
And the clank of the capstan going round  
As the great tides rose and fell.

The sailors' songs, the Captain's shout,  
The boatswain's whistle piping shrill,  
And the roar as the anchor chain runs out,—  
I often hear them still.

I can see them still, the sun on their gear,  
The shining streak as the hulls careen,  
And the flag at the peak unfurling,—clear  
As a picture on a screen.

The fog still hangs on the long tide-rips,  
The gulls go wavering to and fro,  
But where are all the beautiful ships  
I knew so long ago?

## **The Garden of Dreams**

My heart is a garden of dreams  
Where you walk when day is done,  
Fair as the royal flowers,  
Calm as the lingering sun.

Never a drouth comes there,  
Nor any frost that mars,  
Only the wind of love  
Under the early stars,—

The living breath that moves  
Whispering to and fro,  
Like the voice of God in the dusk  
Of the garden long ago.

## **Garden Magic**

Within my stone-walled garden



(I see her standing now,  
Uplifted in the twilight,  
With glory on her brow!)

I love to walk at evening  
And watch, when winds are low,  
The new moon in the tree-tops,  
Because she loved it so!

And there entranced I listen,  
While flowers and winds confer,  
And all their conversation  
Is redolent of her.

I love the trees that guard it,  
Upstanding and serene,  
So noble, so undaunted,  
Because that was her mien.

I love the brook that bounds it,  
Because its silver voice  
Is like her bubbling laughter  
That made the world rejoice.

I love the golden jonquils,  
Because she used to say,  
If soul could choose a color  
It would be clothed as they.

I love the blue-gray iris,  
Because her eyes were blue,  
Sea-deep and heaven-tender  
In meaning and in hue.

I love the small wild roses,  
Because she used to stand  
Adoringly above them  
And bless them with her hand.

These were her boon companions.  
But more than all the rest  
I love the April lilac,  
Because she loved it best.

Soul of undying rapture!  
How love's enchantment clings,  
With sorcery and fragrance,  
About familiar things!

### **In Gold Lacquer**

Gold are the great trees overhead,  
And gold the leaf-strewn grass,  
As though a cloth of gold were spread  
To let a seraph pass.  
And where the pageant should go by,  
Meadow and wood and stream,  
The world is all of lacquered gold,  
Expectant as a dream.

Against the sunset's burning gold,  
Etched in dark monotone  
Behind its alley of grey trees  
And gateposts of grey stone,  
Stands the Old Manse, about whose eaves  
An air of mystery clings,  
Abandoned to the lonely peace  
Of bygone ghostly things.

In molten gold the river winds  
With languid sweep and turn,

Beside the red-gold wooded hill  
Yellowed with ash and fern.  
The streets are tiled with gold-green shade  
And arched with fretted gold,  
Ecstatic aisles that richly thread  
This minster grim and old.

The air is flecked with filtered gold,—  
The shimmer of romance  
Whose ageless glamour still must hold  
The world as in a trance,  
Pouring o'er every time and place  
Light of an amber sea,  
The spell of all the gladsome things  
That have been or shall be.

### **Aprilian**

When April came with sunshine  
And showers and lilac bloom,  
My heart with sudden gladness  
Was like a fragrant room.

Her eyes were heaven's own azure,  
As deep as God's own truth.  
Her soul was made of rapture  
And mystery and youth.

She knew the sorry burden  
Of all the ancient years,  
Yet could not dwell with sadness  
And memory and tears.

With her there was no shadow  
Of failure nor despair,  
But only loving joyance.  
O Heart, how glad we were!

### **Garden Shadows**

When the dawn winds whisper  
To the standing corn,  
And the rose of morning  
From the dark is born,  
All my shadowy garden  
Seems to grow aware  
Of a fragrant presence,  
Half expected there.

In the golden shimmer  
Of the burning noon,  
When the birds are silent  
And the poppies swoon,  
Once more I behold her  
Smile and turn her face,  
With its infinite regard,  
Its immortal grace.

When the twilight silvers  
Every nodding flower,  
And the new moon hallows  
The first evening hour,  
Is it not her footfall  
Down the garden walks,

Where the drowsy blossoms  
Slumber on their stalks?

In the starry quiet,  
When the soul is free,  
And a vernal message  
Stirs the lilac tree,  
Surely I have felt her  
Pass and brush my cheek,  
With the eloquence of love  
That does not need to speak!

### **In The Day of Battle**

In the day of battle,  
In the night of dread,  
Let one hymn be lifted,  
Let one prayer be said.

Not for pride of conquest,  
Not for vengeance wrought,  
Nor for peace and safety  
With dishonour bought!

Praise for faith in freedom,  
Our fighting fathers' stay,  
Born of dreams and daring,  
Bred above dismay.

Prayer for cloudless vision,  
And the valiant hand,  
That the right may triumph  
To the last demand.

### **Trees**

In the Garden of Eden, planted by God,  
There were goodly trees in the springing sod,—

Trees of beauty and height and grace,  
To stand in splendor before His face.

Apple and hickory, ash and pear,  
Oak and beech and the tulip rare,

The trembling aspen, the noble pine,  
The sweeping elm by the river line;

Trees for the birds to build and sing,  
And the lilac tree for a joy in spring;

Trees to turn at the frosty call  
And carpet the ground for their Lord's footfall;

Trees for fruitage and fire and shade,  
Trees for the cunning builder's trade;

Wood for the bow, the spear, and the flail,  
The keel and the mast of the daring sail;

He made them of every grain and girth  
For the use of man in the Garden of Earth.

Then lest the soul should not lift her eyes  
From the gift to the Giver of Paradise,

On the crown of a hill, for all to see,  
God planted a scarlet maple tree.

## The Givers of Life

### I

Who called us forth out of darkness and gave us the gift of life,  
Who set our hands to the toiling, our feet in the field of strife?

Darkly they mused, predestined to knowledge of viewless things,  
Sowing the seed of wisdom, guarding the living springs.

Little they reckoned privation, hunger or hardship or cold,  
If only the life might prosper, and the joy that grows not old.

With sorceries subtler than music, with knowledge older than speech,  
Gentle as wind in the wheat-field, strong as the tide on the beach,

Out of their beauty and longing, out of their raptures and tears,  
In patience and pride they bore us, to war with the warring years.

### II

Who looked on the world before them, and summoned and chose  
our sires,  
Subduing the wayward impulse to the will of their deep desires?

Sovereigns of ultimate issues under the greater laws,  
Theirs was the mystic mission of the eternal cause;

Confident, tender, courageous, leaving the low for the higher,  
Lifting the feet of the nations out of the dust and the mire;  
Luring civilization on to the fair and new,  
Given God's bidding to follow, having God's business to do.

### III

Who strengthened our souls with courage, and taught us the ways  
of Earth?  
Who gave us our patterns of beauty, our standards of flawless worth?

Mothers, unmilitant, lovely, moulding our manhood then,  
Walked in their woman's glory, swaying the might of men.

They schooled us to service and honor, modest and clean and fair,—  
The code of their worth of living, taught with the sanction  
of prayer.

They were our sharers of sorrow, they were our makers of joy,  
Lighting the lamp of manhood in the heart of the lonely boy.

Haloed with love and with wonder, in sheltered ways they trod,  
Seers of sublime divination, keeping the truce of God.

### IV

Who called us from youth and dreaming, and set ambition alight,  
And made us fit for the contest,—men, by their tender rite?

Sweethearts above our merit, charming our strength and skill  
To be the pride of their loving, to be the means of their will.

If we be the builders of beauty, if we be the masters of art,  
Theirs were the gleaming ideals, theirs the uplift of the heart.

Truly they measure the lightness of trappings and ease and fame,  
For the teeming desire of their yearning is ever and ever the same:

To crown their lovers with gladness, to clothe their sons  
with delight,  
And see the men of their making lords in the best man's right.

Lavish of joy and labor, broken only by wrong,  
These are the guardians of being, spirited, sentient and strong.

Theirs is the starry vision, theirs the inspiriting hope,  
Since Night, the brooding enchantress, promised that day  
should ope.

## V

Lo, we have built and invented, reasoned, discovered and planned,  
To rear us a palace of splendor, and make us a heaven by hand.

We are shaken with dark misgiving, as kingdoms rise and fall;  
But the women who went to found them are never counted at all.

Versed in the soul's traditions, skilled in humanity's lore,  
They wait for their crown of rapture, and weep for the sins of war.

And behold they turn from our triumphs, as it was in the first  
of days,  
For a little heaven of ardor and a little heartening of praise.

These are the rulers of kingdoms beyond the domains of state,  
Martyrs of all men's folly, over-rulers of fate.  
These we will love and honor, these we will serve and defend,  
Fulfilling the pride of nature, till nature shall have an end.

## VI

This is the code unwritten, this is the creed we hold,  
Guarding the little and lonely, gladdening the helpless and old,—

Apart from the brunt of the battle our wondrous women shall bide,  
For the sake of a tranquil wisdom and the need of a spirit's guide.

Come they into assembly, or keep they another door,  
Our makers of life shall lighten the days as the years of yore.

The lure of their laughter shall lead us, the lilt of their words  
shall sway.  
Though life and death should defeat us, their solace shall be  
our stay.

Veiled in mysterious beauty, vested in magical grace,  
They have walked with angels at twilight and looked upon glory's face.

Life we will give for their safety, care for their fruitful ease,  
Though we break at the toiling benches or go down in the smoky seas.

This is the gospel appointed to govern a world of men.  
Till love has died, and the echoes have whispered the last Amen.

## A Fireside Vision

Once I walked the world enchanted  
Through the scented woods of spring,  
Hand in hand with Love, in rapture  
Just to hear a bluebird sing.

Now the lonely winds of autumn

Moan about my gusty eaves,  
As I sit beside the fire  
Listening to the flying leaves.

As the dying embers settle  
And the twilight falls apace,  
Through the gloom I see a vision  
Full of ardor, full of grace.

When the Architect of Beauty  
Breathed the lyric soul in man,  
Lo, the being that he fashioned  
Was of such a mould and plan!

Bravely through the deepening shadows  
Moves that figure half divine,  
With its tenderness of bearing,  
With its dignity of line.

Eyes more wonderful than evening  
With the new moon on the hill,  
Mouth with traces of God's humor  
In its corners lurking still.

Ah, she smiles, in recollection;  
Lays a hand upon my brow;  
Rests this head upon Love's bosom!  
Surely it is April now!

### **A Water Color**

There's a picture in my room  
Lightens many an hour of gloom,—

Cheers me under fortune's frown  
And the drudgery of town.

Many and many a winter day  
When my soul sees all things gray,

Here is veritable June,  
Heart's content and spirit's boon.

It is scarce a hand-breadth wide,  
Not a span from side to side,

Yet it is an open door  
Looking back to joy once more,

Where the level marshes lie,  
A quiet journey of the eye,

And the unsubstantial blue  
Makes the fine illusion true.

So I forth and travel there  
In the blessed light and air,

Miles of green tranquillity  
Down the river to the sea.

Here the sea-birds roam at will,  
And the sea-wind on the hill

Brings the hollow pebbly roar  
From the dim and rosy shore,

With the very scent and draft  
Of the old sea's mighty craft.

I am standing on the dunes,  
By some charm that must be June's,

When the magic of her hand  
Lays a sea-spell on the land.

And the old enchantment falls  
On the blue-gray orchard walls

And the purple high-top boles,  
While the orange orioles

Flame and whistle through the green  
Of that paradisaal scene.

Strolling idly for an hour  
Where the elder is in flower,

I can hear the bob-white call  
Down beyond the pasture wall.

Musing in the scented heat,  
Where the bayberry is sweet,

I can see the shadows run  
Up the cliff-side in the sun.

Or I cross the bridge and reach  
The mossers' houses on the beach,

Where the bathers on the sand  
Lie sea-freshened and sun-tanned.

Thus I pass the gates of time  
And the boundaries of clime,

Change the ugly man-made street  
For God's country green and sweet.

Fag of body, irk of mind,  
In a moment left behind,

Once more I possess my soul  
With the poise and self-control

Beauty gives the free of heart  
Through the sorcery of art.

### **Threnody for a Poet**

Not in the ancient abbey,  
Nor in the city ground,  
Not in the lonely mountains,  
Nor in the blue profound,  
Lay him to rest when his time is come  
And the smiling mortal lips are dumb;

But here in the decent quiet  
Under the whispering pines,  
Where the dogwood breaks in blossom  
And the peaceful sunlight shines,  
Where wild birds sing and ferns unfold,  
When spring comes back in her green and gold.

And when that mortal likeness  
Has been dissolved by fire,  
Say not above the ashes,  
"Here ends a man's desire."  
For every year when the bluebirds sing,  
He shall be part of the lyric spring.

Then dreamful-hearted lovers  
Shall hear in wind and rain  
The cadence of his music,  
The rhythm of his refrain,

For he was a blade of the April sod  
That bowed and blew with the whisper of God.

### **Dust of the Street**

This cosmic dust beneath our feet  
Rising to hurry down the street,

Borne by the wind and blown astray  
In its erratic, senseless way,

Is the same stuff as you and I—  
With knowledge and desire put by.

Thousands of times since time began  
It has been used for making man,

Freighted like us with every sense  
Of spirit and intelligence,

To walk the world and know the fine  
Large consciousness of things divine.

These wandering atoms in their day  
Perhaps have passed this very way,

With eager step and flowerlike face,  
With lovely ardor, poise, and grace,

On what delightful errands bent,  
Passionate, generous, and intent,—

An angel still, though veiled and gloved,  
Made to love us and to be loved.

Friends, when the summons comes for me  
To turn my back (reluctantly)

On this delightful play, I claim  
Only one thing in friendship's name;

And you will not decline a task  
So slight, when it is all I ask:

Scatter my ashes in the street  
Where avenue and crossway meet.

I beg you of your charity,  
No granite and cement for me,

To needlessly perpetuate  
An unimportant name and date.

Others may wish to lay them down  
On some fair hillside far from town,

Where slim white birches wave and gleam  
Beside a shadowy woodland stream,

Or in luxurious beds of fern,  
But I would have my dust return

To the one place it loved the best  
In days when it was happiest.

### **To a Young Lady on Her Birthday**



The marching years go by  
And brush your garment's hem.  
The bandits by and by  
Will bid you go with them.

Trust not that caravan!  
Old vagabonds are they;  
They'll rob you if they can,  
And make believe it's play.

Make the old robbers give  
Of all the spoils they bear,—  
Their truth, to help you live,—  
Their joy, to keep you fair.

Ask not for gauds nor gold,  
Nor fame that falsely rings;  
The foolish world grows old  
Caring for all these things.

Make all your sweet demands  
For happiness alone,  
And the years will fill your hands  
With treasures rarely known.

### **The Gift**

I said to Life, "How comes it,  
With all this wealth in store,  
Of beauty, joy, and knowledge,  
Thy cry is still for more?"

"Count all the years of striving  
To make thy burden less,—  
The things designed and fashioned  
To gladden thy success!

"The treasures sought and gathered  
Thy lightest whim to please,—  
The loot of all the ages,  
The spoil of all the seas!

"Is there no end of labor,  
No limit to thy need?  
Must man go bowed forever  
In bondage to thy greed?"

With tears of pride and passion  
She answered, "God above!  
I only wait the asking,  
To spend it all for love!"

### **The Cry of the Hillborn**

I am homesick for the mountains—  
My heroic mother hills—  
And the longing that is on me  
No solace ever stills.

I would climb to brooding summits  
With their old untarnished dreams,  
Cool my heart in forest shadows  
To the lull of falling streams;

Hear the innocence of aspens

That babble in the breeze,  
And the fragrant sudden showers  
That patter on the trees.

I am lonely for my thrushes  
In their hermitage withdrawn,  
Toning the quiet transports  
Of twilight and of dawn.

I need the pure, strong mornings,  
When the soul of day is still,  
With the touch of frost that kindles  
The scarlet on the hill;

Lone trails and winding woodroads  
To outlooks wild and high,  
And the pale moon waiting sundown  
Where ledges cut the sky.

I dream of upland clearings  
Where cones of sumac burn,  
And gaunt and gray-mossed boulders  
Lie deep in beds of fern;

The gray and mottled beeches,  
The birches' satin sheen,  
The majesty of hemlocks  
Crowning the blue ravine.

My eyes dim for the skyline  
Where purple peaks aspire,  
And the forges of the sunset  
Flare up in golden fire.

There crests look down unheeding  
And see the great winds blow,  
Tossing the huddled tree-tops  
In gorges far below;

Where cloud-mists from the warm earth  
Roll up about their knees,  
And hang their filmy tatters  
Like prayers upon the trees.

I cry for night-blue shadows  
On plain and hill and dome,—  
The spell of old enchantments,  
The sorcery of home.

