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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK IN VARIOUS MOODS: POEMS
AND VERSES ***

IN VARIOUS MOODS

Poems And Verses

By Irving Bacheller

Harper & Brothers Publishers New York And London

MCMX



[See page 24

AN' ALL OF A SUDDEN SOMEBODY SAID: "MY GOD!
DON'T THE BOY KNOW HIS MOTHER?"



IN VARIOUS MOODS

POEMS AND VERSES

BY
IRVING BACHELLER
"



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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IN VARIOUS MOODS

THE SOWERS

Written for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of St. Lawrence University

I know the hills that lift the distant plain,
The college hall—the spirit of its throngs,
The meadows and the waving fields of grain,
Full well I know their colors and their songs.
I know the storied gates where love was told,
The grove where walked the muses and the seers,
The river, dark or touched with light of gold,
Or slow, or swift so like the flowing years.
I know not these who sadly sit them down
And while the night in half-forgotten days;
I know not these who wear the hoary crown
And find a pathos in the merry lays.
Here Memory, with old wisdom on her lips,
A finger points at each familiar name—
Some writ on water, stone or stranded ships,
Some in the music of the trump of fame.
Here oft, I think, beloved voices call
Behind a weathered door 'neath ancient trees.
I hear sad echoes in the empty hall,
The wide world's lyric in the harping breeze.
It sings of them I loved and left of old,
Of my fond hope to bring a worthy prize—
Some well-earned token, better far than gold,
And lay it humbly down before their eyes.
And tell them it were rightly theirs—not mine,
An harvest come of their own word and deed;
I strove with tares that threatened my design
To make the crop as noble as the seed.
So they might see it paid—that life they knew—
A toilsome web and knit of many a skein,
With love's sweet sacrifice all woven through,
And broken threads of hope and joy and pain.
On root-bound acres, pent with rocks and stones,
Their hope of wealth and leisure slowly died.
They gave their strength in toil that racked their
bones,
They gave their youth, their beauty, and their pride.
Ere Nature's last defence had been withdrawn
That those they loved might have what they could
not—
The power of learning wedded to their brawn
And to the simple virtue there begot.
My college! Once—it was a day of old—
I saw thy panes aglow with sunset fire
And heard the story of thy purpose told
And felt the tide of infinite desire.
In thee I saw the gates of mystery
That led to dream-lit, vast, inviting lands—
Far backward to the bourne of history

And forward to the House not made with hands.
You gave the husbandman a richer yield
Than any that his granary may hold;
You called his children from the shop and