### **A Mountain Gateway**

I know a vale where I would go one day,  
When June comes back and all the world once more  
Is glad with summer. Deep in shade it lies  
A mighty cleft between the bosoming hills,  
A cool dim gateway to the mountains' heart.

On either side the wooded slopes come down,  
Hemlock and beech and chestnut. Here and there  
Through the deep forest laurel spreads and gleams,  
Pink-white as Daphne in her loveliness.  
Among the sunlit shadows I can see  
That still perfection from the world withdrawn,  
As if the wood-gods had arrested there  
Immortal beauty in her breathless flight.

The road winds in from the broad river-lands,  
Luring the happy traveller turn by turn  
Up to the lofty mountains of the sky.  
And as he marches with uplifted face,  
Far overhead against the arching blue

Gray ledges overhang from dizzy heights,  
Scarred by a thousand winters and untamed.

And where the road runs in the valley's foot,  
Through the dark woods a mountain stream comes down,  
Singing and dancing all its youth away  
Among the boulders and the shallow runs,  
Where sunbeams pierce and mossy tree trunks hang  
Drenched all day long with murmuring sound and spray.

There light of heart and footfree, I would go  
Up to my home among the lasting hills.  
Nearing the day's end, I would leave the road,  
Turn to the left and take the steeper trail  
That climbs among the hemlocks, and at last  
In my own cabin doorway sit me down,  
Companioned in that leafy solitude  
By the wood ghosts of twilight and of peace,  
While evening passes to absolve the day  
And leave the tranquil mountains to the stars.

And in that sweet seclusion I should hear,  
Among the cool-leafed beeches in the dusk,  
The calm-voiced thrushes at their twilight hymn.  
So undistraught, so rapturous, so pure,  
They well might be, in wisdom and in joy,  
The seraphs singing at the birth of time  
The unworn ritual of eternal things.

### **Morning in the Hills**

How quiet is the morning in the hills!  
The stealthy shadows of the summer clouds  
Trail through the cañon, and the mountain stream  
Sounds his sonorous music far below  
In the deep-wooded wind-enchanted cove.

Hemlock and aspen, chestnut, beech, and fir  
Go tiering down from storm-worn crest and ledge,  
While in the hollows of the dark ravine  
See the red road emerge, then disappear  
Towards the wide plain and fertile valley lands.

My forest cabin half-way up the glen  
Is solitary, save for one wise thrush,  
The sound of falling water, and the wind  
Mysteriously conversing with the leaves.

Here I abide unvisited by doubt,  
Dreaming of far-off turmoil and despair,  
The race of men and love and fleeting time,  
What life may be, or beauty, caught and held  
For a brief moment at eternal poise.

What impulse now shall quicken and make live  
This outward semblance and this inward self?  
One breath of being fills the bubble world,  
Colored and frail, with fleeting change on change.

Surely some God contrived so fair a thing  
In a vast leisure of uncounted days,  
And touched it with the breath of living joy,  
Wondrous and fair and wise! It must be so.

## A Wood-path

At evening and at morning  
By an enchanted way  
I walk the world in wonder,  
And have no word to say.

It is the path we traversed  
One twilight, thou and I;  
Thy beauty all a rapture,  
My spirit all a cry.

The red leaves fall upon it,  
The moon and mist and rain,  
But not the magic footfall  
That made its meaning plain.

## Weather of the Soul

There is a world of being  
We range from pole to pole,  
Through seasons of the spirit  
And weather of the soul.

It has its new-born Aprils,  
With gladness in the air,  
Its golden Junes of rapture,  
Its winters of despair.

And in its tranquil autumns  
We halt to re-enforce  
Our tattered scarlet pennons  
With valor and resource.

From undiscovered regions  
Only the angels know,  
Great winds of aspiration  
Perpetually blow,

To free the sap of impulse  
From torpor of distrust,  
And into flowers of joyance  
Quicken the sentient dust.

From nowhere of a sudden  
Loom sudden clouds of fault,  
With thunders of oppression  
And lightnings of revolt.

With hush of apprehension  
And quaking of the heart,  
There breed the storms of anger,  
And floods of sorrow start.

And there shall fall,—how gently!—  
To make them fertile yet,  
The rain of absolution  
On acres of regret.

Till snows of mercy cover  
The dream that shall come true,  
When time makes all things wondrous,  
And life makes all things new.

## Here and Now

Where is Heaven? Is it not  
Just a friendly garden plot,  
Walled with stone and roofed with sun,  
Where the days pass one by one,  
Not too fast and not too slow,  
Looking backward as they go  
At the beauties left behind  
To transport the pensive mind!

Is it not a greening ground  
With a river for its bound,  
And a wood-thrush to prolong  
Fragrant twilights with his song,  
When the peonies in June  
Wait the rising of the moon,  
And the music of the stream  
Voices its immortal dream!

There each morning will renew  
The miracle of light and dew,  
And the soul may joy to praise  
The Lord of roses and of days;  
There the caravan of noon  
Halts to hear the cricket's tune,  
Fifing there for all who pass  
The anthem of the summer grass!

Does not Heaven begin that day  
When the eager heart can say,  
Surely God is in this place,  
I have seen Him face to face  
In the loveliness of flowers,  
In the service of the showers,  
And His voice has talked to me  
In the sunlit apple tree.

I can feel Him in my heart,  
When the tears of knowledge start  
For another's joy or woe,  
Where the lonely soul must go.  
Yea, I learned His very look,  
When we walked beside the brook,  
And you smiled and touched my hand.  
God is love... I understand.

### **The Angel of Joy**

There is no grief for me  
Nor sadness any more;  
For since I first knew thee  
Great Joy has kept my door.

That angel of the calm  
All-comprehending smile,  
No menace can dismay,  
No falsity beguile.

Out of the house of life  
Before him fled away  
Languor, regret, and strife  
And sorrow on that day.

Grim fear, unmanly doubt,  
And impotent despair  
Went at his bidding forth  
Among the things that were,—

Leaving a place all clean,  
Resounding of the sea  
And decked with forest green,

To be a home for thee.

### **The Homestead.**

Here we came when love was young.  
Now that love is old,  
Shall we leave the floor unswept  
And the hearth acold?

Here the hill-wind in the dusk.  
Wandering to and fro,  
Moves the moonflowers, like a ghost  
Of the long ago.

Here from every doorway looks  
A remembered face,  
Every sill and panel wears  
A familiar grace.

Let the windows smile again  
To the morning light,  
And the door stand open wide  
When the moon is bright.

Let the breeze of twilight blow  
Through the silent hall,  
And the dreaming rafters hear  
How the thrushes call.

Oh, be merciful and fond  
To the house that gave  
All its best to shelter love,  
Built when love was brave!

Here we came when love was young,  
Now that love is old,  
Never let its day be lone,  
Nor its heart acold!

### **"The Starry Midnight Whispers"**

The starry midnight whispers,  
As I muse before the fire  
On the ashes of ambition  
And the embers of desire,

"Life has no other logic,  
And time no other creed,  
Than: 'I for joy will follow.  
Where thou for love dost lead!'"

### **A Lyric**

Oh, once I could not understand  
The sob within the throat of spring,—  
The shrilling of the frogs, nor why  
The birds so passionately sing.

That was before your beauty came

And stooped to teach my soul desire,  
When on these mortal lips you laid  
The magic and immortal fire.

I wondered why the sea should seem  
So gray, so lonely, and so old;  
The sigh of level-driving snows  
In winter so forlornly cold.

I wondered what it was could give  
The scarlet autumn pomps their pride.  
And paint with colors not of earth  
The glory of the mountainside.

I could not tell why youth should dream  
And worship at the evening star,  
And yet must go with eager feet  
Where danger and where splendor are.

I could not guess why men at times,  
Beholding beauty, should go mad  
With joy or sorrow or despair  
Or some unknown delight they had.

I wondered what they had received  
From Time's inexorable hand  
So full of loveliness and doom.  
But now, ah, now I understand!

### **"April now in Morning Clad"**

April now in morning clad  
Like a gleaming oread,  
With the south wind in her voice,  
Comes to bid the world rejoice.

With the sunlight on her brow,  
Through her veil of silver showers,  
April o'er New England now  
Trails her robe of woodland flowers,—

Violet and anemone;  
While along the misty sea,  
Pipe at lip, she seems to blow  
Haunting airs of long ago.

### **Nike**

What do men give thanks for?  
I give thanks for one,  
Lovelier than morning,  
Dearer than the sun.

Such a head the victors  
Must have praised and known,  
With that breast and bearing,  
Nike's very own—

As superb, untrammelled,  
Rhythmed and poised and free  
As the strong pure sea-wind  
Walking on the sea;

Such a hand as Beauty  
Uses with full heart,

Seeking for her freedom  
In new shapes of art;

Soft as rain in April,  
Quiet as the days  
Of the purple asters  
And the autumn haze;

With a soul more subtle  
Than the light of stars,  
Frailer than a moth's wing  
To the touch that mars;

Wise with all the silence  
Of the waiting hills,  
When the gracious twilight  
Wakes in them and thrills;

With a voice more tender  
Than the early moon  
Hears among the thrushes  
In the woods of June;

Delicate as grasses  
When they lift and stir—  
One sweet lyric woman—  
I give thanks for her.

### **The Enchanted Traveller**

We travelled empty-handed  
With hearts all fear above,  
For we ate the bread of friendship,  
We drank the wine of love.

Through many a wondrous autumn,  
Through many a magic spring,  
We hailed the scarlet banners,  
We heard the blue-bird sing.

We looked on life and nature  
With the eager eyes of youth,  
And all we asked or cared for  
Was beauty, joy, and truth.

We found no other wisdom,  
We learned no other way,  
Than the gladness of the morning,  
The glory of the day.

So all our earthly treasure  
Shall go with us, my dears,  
Aboard the Shadow Liner,  
Across the sea of years.

### **Spring's Saraband**

Over the hills of April  
With soft winds hand in hand,  
Impassionate and dreamy-eyed,  
Spring leads her saraband.  
Her garments float and gather  
And swirl along the plain,  
Her headgear is the golden sun,  
Her cloak the silver rain.



With color and with music,  
With perfumes and with pomp,  
By meadowland and upland,  
Through pasture, wood, and swamp,  
With promise and enchantment  
Leading her mystic mime,  
She comes to lure the world anew  
With joy as old as time.

Quick lifts the marshy chorus  
To transport, trill on trill;  
There's not a rod of stony ground  
Unanswering on the hill.  
The brooks and little rivers  
Dance down their wild ravines,  
And children in the city squares  
Keep time, to tambourines.

The bluebird in the orchard  
Is lyrical for her,  
The blackbird with his meadow pipe  
Sets all the wood astir,  
The hooded white spring-beauties  
Are curtsyng in the breeze,  
The blue hepaticas are out  
Under the chestnut trees.

The maple buds make glamor,  
Viburnum waves its bloom,  
The daffodils and tulips  
Are risen from the tomb.  
The lances of Narcissus  
Have pierced the wintry mold;  
The commonplace seems paradise  
Through veils of greening gold.

O heart, hear thou the summons,  
Put every grief away,  
When all the motley masques of earth  
Are glad upon a day.  
Alack, that any mortal  
Should less than gladness bring  
Into the choral joy that sounds  
The saraband of spring!

## **Triumphalis**

Soul, art thou sad again  
With the old sadness?  
Thou shalt be glad again  
With a new gladness,  
When April sun and rain  
Mount to the teeming brain  
With the earth madness.

When from the mould again,  
Spurning disaster,  
Spring shoots unfold again,  
Follow thou faster  
Out of the drear domain  
Of dark, defeat, and pain,  
Praising the Master.

Hope for thy guide again,  
Ample and splendid;  
Love at thy side again,  
All doubting ended;  
(Ah, by the dragon slain,  
For nothing small or vain  
Michael contended!)

Thou shalt take heart again,  
No more despairing;  
Play thy great part again,  
Loving and caring.  
Hark, how the gold refrain  
Runs through the iron strain,  
Splendidly daring!

Thou shalt grow strong again,  
Confident, tender,—  
Battle with wrong again,  
Be truth's defender,—  
Of the immortal train,  
Born to attempt, attain,  
Never surrender!

### **"Now the Lengthening Twilights Hold"**

Now the lengthening twilights hold  
Tints of lavender and gold,  
And the marshy places ring  
With the pipers of the spring.

Now the solitary star  
Lays a path on meadow streams,  
And I know it is not far  
To the open door of dreams.

Lord of April, in my hour  
May the dogwood be in flower,  
And my angel through the dome  
Of spring twilight lead me home.

### **The Soul of April**

Over the wintry threshold  
Who comes with joy to-day,  
So frail, yet so enduring,  
To triumph o'er dismay?

Ah, quick her tears are springing,  
And quickly they are dried,  
For sorrow walks before her,  
But gladness walks beside.

She comes with gusts of laughter,—  
The music as of rills;  
With tenderness and sweetness,—  
The wisdom of the hills.

Her hands are strong to comfort,  
Her heart is quick to heed.  
She knows the signs of sadness,  
She knows the voice of need.

There is no living creature,  
However poor or small,  
But she will know its trouble,  
And hasten to its call.

Oh, well they fare forever,  
By mighty dreams possessed,  
Whose hearts have lain a moment  
On that eternal breast.

## **An April Morning**

Once more in misted April  
The world is growing green.  
Along the winding river  
The plumey willows lean.

Beyond the sweeping meadows  
The looming mountains rise,  
Like battlements of dreamland  
Against the brooding skies.

In every wooded valley  
The buds are breaking through,  
As though the heart of all things  
No languor ever knew.

The golden-wings and bluebirds  
Call to their heavenly choirs.  
The pines are blued and drifted  
With smoke of brushwood fires.

And in my sister's garden  
Where little breezes run,  
The golden daffodillies  
Are blowing in the sun.

## **Earth Voices**

### **I**

I heard the spring wind whisper  
Above the brushwood fire,  
"The world is made forever  
Of transport and desire.

I am the breath of being,  
The primal urge of things;  
I am the whirl of star dust,  
I am the lift of wings.

"I am the splendid impulse  
That comes before the thought,  
The joy and exaltation  
Wherein the life is caught.

"Across the sleeping furrows  
I call the buried seed,  
And blade and bud and blossom  
Awaken at my need.

"Within the dying ashes  
I blow the sacred spark,  
And make the hearts of lovers  
To leap against the dark."

### **II**

I heard the spring light whisper  
Above the dancing stream,

"The world is made forever  
In likeness of a dream.

"I am the law of planets,  
I am the guide of man;  
The evening and the morning  
Are fashioned to my plan.

"I tint the dawn with crimson,  
I tinge the sea with blue;  
My track is in the desert,  
My trail is in the dew.

"I paint the hills with color,  
And in my magic dome  
I light the star of evening  
To steer the traveller home.

"Within the house of being,  
I feed the lamp of truth  
With tales of ancient wisdom  
And prophecies of youth."

### III

I heard the spring rain murmur  
Above the roadside flower,  
"The world is made forever  
In melody and power.

"I keep the rhythmic measure  
That marks the steps of time,  
And all my toil is fashioned  
To symmetry and rhyme.

"I plow the untilled upland,  
I ripe the seeding grass,  
And fill the leafy forest  
With music as I pass.

"I hew the raw, rough granite  
To loveliness of line,  
And when my work is finished,  
Behold, it is divine!

"I am the master-builder  
In whom the ages trust.  
I lift the lost perfection  
To blossom from the dust."

### IV

Then Earth to them made answer,  
As with a slow refrain  
Born of the blended voices  
Of wind and sun and rain,

"This is the law of being  
That links the threefold chain:  
The life we give to beauty  
Returns to us again."

## Resurgam

Lo, now comes the April pageant  
And the Easter of the year.

Now the tulip lifts her chalice,  
And the hyacinth his spear;  
All the daffodils and jonquils  
With their hearts of gold are here.  
Child of the immortal vision,  
What hast thou to do with fear?

When the summons wakes the impulse,  
And the blood beats in the vein,  
Let no grief thy dream encumber,  
No regret thy thought detain.  
Through the scented bloom-hung valleys,  
Over tillage, wood and plain,  
Comes the soothing south wind laden  
With the sweet impartial rain.

All along the roofs and pavements  
Pass the volleying silver showers,  
To unfold the hearts of humans  
And the frail unanxious flowers.  
Breeding fast in sunlit places,  
Teeming life puts forth her powers,  
And the migrant wings come northward  
On the trail of golden hours.

Over intervale and upland  
Sounds the robin's interlude  
From his tree-top spire at evening  
Where no unbeliefs intrude.  
Every follower of beauty  
Finds in the spring solitude  
Sanctuary and persuasion  
Where the mysteries still brood.

Now the bluebird in the orchard,  
A warm sighing at the door,  
And the soft haze on the hillside,  
Lure the houseling to explore  
The perennial enchanted  
Lovely world and all its lore;  
While the early tender twilight  
Breathes of those who come no more.

By full brimming river margins  
Where the scents of brush fires blow,  
Through the faint green mist of springtime,  
Dreaming glad-eyed lovers go,  
Touched with such immortal madness  
Not a thing they care to know  
More than those who caught life's secret  
Countless centuries ago.

In old Egypt for Osiris,  
Putting on the green attire,  
With soft hymns and choric dancing  
They went forth to greet the fire  
Of the vernal sun, whose ardor  
His earth children could inspire;  
And the ivory flutes would lead them  
To the slake of their desire.

In remembrance of Adonis  
Did the Dorian maidens sing  
Linus songs of joy and sorrow  
For the coming back of spring,—  
Sorrow for the wintry death  
Of each irrevocable thing,  
Joy for all the pangs of beauty  
The returning year could bring.

Now the priests and holy women  
With sweet incense, chant and prayer,  
Keep His death and resurrection  
Whose new love bade all men share  
Immortality of kindness,  
Living to make life more fair.

Wakened to such wealth of being,  
Who would not arise and dare?

Seeing how each new fulfilment  
Issues at the call of need  
From infinitudes of purpose  
In the core of soul and seed,  
Who shall set the bounds of puissance  
Or the formulas of creed?  
Truth awaits the test of beauty,  
Good is proven in the deed.

Therefore, give thy spring renascence,—  
Freshened ardor, dreams and mirth,—  
To make perfect and replenish  
All the sorry fault and dearth  
Of the life from whose enrichment  
Thine aspiring will had birth;  
Take thy part in the redemption  
Of thy kind from bonds of earth.

So shalt thou, absorbed in beauty,  
Even in this mortal clime  
Share the life that is eternal,  
Brother to the lords of time,—  
Virgil, Raphael, Gautama,—  
Builders of the world sublime.  
Yesterday was not earth's evening  
Every morning is our prime.

All that can be worth the rescue  
From oblivion and decay,—  
Joy and loveliness and wisdom,—  
In thyself, without dismay  
Thou shalt save and make enduring  
Through each word and act, to sway  
The hereafter to a likeness  
Of thyself in other clay.

Still remains the peradventure,  
Soul pursues an orbit here  
Like those unreturning comets,  
Sweeping on a vast career,  
By an infinite directrix,  
Focussed to a finite sphere,—  
Nurtured in an earthly April,  
In what realm to reappear?

## **Easter Eve**

If I should tell you I saw Pan lately down by the shallows  
of Silvermine,  
Blowing an air on his pipe of willow, just as the moon began  
to shine;  
Or say that, coming from town on Wednesday, I met Christ walking  
in Ponus Street;  
You might remark, "Our friend is flighty! Visions, for want of  
enough red meat!"

Then let me ask you. Last December, when there was skating  
on Wampanaw,  
Among the weeds and sticks and grasses under the hard black  
ice I saw  
An old mud-turtle poking about, as if he were putting his house  
to rights,  
Stiff with the cold perhaps, yet knowing enough to prepare  
for the winter nights.

And here he is on a log this morning, sunning himself as calm  
as you please.

But I want to know, when the lock of winter was sprung of a sudden,  
who kept the keys?  
Who told old nibbler to go to sleep safe and sound with the  
lily roots,  
And then in the first warm days of April—out to the sun  
with the greening shoots?

By night a flock of geese went over, honking north on the trails  
of air,  
The spring express—but who despatched it, equipped with speed  
and cunning care?  
Hark to our bluebird down in the orchard trolling his chant  
of the happy heart,  
As full of light as a theme of Mozart's—but where did he learn  
that more than art?

Where the river winds through grassy meadows, as sure as the  
south wind brings the rain,  
Sounding his reedy note in the alders, the redwing comes back  
to his nest again.  
Are these not miracles? Prompt you answer: "Merely the prose  
of natural fact;  
Nothing but instinct plain and patent, born in the creatures,  
that bids them act."

Well, I have an instinct as fine and valid, surely, as that  
of the beasts and birds,  
Concerning death and the life immortal, too deep for logic,  
too vague for words.  
No trace of beauty can pass or perish, but other beauty  
is somewhere born;  
No seed of truth or good be planted, but the yield must grow  
as the growing corn.

Therefore this ardent mind and spirit I give to the glowing days  
of earth.  
To be wrought by the Lord of life to something of lasting import  
and lovely worth.  
If the toil I give be without self-seeking, bestowed to the limit  
of will and power,  
To fashion after some form ideal the instant task and the  
waiting hour,

It matters not though defeat undo me, though faults betray me  
and sorrows scar,  
Already I share the life eternal with the April buds and the  
evening star.  
The slim new moon is my sister now; the rain, my brother; the  
wind, my friend.  
Is it not well with these forever? Can the soul of man fare  
ill in the end?

### **Now is the Time of Year**

Now is the time of year  
When all the flutes begin,—  
The redwing bold and clear,  
The rainbird far and thin.

In all the waking lands  
There's not a wilding thing  
But knows and understands  
The burden of the spring.

Now every voice alive  
By rocky wood and stream  
Is lifted to revive  
The ecstasy, the dream.

For Nature, never old,

But busy as of yore,  
From sun and rain and mould  
Is making spring once more.

She sounds her magic note  
By river-marge and hill,  
And every woodland throat  
Re-echoes with a thrill.

O mother of our days,  
Hearing thy music call.  
Teach us to know thy ways  
And fear no more at all!

### **The Redwing**

I hear you, Brother, I hear you,  
Down in the alder swamp,  
Springing your woodland whistle  
To herald the April pomp!

First of the moving vanguard,  
In front of the spring you come,  
Where flooded waters sparkle  
And streams in the twilight hum.

You sound the note of the chorus  
By meadow and woodland pond,  
Till, one after one up-piping,  
A myriad throats respond.

I see you, Brother, I see you,  
With scarlet under your wing,  
Flash through the ruddy maples,  
Leading the pageant of spring.

Earth has put off her raiment  
Wintry and worn and old,  
For the robe of a fair young sibyl.  
Dancing in green and gold.

I heed you, Brother. To-morrow  
I, too, in the great employ,  
Will shed my old coat of sorrow  
For a brand-new garment of joy.

### **The Rainbird**

I hear a rainbird singing  
Far off. How fine and clear  
His plaintive voice comes ringing  
With rapture to the ear!

Over the misty wood-lots,  
Across the first spring heat,  
Comes the enchanted cadence,  
So clear, so solemn-sweet.

How often I have hearkened  
To that high pealing strain  
Across wild cedar barrens,  
Under the soft gray rain!

How often I have wondered,  
And longed in vain to know



The source of that enchantment,  
That touch of human woe!

O brother, who first taught thee  
To haunt the teeming spring  
With that sad mortal wisdom  
Which only age can bring?

### **Lament**

When you hear the white-throat pealing  
From a tree-top far away,  
And the hills are touched with purple  
At the borders of the day;

When the redwing sounds his whistle  
At the coming on of spring,  
And the joyous April pipers  
Make the alder marshes ring;

When the wild new breath of being  
Whispers to the world once more,  
And before the shrine of beauty  
Every spirit must adore;

When long thoughts come back with twilight,  
And a tender deepened mood  
Shows the eyes of the beloved  
Like the hepaticas in the wood;

Ah, remember, when to nothing  
Save to love your heart gives heed,  
And spring takes you to her bosom,—  
So it was with Golden Weed!

### **Under the April Moon**

Oh, well the world is dreaming  
Under the April moon,  
Her soul in love with beauty,  
Her senses all a-swoon!

Pure hangs the silver crescent  
Above the twilight wood,  
And pure the silver music  
Wakes from the marshy flood.

O Earth, with all thy transport,  
How comes it life should seem  
A shadow in the moonlight,  
A murmur in a dream?

### **The Flute of Spring**

I know a shining meadow stream  
That winds beneath an Eastern hill,  
And all year long in sun or gloom  
Its murmuring voice is never still.

The summer dies more gently there,  
The April flowers are earlier,—  
The first warm rain-wind from the Sound  
Sets all their eager hearts astir.

And there when lengthening twilights fall  
As softly as a wild bird's wing,  
Across the valley in the dusk  
I hear the silver flute of spring.

### **Spring Night**

In the wondrous star-sown night,  
In the first sweet warmth of spring,  
I lie awake and listen  
To hear the glad earth sing.

I hear the brook in the wood  
Murmuring, as it goes,  
The song of the happy journey  
Only the wise heart knows.

I hear the trilling note  
Of the tree-frog under the hill,  
And the clear and watery treble  
Of his brother, silvery shrill.

And then I wander away  
Through the mighty forest of Sleep,  
To follow the fairy music  
To the shore of an endless deep.

### **Bloodroot**

When April winds arrive  
And the soft rains are here,  
Some morning by the roadside  
These Fairy folk appear.

We never see their coming,  
However sharp our eyes;  
Each year as if by magic  
They take us by surprise.

Along the ragged woodside  
And by the green spring-run,  
Their small white heads are nodding  
And twinkling in the sun.

They crowd across the meadow  
In innocence and mirth,  
As if there were no sorrow  
In all this wondrous earth.

So frail, so unregarded,  
And yet about them clings  
A sorcery of welcome,—  
The joy of common things.

Perhaps their trail of beauty  
Across the pasture sod  
In jubilant procession  
Is where an angel trod.

## **Daffodil's Return**

What matter if the sun be lost?  
What matter though the sky be gray?  
There's joy enough about the house,  
For Daffodil comes home to-day.

There's news of swallows on the air,  
There's word of April on the way,  
They're calling flowers within the street,  
And Daffodil comes home to-day.

O who would care what fate may bring,  
Or what the years may take away!  
There's life enough within the hour,  
For Daffodil comes home to-day.

## **Now the Lilac Tree's in Bud**

Now the lilac tree's in bud,  
And the morning birds are loud.  
Now a stirring in the blood  
Moves the heart of every crowd.

Word has gone abroad somewhere  
Of a great impending change.  
There's a message in the air  
Of an import glad and strange.

Not an idler in the street,  
But is better off to-day.  
Not a traveller you meet,  
But has something wise to say.

Now there's not a road too long,  
Not a day that is not good,  
Not a mile but hears a song  
Lifted from the misty wood.

Down along the Silvermine  
That's the blackbird's cheerful note!  
You can see him flash and shine  
With the scarlet on his coat.

Now the winds are soft with rain,  
And the twilight has a spell,  
Who from gladness could refrain  
Or with olden sorrows dwell?

## **White Iris**

White Iris was a princess  
In a kingdom long ago,  
Mysterious as moonlight  
And silent as the snow.

She drew the world in wonder  
And swayed it with desire,  
Ere Babylon was builded  
Or a stone laid in Tyre.

Yet here within my garden  
Her loveliness appears,  
Undimmed by any sorrow  
Of all the tragic years.

How kind that earth should treasure  
So beautiful a thing—  
All mystical enchantment,  
To stir our hearts in spring!

### The Tree of Heaven

Young foreign-born Ailanthus,  
Because he grew so fast,  
We scorned his easy daring  
And doubted it would last.

But lo, when autumn gathers  
And all the woods are old,  
He stands in green and salmon,  
A glory to behold!

Among the ancient monarchs  
His airy tent is spread.  
His robe of coronation  
Is tasseled rosy red.

With something strange and Eastern,  
His height and grace proclaim  
His lineage and title  
Is that celestial name.

This is the Tree of Heaven,  
Which seems to say to us,  
"Behold how rife is beauty,  
And how victorious!"

### Peony

*"Pionia virtutem habet occultam."*  
Arnoldus Villanova—1235-1313.

*Arnoldus Villanova  
Six hundred years ago  
Said Peonies have magic,  
And I believe it so.  
There stands his learned dictum  
Which any boy may read,  
But he who learns the secret  
Will be made wise indeed.*

*Astrologer and doctor  
In the science of his day,  
Have we so far outstripped him?  
What more is there to say?  
His medieval Latin  
Records the truth for us,  
Which I translate—virtutem  
Habet occultam—thus:*

She hath a deep-hid virtue  
No other flower hath.  
When summer comes rejoicing  
A-down my garden path,

In opulence of color,  
In robe of satin sheen,  
She casts o'er all the hours  
Her sorcery serene.

A subtle, heartening fragrance  
Comes piercing the warm hush,  
And from the greening woodland  
I hear the first wild thrush.  
They move my heart to pity  
For all the vanished years,  
With ecstasy of longing  
And tenderness of tears.

By many names we call her,—  
Pale exquisite Aurore,  
Luxuriant Gismonda  
Or sunny Couronne D'Or.  
What matter,—Grandiflora,  
A queen in some proud book,  
Or sweet familiar Piny  
With her old-fashioned look?

The crowding Apple blossoms  
Above the orchard wall;  
The Moonflower in August  
When eerie nights befall;  
Chrysanthemum in autumn,  
Whose pageantries appear  
With mystery and silence  
To deck the dying year;

And many a mystic flower  
Of the wildwood I have known,  
But Pionia Arnoldi  
Hath a transport all her own.  
For Peony, my Peony,  
Hath strength to make me whole,—  
She gives her heart of beauty  
For the healing of my soul.

*Arnoldus Villanova,  
Though earth is growing old,  
As long as life has longing  
Your guess at truth will hold.  
Still works the hidden power  
After a thousand springs,—  
The medicine for heartache  
That lurks in lovely things.*

## **The Urban Pan**

Once more the magic days are come  
With stronger sun and milder air;  
The shops are full of daffodils;  
There's golden leisure everywhere.  
I heard my Lou this morning shout:  
"Here comes the hurdy-gurdy man!"  
And through the open window caught  
The piping of the urban Pan.

I laid my wintry task aside,  
And took a day to follow joy:  
The trail of beauty and the call  
That lured me when I was a boy.  
I looked, and there looked up at me  
A smiling, swarthy, hairy man  
With kindling eye—and well I knew  
The piping of the urban Pan.

He caught my mood; his hat was off;  
I tossed the ungrudged silver down.  
The cunning vagrant, every year  
He casts his spell upon the town!  
And we must fling him, old and young,  
Our dimes or coppers, as we can;  
And every heart must leap to hear  
The piping of the urban Pan.

The music swells and fades again,  
And I in dreams am far away,  
Where a bright river sparkles down  
To meet a blue Aegean bay.  
There, in the springtime of the world,  
Are dancing fauns, and in their van,  
Is one who pipes a deathless tune—  
The earth-born and the urban Pan.

And so he follows down the block,  
A troop of children in his train,  
The light-foot dancers of the street  
Enamored of the reedy strain.  
I hear their laughter rise and ring  
Above the noise of truck and van,  
As down the mellow wind fades out  
The piping of the urban Pan.

### **The Sailing of the Fleets**

Now the spring is in the town,  
Now the wind is in the tree,  
And the wintered keels go down  
To the calling of the sea.

Out from mooring, dock, and slip,  
Through the harbor buoys they glide,  
Drawing seaward till they dip  
To the swirling of the tide.

One by one and two by two,  
Down the channel turns they go,  
Steering for the open blue  
Where the salty great airs blow;

Craft of many a build and trim,  
Every stitch of sail unfurled,  
Till they hang upon the rim  
Of the azure ocean world.

Who has ever, man or boy,  
Seen the sea all flecked with gold,  
And not longed to go with joy  
Forth upon adventures bold?

Who could bear to stay indoor,  
Now the wind is in the street,  
For the creaking of the oar  
And the tugging of the sheet!

Now the spring is in the town,  
Who would not a rover be,  
When the wintered keels go down  
To the calling of the sea?

## 'Tis May now in New England

'Tis May now in New England  
And through the open door  
I see the creamy breakers,  
I hear the hollow roar.

Back to the golden marshes  
Comes summer at full tide,  
But not the golden comrade  
Who was the summer's pride.

### In Early May

O my dear, the world to-day  
Is more lovely than a dream!  
Magic hints from far away  
Haunt the woodland, and the stream  
Murmurs in his rocky bed  
Things that never can be said.

Starry dogwood is in flower,  
Gleaming through the mystic woods.  
It is beauty's perfect hour  
In the wild spring solitudes.  
Now the orchards in full blow  
Shed their petals white as snow.

All the air is honey-sweet  
With the lilacs white and red,  
Where the blossoming branches meet  
In an arbor overhead.  
And the laden cherry trees  
Murmur with the hum of bees.

All the earth is fairy green,  
And the sunlight filmy gold,  
Full of ecstasies unseen,  
Full of mysteries untold.  
Who would not be out-of-door,  
Now the spring is here once more!

### Fireflies

The fireflies across the dusk  
Are flashing signals through the gloom—  
Courageous messengers of light  
That dare immensities of doom.

About the seeding meadow-grass,  
Like busy watchmen in the street,  
They come and go, they turn and pass,  
Lighting the way for Beauty's feet.

Or up they float on viewless wings  
To twinkle high among the trees,  
And rival with soft glimmerings  
The shining of the Pleiades.

The stars that wheel above the hill  
Are not more wonderful to see,  
Nor the great tasks that they fulfill  
More needed in eternity.

## The Path to Sankoty

It winds along the headlands  
Above the open sea—  
The lonely moorland footpath  
That leads to Sankoty.

The crooning sea spreads sailless  
And gray to the world's rim,  
Where hang the reeking fog-banks  
Primordial and dim.

There fret the ceaseless currents,  
And the eternal tide  
Chafes over hidden shallows  
Where the white horses ride.

The wistful fragrant moorlands  
Whose smile bids panic cease,  
Lie treeless and cloud-shadowed  
In grave and lonely peace.

Across their flowering bosom,  
From the far end of day  
Blow clean the great soft moor-winds  
All sweet with rose and bay.

A world as large and simple  
As first emerged for man,  
Cleared for the human drama,  
Before the play began.

O well the soul must treasure  
The calm that sets it free—  
The vast and tender skyline,  
The sea-turn's wizardry,

Solace of swaying grasses,  
The friendship of sweet-fern—  
And in the world's confusion  
Remembering, must yearn

To tread the moorland footpath  
That leads to Sankoty,  
Hearing the field-larks shrilling  
Beside the sailless sea.

## Off Monomoy

Have you sailed Nantucket Sound  
By lightship, buoy, and bell,  
And lain becalmed at noon  
On an oily summer swell?

Lazily drooped the sail,  
Moveless the pennant hung,  
Sagging over the rail  
Idle the main boom swung;

The sea, one mirror of shine  
A single breath would destroy,  
Save for the far low line  
Of treacherous Monomoy.

Yet eastward there toward Spain,



What castled cities rise  
From the Atlantic plain,  
To our enchanted eyes!

Turret and spire and roof  
Looming out of the sea,  
Where the prosy chart gives proof  
No cape nor isle can be!

Can a vision shine so clear  
Wherein no substance dwells?  
One almost harks to hear  
The sound of the city's bells.

And yet no pealing notes  
Within those belfries be,  
Save echoes from the throats  
Of ship-bells lost at sea.

For none shall anchor there  
Save those who long of yore,  
When tide and wind were fair,  
Sailed and came back no more.

And none shall climb the stairs  
Within those ghostly towers,  
Save those for whom sad prayers  
Went up through fateful hours.

O image of the world,  
O mirage of the sea,  
Cloud-built and foam-impearled.  
What sorcery fashioned thee?

What architect of dream,  
What painter of desire,  
Conceived that fairy scheme  
Touched with fantastic fire?

Even so our city of hope  
We mortal dreamers rear  
Upon the perilous slope  
Above the deep of fear;

Leaving half-known the good  
Our kindly earth bestows,  
For the feigned beatitude  
Of a future no man knows.

Lord of the summer sea,  
Whose tides are in thy hand,  
Into immensity  
The vision at thy command

Fades now, and leaves no sign,—  
No light nor bell nor buoy,—  
Only the faint low line  
Of dangerous Monomoy.

### **In St. Germain Street**

Through the street of St. Germain  
March the tattered hosts of rain,

While the wind with vagrant fife  
Whips their chilly ranks to life.

From the window I can see  
Their ghostly banners blowing free,

As they pass to where the ships

Crowd about the wharves and slips.

There at day's end they embark  
To invade the realms of dark,

And the sun comes out again  
In the street of St. Germain.

### **Pan in the Catskills**

They say that he is dead, and now no more  
The reedy syrinx sounds among the hills,  
When the long summer heat is on the land.  
But I have heard the Catskill thrushes sing,  
And therefore am incredulous of death,  
Of pain and sorrow and mortality.

In these blue cañons, deep with hemlock shade,  
In solitudes of twilight or of dawn,  
I have been rapt away from time and care  
By the enchantment of a golden strain  
As pure as ever pierced the Thracian wild,  
Filling the listener with a mute surmise.

At evening and at morning I have gone  
Down the cool trail between the beech-tree boles,  
And heard the haunting music of the wood  
Ring through the silence of the dark ravine,  
Flooding the earth with beauty and with joy  
And all the ardors of creation old.

And then within my pagan heart awoke  
Remembrance of far-off and fabled years  
In the untarnished sunrise of the world,  
When clear-eyed Hellas in her rapture heard  
A slow mysterious piping wild and keen  
Thrill through her vales, and whispered, "It is Pan!"

### **A New England June**

*These things I remember  
Of New England June,  
Like a vivid day-dream  
In the azure noon,  
While one haunting figure  
Strays through every scene,  
Like the soul of beauty  
Through her lost demesne.*

Gardens full of roses  
And peonies a-blow  
In the dewy morning,  
Row on stately row,  
Spreading their gay patterns,  
Crimson, pied and cream,  
Like some gorgeous fresco  
Or an Eastern dream.

Nets of waving sunlight  
Falling through the trees;  
Fields of gold-white daisies  
Rippling in the breeze;  
Lazy lifting groundswells,  
Breaking green as jade

On the lilac beaches,  
Where the shore-birds wade.

Orchards full of blossom,  
Where the bob-white calls  
And the honeysuckle  
Climbs the old gray walls;  
Groves of silver birches,  
Beds of roadside fern,  
In the stone-fenced pasture  
At the river's turn.

*Out of every picture  
Still she comes to me  
With the morning freshness  
Of the summer sea,—  
A glory in her bearing,  
A sea-light in her eyes,  
As if she could not forget  
The spell of Paradise.*

Thrushes in the deep woods,  
With their golden themes,  
Fluting like the choirs  
At the birth of dreams.  
Fireflies in the meadows  
At the gate of Night,  
With their fairy lanterns  
Twinkling soft and bright.

Ah, not in the roses,  
Nor the azure noon,  
Nor the thrushes' music,  
Lies the soul of June.  
It is something finer,  
More unfading far,  
Than the primrose evening  
And the silver star;

Something of the rapture  
My beloved had,  
When she made the morning  
Radiant and glad,—  
Something of her gracious  
Ecstasy of mien,  
That still haunts the twilight,  
Loving though unseen.

*When the ghostly moonlight  
Walks my garden ground,  
Like a leisurely patrol  
On his nightly round,  
These things I remember  
Of the long ago,  
While the slumbrous roses  
Neither care nor know.*

## **The Tent of Noon**

Behold, now, where the pageant of high June  
Halts in the glowing noon!  
The trailing shadows rest on plain and hill;  
The bannered hosts are still,  
While over forest crown and mountain head  
The azure tent is spread.

The song is hushed in every woodland throat;  
Moveless the lilies float;  
Even the ancient ever-murmuring sea  
Sighs only fitfully;

The cattle drowse in the field-corner's shade;  
Peace on the world is laid.

It is the hour when Nature's caravan,  
That bears the pilgrim Man  
Across the desert of uncharted time  
To his far hope sublime,  
Rests in the green oasis of the year,  
As if the end drew near.

Ah, traveller, hast thou naught of thanks or praise  
For these fleet halcyon days?—  
No courage to uplift thee from despair  
Born with the breath of prayer?  
Then turn thee to the liled field once more!  
God stands in his tent door.

### **Children of Dream**

The black ash grows in the swampy ground,  
The white ash in the dry;  
The thrush he holds to the woodland bound,  
The hawk to the open sky.

The trout he runs to the mountain brook,  
The swordfish keeps the sea;  
The brown bear knows where the blueberry grows.  
The clover calls the bee.

The locust sings in the August noon,  
The frog in the April night;  
The iris loves the meadow-land,  
The laurel loves the height.

And each will hold his tenure old  
Of earth and sun and stream,  
For all are creatures of desire  
And children of a dream.

### **Roadside Flowers**

We are the roadside flowers,  
Straying from garden grounds,—  
Lovers of idle hours,  
Breakers of ordered bounds.

If only the earth will feed us,  
If only the wind be kind,  
We blossom for those who need us,  
The stragglers left behind.

And lo, the Lord of the Garden,  
He makes his sun to rise,  
And his rain to fall with pardon  
On our dusty paradise.

On us he has laid the duty,—  
The task of the wandering breed,—  
To better the world with beauty,  
Wherever the way may lead.

Who shall inquire of the season,  
Or question the wind where it blows?  
We blossom and ask no reason.  
The Lord of the Garden knows.

## The Garden of Saint Rose

This is a holy refuge,  
The garden of Saint Rose,  
A fragrant altar to that peace  
The world no longer knows.

Below a solemn hillside,  
Within the folding shade  
Of overhanging beech and pine  
Its walls and walks are laid.

Cool through the heat of summer,  
Still as a sacred grove,  
It has the rapt unworldly air  
Of mystery and love.

All day before its outlook  
The mist-blue mountains loom,  
And in its trees at tranquil dusk  
The early stars will bloom.

Down its enchanted borders  
Glad ranks of color stand,  
Like hosts of silent seraphim  
Awaiting love's command.

Lovely in adoration  
They wait in patient line,  
Snow-white and purple and deep gold  
About the rose-gold shrine.

And there they guard the silence,  
While still from her recess  
Through sun and shade Saint Rose looks down  
In mellow loveliness.

She seems to say, "O stranger,  
Behold how loving care  
That gives its life for beauty's sake,  
Makes everything more fair!

"Then praise the Lord of gardens  
For tree and flower and vine,  
And bless all gardeners who have wrought  
A resting place like mine!"

## The World Voice

I heard the summer sea  
Murmuring to the shore  
Some endless story of a wrong  
The whole world must deplore.

I heard the mountain wind  
Conversing with the trees  
Of an old sorrow of the hills,  
Mysterious as the sea's.

And all that haunted day  
It seemed that I could hear  
The echo of an ancient speech  
Ring in my listening ear.

And then it came to me,

That all that I had heard  
Was my own heart in the sea's voice  
And the wind's lonely word.

## **Songs of the Grass**

### **I**

#### **ON THE DUNES.**

Here all night on the dunes  
In the rocking wind we sleep,  
Watched by sentry stars,  
Lulled by the drone of the deep.

Till hark, in the chill of the dawn  
A field lark wakes and cries,  
And over the floor of the sea  
We watch the round sun rise.

The world is washed once more  
In a tide of purple and gold,  
And the heart of the land is filled  
With desires and dreams untold.

### **II**

#### **LORD OF MORNING.**

Lord of morning, light of day,  
Sacred color-kindling sun,  
We salute thee in the way,—  
Pilgrims robed in rose and dun.

For thou art a pilgrim too,  
Overlord of all our band.  
In thy fervor we renew  
Quests we do not understand.

At thy summons we arise,  
At thy touch put glory on.  
And with glad unanxious eyes  
Take the journey thou hast gone.

### **III**

#### **THE TRAVELLER.**

Before the night-blue fades  
And the stars are quite gone,  
I lift my head  
At the noiseless tread  
Of the angel of dawn.

I hear no word, yet my heart  
Is beating apace;  
Then in glory all still  
On the eastern hill  
I behold his face.

All day through the world he goes,  
Making glad, setting free;  
Then his day's work done,

On the galleon sun  
He sinks in the sea.

## The Choristers

When earth was finished and fashioned well,  
There was never a musical note to tell  
How glad God was, save the voice of the rain  
And the sea and the wind on the lonely plain  
And the rivers among the hills.  
And so God made the marvellous birds  
For a choir of joy transcending words,  
That the world might hear and comprehend  
How rhythm and harmony can mend  
The spirits' hurts and ills.

He filled their tiny bodies with fire,  
He taught them love for their chief desire,  
And gave them the magic of wings to be  
His celebrants over land and sea,  
Wherever man might dwell.  
And to each he apportioned a fragment of song—  
Those broken melodies that belong  
To the seraphs' chorus, that we might learn  
The healing of gladness and discern  
In beauty how all is well.

So music dwells in the glorious throats  
Forever, and the enchanted notes  
Fall with rapture upon our ears,  
Moving our hearts to joy and tears  
For things we cannot say.  
In the wilds the whitethroat sings in the rain  
His pure, serene, half-wistful strain;  
And when twilight falls the sleeping hills  
Ring with the cry of the whippoorwills  
In the blue dusk far away.

In the great white heart of the winter storm  
The chickadee sings, for his heart is warm,  
And his note is brave to rally the soul  
From doubt and panic to self-control  
And elation that knows no fear.  
The bluebird comes with the winds of March,  
Like a shred of sky on the naked larch;  
The redwing follows the April rain  
To whistle contentment back again  
With his sturdy call of cheer.

The orioles revel through orchard boughs  
In their coats of gold for spring's carouse;  
In shadowy pastures the bobwhites call,  
And the flute of the thrush has a melting fall  
Under the evening star.  
On the verge of June when peonies blow  
And joy comes back to the world we know,  
The bobolinks fill the fields of light  
With a tangle of music silver-bright  
To tell how glad they are.

The tiny warblers fill summer trees  
With their exquisite lesser litanies;  
The tanager in his scarlet coat  
In the hemlock pours from a vibrant throat  
His canticle of the sun.  
The loon on the lake, the hawk in the sky,  
And the sea-gull—each has a piercing cry,  
Like outposts set in the lonely vast  
To cry "all's well" as Time goes past  
And another hour is gone.

But of all the music in God's plan  
Of a mystical symphony for man,  
I shall remember best of all—  
Whatever hereafter may befall  
Or pass and cease to be—  
The hermit's hymn in the solitudes  
Of twilight through the mountain woods,  
And the field-larks crying about our doors  
On the soft sweet wind across the moors  
At morning by the sea.

### The Weed's Counsel

*Said a traveller by the way  
Pausing, "What hast thou to say,  
Flower by the dusty road,  
That would ease a mortal's load?"*

Traveller, hearken unto me!  
I will tell thee how to see  
Beauties in the earth and sky  
Hidden from the careless eye.  
I will tell thee how to hear  
Nature's music wild and clear,—  
Songs of midday and of dark  
Such as many never mark,  
Lyrics of creation sung  
Ever since the world was young.

And thereafter thou shalt know  
Neither weariness nor woe.

Thou shalt see the dawn unfold  
Artistries of rose and gold,  
And the sunbeams on the sea  
Dancing with the wind for glee.  
The red lilies of the moors  
Shall be torches on the floors,  
Where the field-lark lifts his cry  
To rejoice the passer-by,  
In a wide world rimmed with blue  
Lovely as when time was new.

And thereafter thou shalt fare  
Light of foot and free from care.

I will teach thee how to find  
Lost enchantments of the mind  
All about thee, never guessed  
By indifferent unrest.  
Thy distracted thought shall learn  
Patience from the roadside fern,  
And a sweet philosophy  
From the flowering locust tree,—  
While thy heart shall not disdain  
The consolation of the rain.

Not an acre but shall give  
Of its strength to help thee live.

With the many-wintered sun  
Shall thy hardy course be run.  
And the bright new moon shall be  
A lamp to thy felicity.  
When green-mantled spring shall come  
Past thy door with flute and drum,  
And when over wood and swamp  
Autumn trails her scarlet pomp,  
No misgiving shalt thou know,  
Passing glad to rise and go.



So thy days shall be unrolled  
Like a wondrous cloth of gold.

When gray twilight with her star  
Makes a heaven that is not far,  
Touched with shadows and with dreams,  
Thou shalt hear the woodland streams  
Singing through the starry night  
Holy anthems of delight.  
So the ecstasy of earth  
Shall refresh thee as at birth,  
And thou shalt arise each morn  
Radiant with a soul reborn.

And this wisdom of a day  
None shall ever take away.

What the secret, what the clew  
The wayfarer must pursue?  
Only one thing he must have  
Who would share these transports brave.  
Love within his heart must dwell  
Like a bubbling roadside well,  
For a spring to quicken thought,  
Else my counsel comes to naught.  
For without that quickening trust  
We are less than roadside dust.

This, O traveller, is my creed,—  
All the wisdom of the weed!

*Then the traveller set his pack  
Once more on his dusty back,  
And trudged on for many a mile  
Fronting fortune with a smile.*

### **The Blue Heron**

I see the great blue heron  
Rising among the reeds  
And floating down the wind,  
Like a gliding sail  
With the set of the stream.

I hear the two-horse mower  
Clacking among the hay,  
In the heat of a July noon,  
And the driver's voice  
As he turns his team.

I see the meadow lilies  
Flecked with their darker tan,  
The elms, and the great white clouds;  
And all the world  
Is a passing dream.

### **Woodland Rain**

Shining, shining children  
Of the summer rain,  
Racing down the valley,  
Sweeping o'er the plain!

Rushing through the forest,

Pelting on the leaves,  
Drenching down the meadow  
With its standing sheaves;

Robed in royal silver,  
Girt with jewels gay,  
With a gust of gladness  
You pass upon your way.

Fresh, ah, fresh behind you,  
Sunlit and impearled,  
As it was in Eden,  
Lies the lovely world!

### **Summer Storm**

The hilltop trees are bowing  
Under the coming of storm.  
The low, gray clouds are trailing  
Like squadrons that sweep and form,  
With their ammunition of rain.

Then the trumpeter wind gives signal  
To unlimber the viewless guns;  
The cattle huddle together;  
Indoors the farmer runs;  
And the first shot lashes the pane.

They charge through the quiet orchard;  
One pear tree is snapped like a wand;  
As they sweep from the shattered hillside,  
Ruffling the blackened pond,  
Ere the sun takes the field again.

### **Dance of the Sunbeams**

When morning is high o'er the hilltops,  
On river and stream and lake,  
Wherever a young breeze whispers,  
The sun-clad dancers wake.

One after one up-springing,  
They flash from their dim retreat.  
Merry as running laughter  
Is the news of their twinkling feet.

Over the floors of azure  
Wherever the wind-flaws run,  
Sparkling, leaping, and racing,  
Their antics scatter the sun.

As long as water ripples  
And weather is clear and glad,  
Day after day they are dancing,  
Never a moment sad.

But when through the field of heaven  
The wings of storm take flight,  
At a touch of the flying shadows  
They falter and slip from sight.

Until at the gray day's ending,  
As the squadrons of cloud retire,  
They pass in the triumph of sunset  
With banners of crimson fire.

## **The Campfire of the Sun**

Lo, now, the journeying sun,  
Another day's march done,  
Kindles his campfire at the edge of night!  
And in the twilight pale  
Above his crimson trail,  
The stars move out their cordons still and bright.

Now in the darkening hush  
A solitary thrush  
Sings on in silvery rapture to the deep;  
While brooding on her best,  
The wandering soul has rest,  
And earth receives her sacred gift of sleep.

## **Summer Streams**

All day long beneath the sun  
Shining through the fields they run,

Singing in a cadence known  
To the seraphs round the throne.

And the traveller drawing near  
Through the meadow, halts to hear

Anthems of a natural joy  
No disaster can destroy.

All night long from set of sun  
Through the starry woods they run,

Singing through the purple dark  
Songs to make a traveller hark.

All night long, when winds are low,  
Underneath my window go

The immortal happy streams,  
Making music through my dreams.

## **The God of the Wood**

Here all the forces of the wood  
As one converge,  
To make the soul of solitude  
Where all things merge.

The sun, the rain-wind, and the rain,  
The visiting moon,  
The hurrying cloud by peak and plain,  
Each with its boon.

Here power attains perfection still  
In mighty ease,  
That the great earth may have her will  
Of joy and peace.

And so through me, the mortal born  
Of plasmic clay,  
Immortal powers, kind, fierce, forlorn,  
And glad, have sway.

Eternal passions, ardors fine,  
And monstrous fears,  
Rule and rebel, serene, malign,  
Or loosed in tears;

Until at last they shall evolve  
From griefs and joys  
Some steady light, some firm resolve,  
Some Godlike poise.

### **At Sunrise**

Now the stars have faded  
In the purple chill,  
Lo, the sun is kindling  
On the eastern hill.

Tree by tree the forest  
Takes the golden tinge,  
As the shafts of glory  
Pierce the summit's fringe.

Rock by rock the ledges  
Take the rosy sheen,  
As the tide of splendor  
Floods the dark ravine.

Like a shining angel  
At my cabin door,  
Shod with hope and silence,  
Day is come once more.

Then, as if in sorrow  
That you are not here,  
All his magic beauties  
Gray and disappear.

### **At Twilight**

Now the fire is lighted  
On the chimney stone,  
Day goes down the valley,  
I am left alone.

Now the misty purple  
Floods the darkened vale,  
And the stars come out  
On the twilight trail.

The mountain river murmurs  
In his rocky bed,  
And the stealthy shadows  
Fill the house with dread.

Then I hear your laughter  
At the open door,—  
Brightly burns the fire,  
I need fear no more.

## Moonrise

At the end of the road through the wood  
I see the great moon rise.  
The fields are flooded with shine,  
And my soul with surmise.

What if that mystic orb  
With her shadowy beams,  
Should be the revealer at last  
Of my darkest dreams!

What if this tender fire  
In my heart's deep hold  
Should be wiser than all the lore  
Of the sages of old!

## The Queen of Night

Mortal, mortal, have you seen  
In the scented summer night,  
Great Astarte, clad in green  
With a veil of mystic light,  
Passing on her silent way,  
Pale and lovelier than day?

Mortal, mortal, have you heard,  
On an odorous summer eve,  
Rumors of an unknown word  
Bidding sorrow not to grieve,—  
Echoes of a silver voice  
Bidding every heart rejoice?

Mortal, when the slim new moon  
Hangs above the western hill,  
When the year comes round to June  
And the leafy world is still,  
Then, enraptured, you shall hear  
Secrets for a poet's ear.

Mortal, mortal, come with me,  
When the moon is rising large,  
Through the wood or from the sea,  
Or by some lone river marge.  
There, entranced, you shall behold  
Beauty's self, that grows not old.

## Night Lyric

In the world's far edges  
Faint and blue,  
Where the rocky ledges  
Stand in view,

Fades the rosy, tender  
Evening light;  
Then in starry splendor  
Comes the night.

So a stormy lifetime

Comes to close,  
Spirit's mortal strifefime  
Finds repose.

Faith and toil and vision  
Crowned at last,  
Failure and derision  
Overpast,—

All the daylight splendor  
Far above,  
Calm and sure and tender  
Comes thy love.

### **The Heart of Night**

When all the stars are sown  
Across the night-blue space,  
With the immense unknown,  
In silence face to face.

We stand in speechless awe  
While Beauty marches by,  
And wonder at the Law  
Which wears such majesty.

How small a thing is man  
In all that world-sown vast,  
That he should hope or plan  
Or dream his dream could last!

O doubter of the light,  
Confused by fear and wrong,  
Lean on the heart of night  
And let love make thee strong!

The Good that is the True  
Is clothed with Beauty still.  
Lo, in their tent of blue,  
The stars above the hill!

### **Peace**

The sleeping tarn is dark  
Below the wooded hill.  
Save for its homing sounds,  
The twilit world grows still.

And I am left to muse  
In grave-eyed mystery,  
And watch the stars come out  
As sandalled dusk goes by.

And now the light is gone,  
The drowsy murmurs cease,  
And through the still unknown  
I wonder whence comes peace.

Then softly falls the word  
Of one beyond a name,  
"Peace only comes to him  
Who guards his life from shame,—

"Who gives his heart to love,  
And holding truth for guide,

Girds him with fearless strength,  
That freedom may abide."

### **The Old Gray Wall**

Time out of mind I have stood  
Fronting the frost and the sun,  
That the dream of the world might endure,  
And the goodly will be done.

Did the hand of the builder guess,  
As he laid me stone by stone,  
A heart in the granite lurked,  
Patient and fond as his own?

Lovers have leaned on me  
Under the summer moon,  
And mowers laughed in my shade  
In the harvest heat at noon.

Children roving the fields  
With early flowers in spring,  
Old men turning to look,  
When they heard a bluebird sing,

Have seen me a thousand times  
Standing here in the sun,  
Yet never a moment dreamed  
Whose likeness they gazed upon.

Ah, when will ye understand,  
Mortals who strive and plod,—  
Who rests on this old gray wall  
Lays a hand on the shoulder of God!

### **Te Deum**

If I could paint you the autumn color, the melting glow upon all  
things laid,  
The violet haze of Indian summer, before its splendor begins to fade,  
When scarlet has reached its breathless moment, and gold the hush  
of its glory now,  
That were a mightier craft than Titian's, the heart to lift and  
the head to bow.

I should be lord of a world of rapture, master of magic and gladness,  
too,—  
The touch of wonder transcending science, the solace escaping from  
line and hue;  
I would reveal through tint and texture the very soul of this earth  
of ours,  
Forever yearning through boundless beauty to exalt the spirit with  
all her powers.

See where it lies by the lake this morning, our autumn hillside  
of hardwood trees,  
A masterpiece of the mighty painter who works in the primal mysteries.  
A living tapestry, rich and glowing with blended marvels, vermilion  
and dun,  
Hung out for the pageant of time that passes along an avenue  
of the sun!

The crown of the ash is tinged with purple, the hickory leaves  
are Etruscan gold,

And the tulip-tree lifts yellow banners against the blue for  
a signal bold;  
The oaks in crimson cohorts stand, a myriad sumach torches mass  
In festal pomp and victorious pride, when the vision of spring  
is brought to pass.

Down from the line of the shore's deep shadows another and  
softer picture lies,  
As if the soul of the lake in slumber should harbor a dream  
of paradise,—  
Passive and blurred and unsubstantial, lulling the sense and  
luring the mind  
With the spell of an empty fairy world, where sinew and sap  
are left behind.

So men dream of a far-off heaven of power and knowledge and  
endless joy,  
Asleep to the moment's fine elation, dull to the day's divine  
employ,  
Musing over a phantom image, born of fantastic hope and fear,  
Of the very happiness life engenders and earth provides—our  
privilege here.

Dare we dispel a single transport, neglect the worth that is  
here and now,  
Yet dream of enjoying its shadowy semblance in the by-and-by  
somewhere, somehow?  
I heard the wind on the hillside whisper, "They ill prepare for  
a journey hence  
Who waste the senses and starve the spirit in a world all made  
for spirit and sense.

"Is the full stream fed from a stifled source, or the ripe fruit  
filled from a blighted flower?  
Are not the brook and the blossom greatedened through many a busy  
beatified hour?  
Not in the shadow but in the substance, plastic and potent at our  
command,  
Are all the wisdom and gladness of heart; this is the kingdom of  
heaven at hand."

So I will pass through the lovely world, and partake of beauty to  
feed my soul.  
With earth my domain and growth my portion, how should I sue for  
a further dole?  
In the lift I feel of immortal rapture, in the flying glimpse I gain  
of truth,  
Released is the passion that sought perfection, assuaged the ardor  
of dreamful youth.

The patience of time shall teach me courage, the strength of the sun  
shall lend me poise.  
I would give thanks for the autumn glory, for the teaching of earth  
and all her joys.  
Her fine fruition shall well suffice me; the air shall stir in my  
veins like wine;  
While the moment waits and the wonder deepens, my life shall merge  
with the life divine.

## **In October**

Now come the rosy dogwoods,  
The golden tulip-tree,  
And the scarlet yellow maple,  
To make a day for me.

The ash-trees on the ridges,  
The alders in the swamp,  
Put on their red and purple  
To join the autumn pomp.



The woodbine hangs her crimson  
Along the pasture wall,  
And all the bannered sumacs  
Have heard the frosty call.

Who then so dead to valor  
As not to raise a cheer,  
When all the woods are marching  
In triumph of the year?

### By Still Waters

*"He leadeth me beside the still waters; He restoreth  
my soul."*

"My tent stands in a garden  
Of aster and goldenrod,  
Tilled by the rain and the sunshine,  
And sown by the hand of God,—  
An old New England pasture  
Abandoned to peace and time,  
And by the magic of beauty  
Reclaimed to the sublime.

About it are golden woodlands  
Of tulip and hickory;  
On the open ridge behind it  
You may mount to a glimpse of sea,—  
The far-off, blue, Homeric  
Rim of the world's great shield,  
A border of boundless glamor  
For the soul's familiar field.

In purple and gray-wrought lichen  
The boulders lie in the sun;  
Along its grassy footpath  
The white-tailed rabbits run.  
The crickets work and chirrup  
Through the still afternoon;  
And the owl calls from the hillside  
Under the frosty moon.

The odorous wild grape clambers  
Over the tumbling wall,  
And through the autumnal quiet  
The chestnuts open and fall.  
Sharing time's freshness and fragrance,  
Part of the earth's great soul,  
Here man's spirit may ripen  
To wisdom serene and whole.

Shall we not grow with the asters—  
Never reluctant nor sad,  
Not counting the cost of being,  
Living to dare and be glad?  
Shall we not lift with the crickets  
A chorus of ready cheer,  
Braving the frost of oblivion,  
Quick to be happy here?

Is my will as sweet as the wild grape,  
Spreading delight on the air  
For the passer-by's enchantment,  
Subtle and unaware?  
Have I as brave a spirit,  
Sprung from the self-same mould,  
As this weed from its own contentment  
Lifting its shaft of gold?

The deep red cones of the sumach

And the woodbine's crimson's sprays  
Have bannered the common roadside  
For the pageant of passing days.  
These are the oracles Nature  
Fills with her holy breath,  
Giving them glory of color,  
Transcending the shadow of death.

Here in the sifted sunlight  
A spirit seems to brood  
On the beauty and worth of being,  
In tranquil, instinctive mood;  
And the heart, filled full of gladness  
Such as the wise earth knows,  
Wells with a full thanksgiving  
For the gifts that life bestows:

For the ancient and virile nurture  
Of the teeming primordial ground,  
For the splendid gospel of color,  
The rapt revelations of sound;  
For the morning-blue above us  
And the rusted gold of the fern,  
For the chickadee's call of valor  
Bidding the faint-heart turn;

For fire and running water,  
Snowfall and summer rain;  
For sunsets and quiet meadows,  
The fruit and the standing grain;  
For the solemn hour of moonrise  
Over the crest of trees,  
When the mellow lights are kindled  
In the lamps of the centuries;

For those who wrought aforetime,  
Led by the mystic strain  
To strive for the larger freedom,  
And live for the greater gain;  
For plenty of peace and playtime,  
The homely goods of earth,  
And for rare immaterial treasures  
Accounted of little worth;

For art and learning and friendship,  
Where beneficent truth is supreme,—  
Those everlasting cities  
Built on the hills of dream;  
For all things growing and goodly  
That foster this life, and breed  
The immortal flower of wisdom  
Out of the mortal seed.

But most of all for the spirit  
That cannot rest nor bide  
In stale and sterile convenience,  
Nor safety proven and tried,  
But still inspired and driven,  
Must seek what better may be,  
And up from the loveliest garden  
Must climb for a glimpse of sea.

### **Lines for a Picture**

When the leaves are flying  
Across the azure sky,  
Autumn on the hill top  
Turns to say good-by;

In her gold-red tunic,

Like an Eastern queen,  
With untarnished courage  
In her wilding mien.

All the earth below her  
Answers to her gaze,  
And her eyes are pensive  
With remembered days.

Yet, with cheek ensanguined,  
Gay at heart she goes  
On the great adventure  
Where the north wind blows.

### **The Deserted Pasture**

I love the stony pasture  
That no one else will have.  
The old gray rocks so friendly seem,  
So durable and brave.

In tranquil contemplation  
It watches through the year.  
Seeing the frosty stars arise,  
The slender moons appear.

Its music is the rain-wind,  
Its choristers the birds,  
And there are secrets in its heart  
Too wonderful for words.

It keeps the bright-eyed creatures  
That play about its walls,  
Though long ago its milking herds  
Were banished from their stalls.

Only the children come there,  
For buttercups in May,  
Or nuts in autumn, where it lies  
Dreaming the hours away.

Long since its strength was given  
To making good increase,  
And now its soul is turned again  
To beauty and to peace.

There in the early springtime  
The violets are blue,  
And adder-tongues in coats of gold  
Are garmented anew.

There bayberry and aster  
Are crowded on its floors,  
When marching summer halts to praise  
The Lord of Out-of-doors.

And there October passes  
In gorgeous livery,—  
In purple ash, and crimson oak,  
And golden tulip tree.

And when the winds of winter  
Their bugle blasts begin,  
The snowy hosts of heaven arrive  
And pitch their tents therein.

## Autumn

Now when the time of fruit and grain is come,  
When apples hang above the orchard wall,  
And from the tangle by the roadside stream  
A scent of wild grapes fills the racy air,  
Comes Autumn with her sunburnt caravan,  
Like a long gypsy train with trappings gay  
And tattered colors of the Orient,  
Moving slow-footed through the dreamy hills.  
The woods of Wilton at her coming wear  
Tints of Bokhara and of Samarcand:  
The maples glow with their Pompeian red,  
The hickories with burnt Etruscan gold;  
And while the crickets fife along her march,  
Behind her banners burns the crimson sun.

## November Twilight

Now Winter at the end of day  
Along the ridges takes her way,

Upon her twilight round to light  
The faithful candles of the night.

As quiet as the nun she goes  
With silver lamp in hand, to close

The silent doors of dusk that keep  
The hours of memory and sleep.

She pauses to tread out the fires  
Where Autumn's festal train retires.

The last red embers smoulder down  
Behind the steeples of the town.

Austere and fine the trees stand bare  
And moveless in the frosty air,

Against the pure and paling light  
Before the threshold of the night.

On purple valley and dim wood  
The timeless hush of solitude

Is laid, as if the time for some  
Transcending mystery were come,

That shall illumine and console  
The penitent and eager soul,

Setting her free to stand before  
Supernal beauty and adore.

Dear Heart, in heaven's high portico  
It is the hour of prayer. And lo,

Above the earth, serene and still,  
One star—our star—o'er Lonetree Hill!

## The Ghost-yard of the Goldenrod

When the first silent frost has trod  
The ghost-yard of the goldenrod,

And laid the blight of his cold hand  
Upon the warm autumnal land,

And all things wait the subtle change  
That men call death, is it not strange

That I—without a care or need,  
Who only am an idle weed—

Should wait unmoved, so frail, so bold,  
The coming of the final cold!

### **Before the Snow**

Now soon, ah, very soon, I know  
The trumpets of the north will blow,  
And the great winds will come to bring  
The pale, wild riders of the snow.

Darkening the sun with level flight,  
At arrowy speed, they will alight,  
Unnumbered as the desert sands,  
To bivouac on the edge of night.

Then I, within their somber ring,  
Shall hear a voice that seems to sing,  
Deep, deep within my tranquil heart,  
The valiant prophecy of spring.

### **Winter**

When winter comes along the river line  
And Earth has put away her green attire,  
With all the pomp of her autumnal pride,  
The world is made a sanctuary old,  
Where Gothic trees uphold the arch of gray,  
And gaunt stone fences on the ridge's crest  
Stand like carved screens before a crimson shrine,  
Showing the sunset glory through the chinks.  
There, like a nun with frosty breath, the soul,  
Uplift in adoration, sees the world  
Transfigured to a temple of her Lord;  
While down the soft blue-shadowed aisles of snow  
Night, like a sacristan with silent step,  
Passes to light the tapers of the stars.

### **A Winter Piece**

Over the rim of a lacquered bowl,  
Where a cold blue water-color stands,  
I see the wintry breakers roll  
And heave their froth up the freezing sands.

Here in immunity safe and dull,  
Soul treads her circuit of trivial things.  
There soul's brother, a shining gull,  
Dares the rough weather on dauntless wings.

## Winter Streams

Now the little rivers go  
Muffled safely under snow,  
  
And the winding meadow streams  
Murmur in their wintry dreams,  
  
While a tinkling music wells  
Faintly from their icy bells,  
  
Telling how their hearts are bold  
Though the very sun be cold.  
  
Ah, but wait until the rain  
Comes a-sighing once again,  
  
Sweeping softly from the Sound  
Over ridge and meadow ground!  
  
Then the little streams will hear  
April calling far and near,—  
  
Slip their snowy bands and run  
Sparkling in the welcome sun.

## Winter Twilight

Along the wintry skyline,  
Crowning the rocky crest,  
Stands the bare screen of hardwood trees  
Against the saffron west,—  
Its gray and purple network  
Of branching tracery  
Outspread upon the lucent air,  
Like weed within the sea.  
  
The scarlet robe of autumn  
Renounced and put away,  
The mystic Earth is fairer still,—  
A Puritan in gray.  
The spirit of the winter,  
How tender, how austere!  
Yet all the ardor of the spring  
And summer's dream are here.  
  
Fear not, O timid lover,  
The touch of frost and rime!  
This is the virtue that sustained  
The roses in their prime.  
The anthem of the northwind  
Shall hallow thy despair,  
The benediction of the snow  
Be answer to thy prayer.  
  
And now the star of evening  
That is the pilgrim's sign,  
Is lighted in the primrose dusk,—  
A lamp before a shrine.  
Peace fills the mighty minster,  
Tranquil and gray and old,  
And all the chancel of the west  
Is bright with paling gold.  
  
A little wind goes sifting  
Along the meadow floor,—  
Like steps of lovely penitents

Who sighingly adore.  
Then falls the twilight curtain,  
And fades the eerie light,  
And frost and silence turn the keys  
In the great doors of night.

### **The Twelfth Night Star**

It is the bitter time of year  
When iron is the ground,  
With hasp and sheathing of black ice  
The forest lakes are bound,  
The world lies snugly under snow,  
Asleep without a sound.

All the night long in trooping squares  
The sentry stars go by,  
The silent and unwearying hosts  
That bear man company,  
And with their pure enkindling fires  
Keep vigils lone and high.

Through the dead hours before the dawn,  
When the frost snaps the sill,  
From chestnut-wooded ridge to sea  
The earth lies dark and still,  
Till one great silver planet shines  
Above the eastern hill.

It is the star of Gabriel,  
The herald of the Word  
In days when messengers of God  
With sons of men conferred,  
Who brought the tidings of great joy  
The watching shepherds heard;

The mystic light that moved to lead  
The wise of long ago,  
Out of the great East where they dreamed  
Of truths they could not know,  
To seek some good that should assuage  
The world's most ancient woe.

O well, believe, they loved their dream,  
Those children of the star,  
Who saw the light and followed it,  
Prophetical, afar,—  
Brave Caspar, clear-eyed Melchior,  
And eager Balthasar.

Another year slips to the void,  
And still with omen bright  
Above the sleeping doubting world  
The day-star is alight,—  
The waking signal flashed of old  
In the blue Syrian night.

But who are now as wise as they  
Whose faith could read the sign  
Of the three gifts that shall suffice  
To honor the divine,  
And show the tread of common life  
Ineffably benign?

Whoever wakens on a day  
Happy to know and be,  
To enjoy the air, to love his kind,  
To labor, to be free,—  
Already his enraptured soul  
Lives in eternity.

For him with every rising sun  
The year begins anew;  
The fertile earth receives her lord,  
And prophecy comes true,  
Wondrously as a fall of snow,  
Dear as a drench of dew.

Who gives his life for beauty's need,  
King Caspar could no more;  
Who serves the truth with single mind  
Shall stand with Melchior;  
And love is all that Balthasar  
In crested censer bore.

## A Christmas Eve Choral

*Halleluja!*  
*What sound is this across the dark*  
*While all the earth is sleeping? Hark!*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!*

Why are thy tender eyes so bright,  
Mary, Mary?  
On the prophetic deep of night  
Joseph, Joseph,  
I see the borders of the light,  
And in the day that is to be  
An aureoled man-child I see,  
Great love's son, Joseph.

*Halleluja!*  
*He hears not, but she hears afar,*  
*The Minstrel Angel of the star.*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!*

Why is thy gentle smile so deep,  
Mary, Mary?  
It is the secret I must keep,  
Joseph, Joseph,—  
The joy that will not let me sleep,  
The glory of the coming days,  
When all the world shall turn to praise  
God's goodness, Joseph.

*Halleluja!*  
*Clear as the bird that brings the morn*  
*She hears the heavenly music borne.*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!*

Why is thy radiant face so calm,  
Mary, Mary?  
His strength is like a royal palm,  
Joseph, Joseph;  
His beauty like the victor's psalm.  
He moves like morning o'er the lands  
And there is healing in his hands  
For sorrow, Joseph.

*Halleluja!*  
*Tender as dew-fall on the earth*  
*She hears the choral of love's birth.*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!*

What is the message come to thee,  
Mary, Mary?  
I hear like wind within the tree,  
Joseph, Joseph,  
Or like a far-off melody  
His deathless voice proclaiming peace,  
And bidding ruthless wrong to cease,



For love's sake, Joseph.

*Halleluja!*  
*Moving as rain-wind in the spring*  
*She hears the angel chorus ring.*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!*

Why are thy patient hands so still,  
Mary, Mary?  
I see the shadow on the hill,  
Joseph, Joseph,  
And wonder if it is God's will  
That courage, service, and glad youth  
Shall perish in the cause of truth  
Forever, Joseph.

*Halleluja!*  
*Her heart in that celestial chime*  
*Has heard the harmony of time.*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!*

Why is thy voice so strange and far,  
Mary, Mary?  
I see the glory of the star,  
Joseph, Joseph;  
And in its light all things that are,  
Made glad and wise beyond the sway  
Of death and darkness and dismay,  
In God's time Joseph.

*Halleluja!*  
*To every heart in love 'tis given*  
*To hear the ecstasy of heaven.*  
*Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja.*

## **Christmas Song**

Above the weary waiting world,  
Asleep in chill despair,  
There breaks a sound of joyous bells  
Upon the frosted air.  
And o'er the humblest rooftree, lo,  
A star is dancing on the snow.

What makes the yellow star to dance  
Upon the brink of night?  
What makes the breaking dawn to glow  
So magically bright,—  
And all the earth to be renewed  
With infinite beatitude?

The singing bells, the throbbing star,  
The sunbeams on the snow,  
And the awakening heart that leaps  
New ecstasy to know,—  
They all are dancing in the morn  
Because a little child is born.

## **The Wise Men from the East**

### **(A LITTLE BOY'S CHRISTMAS LESSON)**

*Why were the Wise Men three,  
Instead of five or seven?"*

They had to match, you see,  
The archangels in Heaven.

God sent them, sure and swift,  
By his mysterious presage,  
To bear the threefold gift  
And take the threefold message.

Thus in their hands were seen  
The gold of purest Beauty,  
The myrrh of Truth all-clean,  
The frankincense of Duty.

And thus they bore away  
The loving heart's great treasure,  
And knowledge clear as day,  
To be our life's new measure.

They went back to the East  
To spread the news of gladness.  
There one became a priest  
To the new word of sadness;

And one a workman, skilled  
Beyond the old earth's fashion;  
And one a scholar, filled  
With learning's endless passion.

God sent them for a sign  
He would not change nor alter  
His good and fair design,  
However man may falter.

He meant that, as He chose  
His perfect plan and willed it,  
They stood in place of those  
Who elsewhere had fulfilled it;

Whoso would mark and reach  
The height of man's election,  
Must still achieve and teach  
The triplicate perfection.

For since the world was made,  
One thing was needed ever,  
To keep man undismayed  
Through failure and endeavor—

A faultless trinity  
Of body, mind, and spirit,  
And each with its own three  
Strong angels to be near it;

Strength to arise and go  
Wherever dawn is breaking,  
Poise like the tides that flow,  
Instinct for beauty-making;

Imagination bold  
To cross the mystic border,  
Reason to seek and hold,  
Judgment for law and order;

Joy that makes all things well,  
Faith that is all-availing  
Each terror to dispel,  
And Love, ah, Love unfailing.

These are the flaming Nine  
Who walk the world unsleeping,  
Sent forth by the Divine  
With manhood in their keeping.

These are the seraphs strong  
His mighty soul had need of,  
When He would right the wrong  
And sorrow He took heed of.

And that, I think, is why  
The Wise Men knelt before Him,  
And put their kingdoms by  
To serve Him and adore Him;

So that our Lord, unknown,  
Should not be unattended,  
When He was here alone  
And poor and unbefriended;

That still He might have three  
(Rather than five or seven)  
To stand in their degree,  
Like archangels in Heaven.

## **The Sending of the Magi**

In a far Eastern country  
It happened long of yore,  
Where a lone and level sunrise  
Flushes the desert floor,  
That three kings sat together  
And a spearman kept the door.

Caspar, whose wealth was counted  
By city and caravan;  
With Melchior, the seer  
Who read the starry plan;  
And Balthasar, the blameless,  
Who loved his fellow man.

There while they talked, a sudden  
Strange rushing sound arose,  
And as with startled faces  
They thought upon their foes,  
Three figures stood before them  
In imperial repose.

One in flame-gold and one in blue  
And one in scarlet clear,  
With the almighty portent  
Of sunrise they drew near!  
And the kings made obeisance  
With hand on breast, in fear.

"Arise," said they, "we bring you  
Good tidings of great peace!  
To-day a power is wakened  
Whose working must increase,  
Till fear and greed and malice  
And violence shall cease."

The messengers were Michael,  
By whom all things are wrought  
To shape and hue; and Gabriel  
Who is the lord of thought;  
And Rafael without whose love  
All toil must come to nought.

Then Rafael said to Balthasar,  
"In a country west from here  
A lord is born in lowliness,  
In love without a peer.  
Take grievances and gifts to him  
And prove his kingship clear!

"By this sign ye shall know him;  
Within his mother's arm  
Among the sweet-breathed cattle  
He slumbers without harm,

While wicked hearts are troubled  
And tyrants take alarm."

And Gabriel said to Melchior,  
"My comrade, I will send  
My star to go before you,  
That ye may comprehend  
Where leads your mystic learning  
In a humaner trend."

And Michael said to Gaspar,  
"Thou royal builder, go  
With tribute of thy riches!  
Though time shall overthrow  
Thy kingdom, no undoing  
His gentle might shall know."

Then while the kings' hearts grieved  
And all the chamber shone,  
As when the hills at sundown  
Take a new glory on  
And the air thrills with purple,  
Their visitors were gone.

Then straightway up rose Gaspar,  
Melchior and Balthasar,  
And passed out through the murmur  
Of palace and bazar,  
To make without misgiving  
The journey of the Star.

## **The Angels of Man**

The word of the Lord of the outer worlds  
Went forth on the deeps of space,  
That Michael, Gabriel, Rafael,  
Should stand before his face,  
The seraphs of his threefold will,  
Each in his ordered place.

Brave Michael, the right hand of God,  
Strong Gabriel, his voice,  
Fair Rafael, his holy breath  
That makes the world rejoice,—  
Archangels of omnipotence,  
Of knowledge, and of choice;

Michael, angel of loveliness  
In all things that survive,  
And Gabriel, whose part it is  
To ponder and contrive,  
And Rafael, who puts the heart  
In every thing alive.

Came Rafael, the enraptured soul,  
Stainless as wind or fire,  
The urge within the flux of things,  
The life that must aspire,  
With whom is the beginning,  
The worth, and the desire;

And Gabriel, the all-seeing mind,  
Bringer of truth and light,  
Who lays the courses of the stars  
In their stupendous flight,  
And calls the migrant flocks of spring  
Across the purple night;

And Michael, the artificer  
Of beauty, shape, and hue,

Lord of the forges of the sun,  
The crucible of the dew,  
And driver of the plowing rain  
When the flowers are born anew.

Then said the Lord: "Ye shall account  
For the ministry ye hold,  
Since ye have been my sons to keep  
My purpose from of old.  
How fare the realms within your sway  
To perfections still untold?"

Answered each as he had the word.  
And a great silence fell  
On all the listening hosts of heaven  
To hear their captains tell,—  
With the breath of the wind, the call of a bird.  
And the cry of a mighty bell.

Then the Lord said: "The time is ripe  
For finishing my plan,  
And the accomplishment of that  
For which all time began.  
Therefore on you is laid the task  
Of the fashioning of man;

"In your own likeness shall he be,  
To triumph in the end.  
I only give him Michael's strength  
To guard him and defend,  
With Gabriel to be his guide,  
And Rafael his friend.

"Ye shall go forth upon the earth,  
And make there Paradise,  
And be the angels of that place  
To make men glad and wise,  
With loving-kindness in their hearts,  
And knowledge in their eyes.

"And ye shall be man's counsellors  
That neither rest nor sleep,  
To cheer the lonely, lift the frail,  
And solace them that weep.  
And ever on his wandering trail  
Your watch-fires ye shall keep;

"Till in the far years he shall find  
The country of his quest,  
The empire of the open truth,  
The vision of the best,  
Foreseen by every mother saint  
With her new-born on her breast."

## **At the Making of Man**

*First all the host of Raphael  
In liveries of gold,  
Lifted the chorus on whose rhythm  
The spinning spheres are rolled,—  
The Seraphs of the morning calm  
Whose hearts are never cold.*

He shall be born a spirit,  
Part of the soul that yearns,  
The core of vital gladness  
That suffers and discerns,  
The stir that breaks the budding sheath  
When the green spring returns,—

The gist of power and patience  
Hid in the plasmic clay,  
The calm behind the senses,  
The passionate essay  
To make his wise and lovely dream  
Immortal on a day.

The soft, Aprilian ardors  
That warm the waiting loam  
Shall whisper in his pulses  
To bid him overcome,  
And he shall learn the wonder-cry  
Beneath the azure dome.

And though all-dying nature  
Should teach him to deplore,  
The ruddy fires of autumn  
Shall lure him but the more  
To pass from joy to stronger joy,  
As through an open door.

He shall have hope and honor,  
Proud trust and courage stark,  
To hold him to his purpose  
Through the unlighted dark,  
And love that sees the moon's full orb  
In the first silver arc.

And he shall live by kindness  
And the heart's certitude,  
Which moves without misgiving  
In ways not understood,  
Sure only of the vast event,—  
The large and simple good.

*Then Gabriel's host in silver gear  
And vesture twilight blue,  
The spirits of immortal mind,  
The warders of the true,  
Took up the theme that gives the world  
Significance anew.*

He shall be born to reason,  
And have the primal need  
To understand and follow  
Wherever truth may lead,—  
To grow in wisdom like a tree  
Unfolding from a seed.

A watcher by the sheepfolds,  
With wonder in his eyes,  
He shall behold the seasons,  
And mark the planets rise,  
Till all the marching firmament  
Shall rouse his vast surmise.

Beyond the sweep of vision,  
Or utmost reach of sound,  
This cunning fire-maker,  
This tiller of the ground,  
Shall learn the secrets of the suns  
And fathom the profound.

For he must prove all being  
Sane, beauteous, benign,  
And at the heart of nature  
Discover the divine,—  
Himself the type and symbol  
Of the eternal trine.

He shall perceive the kindling  
Of knowledge, far and dim,  
As of the fire that brightens  
Below the dark sea-rim,  
When ray by ray the splendid sun  
Floats to the world's wide brim.

And out of primal instinct,  
The lore of lair and den,  
He shall emerge to question  
How, wherefore, whence, and when,  
Till the last frontier of the truth  
Shall lie within his ken.

*Then Michael's scarlet-suited host  
Took up the word and sang;  
As though a trumpet had been loosed  
In heaven, the arches rang;  
For these were they who feel the thrill  
Of beauty like a pang.*

He shall be framed and balanced  
For loveliness and power,  
Lithe as the supple creatures,  
And colored as a flower,  
Sustained by the all-feeding earth,  
Nurtured by wind and shower,

To stand within the vortex  
Where surging forces play,  
A poised and pliant figure  
Immutable as they,  
Till time and space and energy  
Surrenders to his sway.

He shall be free to journey  
Over the teeming earth,  
An insatiable seeker,  
A wanderer from his birth,  
Clothed in the fragile veil of sense,  
With fortitude for girth.

His hands shall have dominion  
Of all created things,  
To fashion in the likeness  
Of his imaginings,  
To make his will and thought survive  
Unto a thousand springs.

The world shall be his province,  
The principedom of his skill;  
The tides shall wear his harness,  
The winds obey his will;  
Till neither flood, nor fire, nor frost,  
Shall work to do him ill.

A creature fit to carry  
The pure creative fire,  
Whatever truth inform him,  
Whatever good inspire,  
He shall make lovely in all things  
To the end of his desire.

### **St. Michael's Star**

In the pure solitude of dusk  
One star is set to shine  
Above the sundown's dying rose,  
A lamp before a shrine.  
It is the star of Michael lit  
In the minster of the sun,  
That every toiling hand may give  
Thanks for the day's work done.

For when the almighty word went forth  
To bid creation be,—  
The glimmering star-tracks on the blue,

The tide-belts on the sea,—  
Perfect as planned, from Michael's hand  
The lasting hills arose,  
Their bases on the poppied plain,  
Their peaks in bannered snows.

Cedar and thorn and oak were born;  
Green fiddleheads uncurled  
In the spring woods; gold adder-tongues  
Came forth to glad the world;—  
The magic of the punctual seeds,  
Each with its pregnant powers,  
As the lord Michael fashioned them  
To keep their days and hours.

Frail fins to ride the monstrous tide,  
Soft wings to poise and gleam,  
He formed the pageant tribe by tribe  
As vivid as a dream.  
And still must his beneficence  
Renew, create, sustain,  
Sorcery of the wind and sun,  
Alchemy of the rain.

Teeming with God, the kindly sod  
Yearns through the summer days  
With the mute eloquence of flowers,  
Its only means of praise.  
At dusk and dawn the tranquil hills  
Throb to the song of birds,  
And all the dim blue silence thrills  
To transport not of words.

For earth must breed to spirit's need,  
Clay to the finer clay,  
That soul through sense find recompense  
And rapture on her way.  
And man, from dust and dreaming wrought,  
To all things must impart  
The trend and likeness of his thought,  
The passion of his heart.

The love and lore he shall acquire  
To word and deed must dare;  
Resemblances of God his sire  
His voice and mien must bear.  
His children's children shall portray  
The skill which he bestows  
On living; and what life must mean  
His craftsman's instinct knows.

Line upon line and tone by tone,  
The visioned form he gives  
To sound and color, wood and stone,  
Takes loveliness and lives.  
He sees his project's soaring hope  
Grow substance, and expand  
To measure a diviner scope  
Beneath his patient hand.

To pencil, brush, and burnisher  
His wizardry he lends,  
And to the care of lathe and loom  
His secret he commends.  
In hues and forms and cadences  
New beauty he instills,  
A brother by the right of craft  
To Michael of the hills.



Charlemagne with knight and lord,  
In the hill at Ingelheim,  
Slumbers at the council board,  
Seated waiting for the time.

With their swords across their knees  
In that chamber dimly lit,  
Chin on breast life effigies  
Of the dreaming gods, they sit.

Long ago they went to sleep,  
While great wars above them hurled.  
Taking counsel how to keep  
Giant evil from the world.

Golden-armored, iron-crowned,  
There in silence they await  
The last war,—in war renowned,  
Done with doubting and debate.

What is all our clamor for?  
Petty virtue, puny crime,  
Beat in vain against the door  
Of the hill at Ingelheim.

When at last shall dawn the day  
For the saving of the world,  
They will forth in war array,  
Iron-armored, golden-curved.

In the hill at Ingelheim,  
Still, they say, the Emperor,  
Like a warrior in his prime,  
Waits the message at the door.

Shall the long enduring fight  
Break above our heads in vain,  
Plunged in lethargy and night,  
Like the men of Charlemagne?

Comrades, through the Council Hall  
Of the heart, inert and dumb,  
Hear ye not the summoning call,  
"Up, my lords, the hour is come!"

## **El Dorado**

This is the story  
Of Santo Domingo,  
The first established  
Permanent city  
Built in the New World.

Miguel Dias,  
A Spanish sailor  
In the fleet of Columbus,  
Fought with a captain,  
Wounded him, then in fear  
Fled from his punishment.

Ranging the wilds, he came  
On a secluded  
Indian village  
Of the peace-loving  
Comely Caguissas.  
There he found shelter,  
Food, fire, and hiding,—  
Welcome unstinted.

Over this tribe ruled—  
No cunning chieftain

Grown gray in world-craft,  
But a young soft-eyed  
Girl, tender-hearted,  
Loving, and regal  
Only in beauty,  
With no suspicion  
Of the perfidious  
Merciless gold-lust  
Of the white sea-wolves,—  
Roving, rapacious,  
Conquerors, destroyers.  
Strongly the stranger  
Wooed with his foreign  
Manners, his Latin  
Fervor and graces;  
Beat down her gentle,  
Unreserved strangeness;

Made himself consort  
Of a young queen, all  
Loveliness, ardor,  
And generous devotion.  
Her world she gave him,  
Nothing denied him,  
All, all for love's sake  
Poured out before him,—  
Lived but to pleasure  
And worship her lover.

Such is the way  
Of free-hearted women,  
Radiant beings  
Who carry God's secret;  
All their seraphic  
Unworldly wisdom  
Spent without fearing  
Or calculation  
For the enrichment  
Of—whom, what, and wherefore?

Ask why the sun shines  
And is not measured,  
Ask why the rain falls  
Aeon by aeon,  
Ask why the wind comes  
Making the strong trees  
Blossom in springtime,  
Forever unwearied!  
Whoever earned these gifts,  
Air, sun, and water?  
Whoever earned his share  
In that unfathomed  
Full benediction,

Passing the old earth's  
Cunningest knowledge,  
Greater than all  
The ambition of ages,  
Light as a thistle-seed,  
Strong as a tide-run,  
Vast and mysterious  
As the night sky,—  
The love of woman?  
Not long did Miguel  
Dias abide content  
With his good fortune.  
Back to his voyaging  
Turned his desire,  
Restless once more to rove  
With boon companions,  
Filled with the covetous  
Thirst for adventure,—  
The white man's folly.

Then poor Zamcaca,

In consternation  
Lest she lack merit  
Worthy to tether  
His wayward fancy,  
Knowing no way but love,  
Guileless, and sedulous  
Only to gladden,  
Quick and sweet-souled  
As another madonna,  
Gave him the secret  
Of her realm's treasure,—  
Raw gold unweighed,  
Stored wealth unimagined;  
Decked him with trappings  
Of that yellow peril;  
And bade him go  
Bring his comrades to settle  
In her dominion.

Not long the Spaniards  
Stood on that bidding.  
Gold was their madness,  
Their Siren and Pandar.  
Trooping they followed  
Their friend the explorer,  
Greed-fevered ravagers  
Of all things goodly,  
Hot-foot to plunder  
The land of his love-dream.  
They swooped on that country,  
Founded their city,  
Made Miguel Dias  
Its first Alcalde,—  
Flattered and fooled him,  
Loud in false praises  
For the great wealth he had  
By his love's bounty.

Then the old story,  
Older than Adam,—  
Treachery, rapine,  
Ingratitude, bloodshed,  
Wrought by the strong man  
On unsuspecting  
And gentler brothers.  
The rabid Spaniard,  
Christian and ruthless  
(Like any modern  
Magnate of Mammon),  
Harried that fearless,  
Light-hearted, trustful folk  
Under his booted heel.  
Tears (ah, a woman's tears,—  
The grief of angels,—)  
Fell from Zamcaca,  
Sorrowing, hopeless,  
Alone, for her people.

Sick from injustice,  
Distraught, and disheartened,  
Tortured by sight and sound  
Of wrong and ruin,  
When the kind, silent,  
Tropical moonlight,  
Lay on the city,  
In the dead hour  
When the soul trembles  
Within the portals  
Of its own province,  
While far away seem

All deeds of daytime,  
She rose and wondered;  
Gazed on the sleeping  
Face of her loved one,

Alien and cruel;  
Kissed her strange children,  
Longingly laying a hand  
In farewell on each,  
Crept to the door, and fled  
Back to the forest.

Only the deep heart  
Of the World-mother,  
Brooding below the storms  
Of human madness,  
Can know what desolate  
Anguish possessed her.

Only the far mind  
Of the World-father,  
Seeing the mystic  
End and beginning,  
Knows why the pageant  
Is so betattered  
With mortal sorrow.

### **On the Plaza**

One August day I sat beside  
A café window open wide  
To let the shower-freshened air  
Blow in across the Plaza, where  
In golden pomp against the dark  
Green leafy background of the Park,  
St. Gaudens' hero, gaunt and grim,  
Rides on with Victory leading him.

The wet, black asphalt seemed to hold  
In every hollow pools of gold,  
And clouds of gold and pink and gray  
Were piled up at the end of day,  
Far down the cross street, where one tower  
Still glistened from the drenching shower.

A weary, white-haired man went by,  
Cooling his forehead gratefully  
After the day's great heat. A girl,  
Her thin white garments in a swirl  
Blown back against her breasts and knees,  
Like a Winged Victory in the breeze,  
Alive and modern and superb,  
Crossed from the circle of the curb.

We sat there watching people pass,  
Clinking the ice against the glass  
And talking idly—books or art,  
Or something equally apart  
From the essential stress and strife  
That rudely form and further life,  
Glad of a respite from the heat,  
When down the middle of the street,  
Trundling a hurdy-gurdy, gay  
In spite of the dull-stifling day,  
Three street-musicians came. The man,  
With hair and beard as black as Pan,  
Strolled on one side with lordly grace,  
While a young girl tugged at a trace  
Upon the other. And between  
The shafts there walked a laughing queen,  
Bright as a poppy, strong and free.  
What likelier land than Italy  
Breeds such abandon? Confident  
And rapturous in mere living spent  
Each moment to the utmost, there

With broad, deep chest and kerchiefed hair,  
With head thrown back, bare throat, and waist  
Supple, heroic and free-laced,  
Between her two companions walked  
This splendid woman, chaffed and talked,  
Did half the work, made all the cheer  
Of that small company.

No fear  
Of failure in a soul like hers  
That every moment throbs and stirs  
With merry ardor, virile hope,  
Brave effort, nor in all its scope  
Has room for thought or discontent,  
Each day its own sufficient vent  
And source of happiness.

Without  
A trace of bitterness or doubt  
Of life's true worth, she strode at ease  
Before those empty palaces,  
A simple heiress of the earth  
And all its joys by happy birth,  
Beneficent as breeze or dew,  
And fresh as though the world were new  
And toil and grief were not. How rare  
A personality was there!

### **A Painter's Holiday**

We painters sometimes strangely keep  
These holidays. When life runs deep  
And broad and strong, it comes to make  
Its own bright-colored almanack.  
Impulse and incident divine  
Must find their way through tone and line;  
The throb of color and the dream  
Of beauty, giving art its theme  
From dear life's daily miracle,  
Illume the artist's life as well.  
A bird-note, or a turning leaf,  
The first white fall of snow, a brief  
Wild song from the Anthology,  
A smile, or a girl's kindling eye,—  
And there is worth enough for him  
To make the page of history dim.  
Who knows upon what day may come  
The touch of that delirium  
Which lifts plain life to the divine,  
And teaches hand the magic line  
No cunning rule could ever reach,  
Where Soul's necessities find speech?  
None knows how rapture may arrive  
To be our helper, and survive  
Through our essay to help in turn  
All starving eager souls who yearn  
Lightward discouraged and distraught.  
Ah, once art's gleam of glory caught  
And treasured in the heart, how then  
We walk enchanted among men,  
And with the elder gods confer!  
So art is hope's interpreter,  
And with devotion must conspire  
To fan the eternal altar fire.  
Wherefore you find me here to-day,  
Not idling the good hours away,  
But picturing a magic hour  
With its replenishment of power.

Conceive a bleak December day,  
The streets all mire, the sky all gray,  
And a poor painter trudging home  
Disconsolate, when what should come  
Across his vision, but a line  
On a bold-lettered play-house sign,  
*A Persian Sun Dance.*

In he turns.

A step, and there the desert burns  
Purple and splendid; molten gold  
The streamers of the dawn unfold,  
Amber and amethyst uphurled  
Above the far rim of the world;  
The long-held sound of temple bells  
Over the hot sand steals and swells;  
A lazy tom-tom throbs and dones  
In barbarous maddening monotones;  
While sandal incense blue and keen  
Hangs in the air. And then the scene  
Wakes, and out steps, by rhythm released,  
The sorcery of all the East,  
In rose and saffron gossamer,—  
A young light-hearted worshipper  
Who dances up the sun. She moves  
Like waking woodland flower that loves  
To greet the day. Her lithe, brown curve  
Is like a sapling's sway and swerve  
Before the spring wind. Her dark hair  
Framing a face vivid and rare,  
Curled to her throat and then flew wild,  
Like shadows round a radiant child.  
The sunlight from her cymbals played  
About her dancing knees, and made  
A world of rose-lit ecstasy,  
Prophetic of the day to be.

Such mystic beauty might have shone  
In Sardis or in Babylon,  
To bring a Satrap to his doom  
Or touch some lad with glory's bloom.  
And now it wrought for me, with sheer  
Enchantment of the dying year,  
Its irresistible reprieve  
From joylessness on New Year's Eve.

## Mirage

Here hangs at last, you see, my row  
Of sketches,—all I have to show  
Of one enchanted summer spent  
In sweet laborious content,  
At little 'Sconset by the moors,  
With the sea thundering by its doors,  
Its grassy streets, and gardens gay  
With hollyhocks and salvia.

And here upon the easel yet,  
With the last brush of paint still wet,  
(Showing how inspiration toils),  
Is one where the white surf-line boils  
Along the sand, and the whole sea  
Lifts to the skyline, just to be  
The wondrous background from whose verge  
Of blue on blue there should emerge  
This miracle.

One day of days  
I strolled the silent path that strays

Between the moorlands and the beach  
From Siasconset, till you reach  
Tom Nevers Head, the lone last land  
That fronts the ocean, lone and grand  
As when the Lord first bade it be  
For a surprise and mystery.  
A sailless sea, a cloudless sky,  
The level lonely moors, and I  
The only soul in all that vast  
Of color made intense to last!  
The small white sea-birds piping near;  
The great soft moor-winds; and the dear  
Bright sun that pales each crest to jade,  
Where gulls glint fishing unafraid.

Here man, the godlike, might have gone  
With his deep thought, on that wild dawn  
When the first sun came from the sea,  
Glowing and kindling the world to be,  
While time began and joy had birth,—  
No wilder sweeter spot on earth!

As I sat there and mused (the way  
We painters waste our time, you say!)  
On the sheer loneliness and strength  
Whence life must spring, there came at length  
Conviction of the helplessness  
Of earth alone to ban or bless.  
I saw the huge unhuman sea;  
I heard the drear monotony  
Of the waves beating on the shore  
With heedless, futile strife and roar,  
Without a meaning or an aim.

And then a revelation came,  
In subtle, sudden, lovely guise,  
Like one of those soft mysteries  
Of Indian jugglers, who evoke  
A flower for you out of smoke.  
I knew sheer beauty without soul  
Could never be perfection's goal,  
Nor satisfy the seeking mind  
With all it longs for and must find  
One day. The lovely things that haunt  
Our senses with an aching want,  
And move our souls, are like the fair  
Lost garments of a soul somewhere.  
Nature is naught, if not the veil  
Of some great good that must prevail  
And break in joy, as woods of spring  
Break into song and blossoming.

But what makes that great goodness start  
Within ourselves? When leaps the heart  
With gladness, only then we know  
Why lovely Nature travails so,—  
Why art must persevere and pray  
In her incomparable way.  
In all the world the only worth  
Is human happiness; its dearth  
The darkest ill. Let joyance be,  
And there is God's sufficiency,—  
Such joy as only can abound  
Where the heart's comrade has been found.

That was my thought. And then the sea  
Broke in upon my revery  
With clamorous beauty,—the superb  
Eternal noun that takes no verb  
But love. The heaven of dove-like blue  
Bent o'er the azure, round and true  
As magic sphere of crystal glass,  
Where faith sees plain the pageant pass  
Of things unseen. So I beheld  
The sheer sky-arches domed and belled,

As if the sea were the very floor  
Of heaven where walked the gods of yore  
In Plato's imagery, and I  
Uplifted saw their pomps go by.

The House of space and time grew tense  
As if with rapture's imminence,  
When truth should be at last made clear,  
And the great worth of life appear;  
While I, a worshipper at the shrine,  
For very longing grew divine,  
Borne upward on earth's ecstasy,  
And welcomed by the boundless sky.

A mighty prescience seemed to brood  
Over that tenuous solitude  
Yearning for form, till it became  
Vivid as dream and live as flame,  
Through magic art could never match,  
The vision I have tried to catch,—  
All earth's delight and meaning grown  
A lyric presence loved and known.

How otherwise could time evolve  
Young courage, or the high resolve,  
Or gladness to assuage and bless  
The soul's austere great loneliness,  
Than by providing her somehow  
With sympathy of hand and brow,  
And bidding her at last go free,  
Companioned through eternity?

So there appeared before my eyes,  
In a beloved, familiar guise,  
A vivid, questing human face  
In profile, scanning heaven for grace,  
Up-gazing there against the blue  
With eyes that heaven itself shone through;  
The lips soft-parted, half in prayer,  
Half confident of kindness there;  
A brow like Plato's made for dream  
In some immortal Academe,  
And tender as a happy girl's;  
A full dark head of clustered curls  
Round as an emperor's, where meet  
Repose and ardor, strong and sweet,  
Distilling from a mind unmarred  
The glory of her rapt regard.

So eager Mary might have stood,  
In love's adoring attitude,  
And looked into the angel's eyes  
With faith and fearlessness, all wise  
In soul's unfaltering innocence,  
Sure in her woman's supersense  
Of things only the humble know.  
My vision looks forever so.

In other years when men shall say,  
"What was the painter's meaning, pray?  
Why all this vast of sea and space,  
Just to enframe a woman's face?"  
Here is the pertinent reply,  
"What better use for earth and sky?"

The great archangel passed that way  
Illuming life with mystic ray.  
Not Lippo's self nor Raphael  
Had lovelier, realer things to tell  
Than I, beholding far away  
How all the melting rose and gray  
Upon the purple sea-line leaned  
About that head that intervened.

How real was she? Ah, my friend,  
In art the fact and fancy blend



Past telling. All the painter's task  
Is with the glory. Need we ask  
The tulips breaking through the mould  
To their untarnished age of gold,  
Whence their ideals were derived  
That have so gloriously survived?  
Flowers and painters both must give  
The hint they have received, to live,—  
Spend without stint the joy and power  
That lurk in each propitious hour,—  
Yet leave the why untold—God's way.

My sketch is all I have to say.

### **The Winged Victory**

Thou dear and most high Victory,  
Whose home is the unvanquished sea,  
Whose fluttering wind-blown garments keep  
The very freshness, fold, and sweep  
They wore upon the galley's prow,  
By what unwonted favor now  
Hast thou alighted in this place,  
Thou Victory of Samothrace?

O thou to whom in countless lands  
With eager hearts and striving hands  
Strong men in their last need have prayed,  
Greatly desiring, undismayed,  
And thou hast been across the fight  
Their consolation and their might,  
Withhold not now one dearer grace,  
Thou Victory of Samothrace!

Behold, we, too, must cry to thee,  
Who wage our strife with Destiny,  
And give for Beauty and for Truth  
Our love, our valor and our youth.  
Are there no honors for these things  
To match the pageantries of kings?  
Are we more laggard in the race  
Than those who fell at Samothrace?

Not only for the bow and sword,  
O Victory, be thy reward!  
The hands that work with paint and clay  
In Beauty's service, shall not they  
Also with mighty faith prevail?  
Let hope not die, nor courage fail,  
But joy come with thee pace for pace,  
As once long since in Samothrace.

Grant us the skill to shape the form  
And spread the color living-warm,  
(As they who wrought aforesaid),  
Where love and wisdom shall lie hid,  
In fair impassioned types, to sway  
The cohorts of the world to-day,  
In Truth's eternal cause, and trace  
Thy glory down from Samothrace.

With all the ease and splendid poise  
Of one who triumphs without noise,  
Wilt thou not teach us to attain  
Thy sense of power without strain,  
That we a little may possess  
Our souls with thy sure loveliness,—  
That calm the years cannot deface,  
Thou Victory of Samothrace?

Then in the ancient, ceaseless war  
With infamy, go thou before!  
Amid the shoutings and the drums  
Let it be learned that Beauty comes,  
Man's matchless Paladin to be,  
Whose rule shall make his spirit free  
As thine from all things mean or base,  
Thou Victory of Samothrace.

### **The Gate of Peace**

Ah, who will build the city of our dream,  
Where beauty shall abound and truth avail,  
With patient love that is too wise for strife,  
Blending in power as gentle as the rain  
With the reviving earth on full spring days?  
Who now will speed us to its gate of peace,  
And reassure us on our doubtful road?

Three centuries ago a fearless man,  
Yearning to set his people in the way,  
Threw all his royal might into a plan  
To found an ideal city that should give  
Freedom to every instinct for the best,  
From humblest impulse in his own domain  
To rumored wisdom from the world's far ends.  
Strengthened with ardor from a high resolve,  
Beneath the patient smile of Indian skies  
This fair dream flourished for a score of years,  
Until the blight of evil touched its bloom  
With fading, and transformed its vivid life  
Into a ghost-flower of its fair design.

Now ruined nursery tower and gay boudoir,  
A sad custodian of sacred tombs,  
And scattered feathers from the purple wings  
Of doves who reign in undisputed calm  
Over this Eden of hope and fair essay,  
Recall the valor of this ancient quest.

Great Akbar,—grandfather of Shah Jehan,  
The artist Emperor of India  
Who built the Taj for love of one held dear  
Beyond all other women in the world,  
And left that loveliest memorial,  
The most supreme of wonders wrought by man,  
To move for very joy all hearts to tears  
Beholding how great beauty springs from love,—  
Akbar the wisest ruler over Ind,  
Grandson of Babar in whose veins were mixed  
The blood of Tamerlane and Chinghiz Khan,  
Who beat the Afghans and the Rajputs down  
At Paniput and Buxar in Bengal,  
Making himself the lord of Hindustan,  
And with his restless Tartars founded there  
The Mogul empire with its Moslem faith,  
Its joyousness, enlightenment, and art,—  
Akbar of all the sovereigns of the East  
Is still most deeply loved and gladly praised.

For he who conquered with so strong a hand  
Cabul, Kashmir, and Kandahar, and Sind,  
Oudh and Orissa, Chitor and Ajmir,  
With all their wealth to weld them into one,  
Upholding justice with his sovereignty  
Throughout his borders and imposing peace,  
Was first and last a seeker after truth.

No craven unlaborious truce he sought,  
But that great peace which only comes with light,

Emerging after chaos has been quelled  
In some long struggle of enduring will,  
To be a proof of order and of law,  
Which cannot rest on falsehood nor on wrong,  
But spreads like generous sunshine on the earth  
When goodness has been gained and truth made clear,  
At whatsoever incalculable cost.  
Returning once with his victorious arms  
And war-worn companies on the homeward march  
To Agra and his court's magnificence,  
From a campaign against some turbulent folk,  
He came at evening to a quiet place  
Near Sikri by the roadside through the woods,  
Where there were many doves among the trees.

There Salim Chisti a holy man had made  
His lonely dwelling in the wilderness,  
Seeking perfection. And the solitude  
Was sweet to Akbar, and he halted there  
And went to Salim in his lodge and said,  
"O man and brother, thy long days are spent  
In meditation, seeking for the path  
Through this great world's impediments to peace,  
Here in the twilight with the holy stars  
Or when the rose of morning breaks in gold;  
Tell me, I pray, whence comes the gift of peace  
With all its blessings for a people's need,  
And how may true tranquillity be found  
On which man's restless spirit longs to rest?"

And Salim answered, "Lord, most readily  
In Allah's out-of-doors, for there men live  
More truly, being free from false constraint,  
For learning wisdom with a calmer mind.  
For they who would find peace must conquer fear  
And ignorance and greed,—the ravagers  
Of spirit, mind, and sense,—and learn to live  
Content beneath the shade of Allah's hand.  
Who worships not his own will shall find peace."

Then Akbar answered, "I have set my heart  
On making beauty, truth, and justice shine  
As the ordered stars above the darkened earth.  
Are not these also things to be desired,  
And striven for with no uncertain toil?  
And save through them whence comes the gift of peace?"

Then Salim smiled, and with his finger drew  
In the soft dust before his door, and said,  
"O king, thy words are true, thy heart most wise.  
Thou also shalt find peace, as Allah wills,  
Through following bravely what to thee seems best.  
When any question, 'What is peace?' reply,  
'The shelter of the Gate of Paradise,  
The shadow of the archway, not the arch,  
Within whose shade at need the poor may rest,  
The weary be refreshed, the weak secure,  
And all men pause to gladden as they go.'"

And Akbar pondered Salim Chisti's words.  
Then turning to his ministers, he said,  
"Here will I build my capital, and here  
The world shall come unto a council hall,  
And in a place of peace pursue the quest  
Of wisdom and the finding out of truth,  
That there be no more discord upon earth,  
But only knowledge, beauty, and good will."

And it was done according to Akbar's word.  
There in the wilderness as by magic rose  
Futtehpur Sikri, the victorious city,  
Of marble and red sandstone among the trees,  
A rose unfolding in the kindling dawn.  
Palace and mosque and garden and serai,  
Bazaars and baths and spacious pleasure grounds,  
By favor of Allah to perfection sprang.

Thus Akbar wrought to make his dream come true.  
From the four corners of the world he brought  
His master workmen, from Iran and Ind,  
From wild Mongolia and the Arabian wastes;  
Masons from Bagdad, Delhi, and Multan;  
Dome builders from the North, from Samarkand;  
Cunning mosaic workers from Kanauj;  
And carvers of inscriptions from Shiraz;  
And they all labored with endearing skill,  
Each at his handicraft, to make beauty be.

When the first ax-blade on the timber rang,  
The timid doves, as if foreboding ill,  
Had fled from Sikri and its quiet groves.

But as he promised, Akbar sent and bade  
The wise men of all nations to his court,  
Brahman and Christian, Buddhist and Parsee,  
Jain and stiff Mohammedan and Jew,  
All followers of the One with many names,  
Bringing the ghostly wisdom of the earth.

And so they came of every hue and creed.  
From the twelve winds of heaven their caravans  
Drew into Sikri as Akbar summoned them,  
To spend long afternoons in council grave,  
Sifting tradition for the seed of truth,  
In the great mosque in Futtehpur at peace.  
And Salim Chisti lived his holy life,  
Beloved and honored there as Akbar's friend.

But light and changeable are the hearts of men.  
Soon in that city dedicate to peace  
Dissensions spread and rivalries grew rife,  
Envy and bitterness and strife returned  
Once more, and truth before them fled away.  
Then Salim Chisti, coming to Akbar spoke,  
"Lord, give thy servant leave now to depart  
And follow where the fluttered wings have gone,  
For here there is no longer any peace,  
And truth cannot prevail where discord dwells."

"Nay then," said Akbar, "'tis not thou but I  
Who am the servant here and must go hence.  
I found thee master of this solitude,  
Lord of the principedom of a quiet mind,  
A sovereign vested in tranquillity,  
And I have done thee wrong and stayed thy feet  
From following perfection, with my horde  
Of turbulent malcontents; and my loved dream  
To build a city of abiding peace  
Was but a vain illusion. Therefore now  
This foolish people shall be driven forth  
From this fair place, to live as they may choose  
In disputance and wrangling longer still,  
Until they learn, if Allah wills it so,  
To lay aside their folly for the truth."

And as the king commanded, so it was.  
More quickly than he came, with all his court  
And hosts of followers he went away,  
Leaving the place to solitude once more,—  
A rose to wither where it once had blown.

To-day the all-kind unpolluted sun  
Shines through the marble fret-work with no sound;  
The winds play hide and seek through corridors  
Where stately women with dark glowing eyes  
Have laughed and frolicked in their fluttering robes;  
The rose leaves drop with none to gather them,  
In gardens where no footfall comes with eve,  
Nor any lovers watch the rising moon;  
And ancient silence, truer than all speech,  
Still holds the secrets of the Council Hall,  
Upon whose walls frescoes of many faiths

Attest the courtesy of open minds.

Before the last camp-follower was gone,  
The doves returned and took up their abode  
In the main gate of those deserted walls.  
And in their custody this "Gate of Peace"  
Bears still the grandeur of its origin,  
Firing anew the wistful hearts of men  
To brave endeavor with replenished hope,  
Though since that time three hundred years ago,  
The magic hush of those forsaken streets  
And empty courtyards has been undisturbed  
Save by the gentle whirring of grey wings,  
With cooing murmurs uttered all day long,  
And reverent tread of those from near and far,  
Who still pursue the immemorial quest.

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When all my writing has been done  
Except the final colophon,

And I must bid beloved verse  
Farewell for better or for worse,

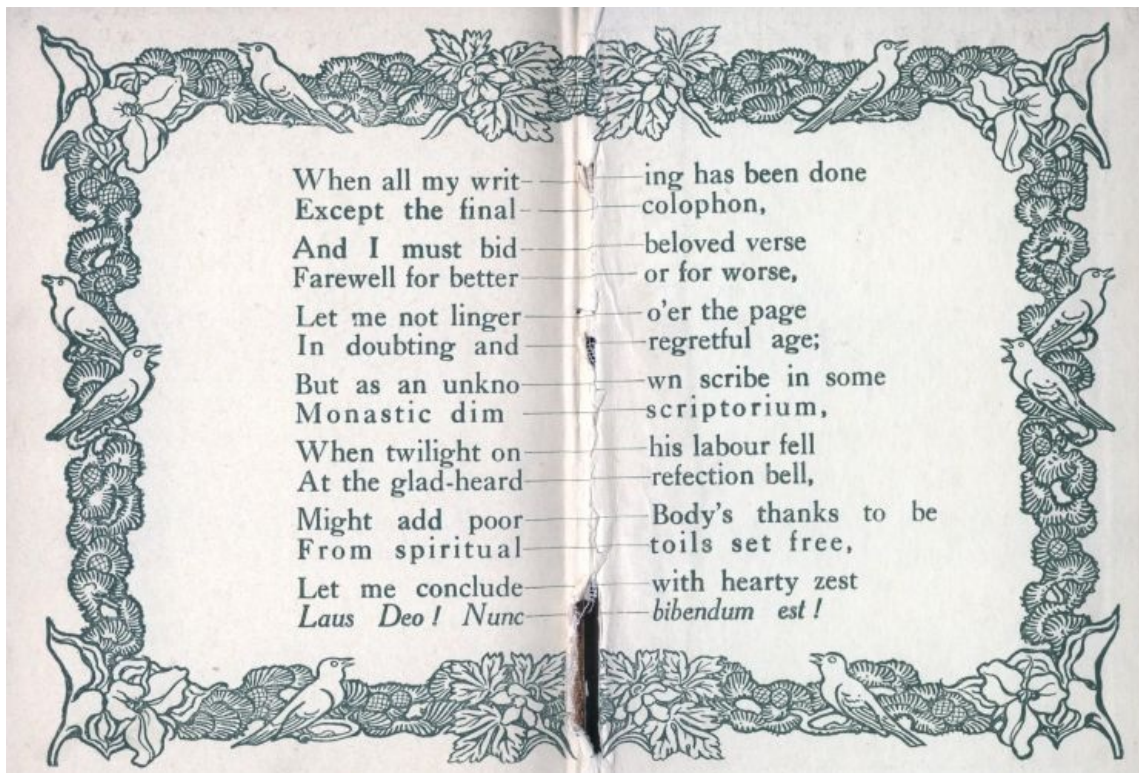
Let me not linger o'er the page  
In doubting and regretful age;

But as an unknown scribe in some  
Monastic dim scriptorium,

When twilight on his labour fell  
At the glad-heard refectory bell,

Might add poor Body's thanks to be  
From spiritual toils set free,

Let me conclude with hearty zest  
*Laus Deo! Nunc bibendum est!*



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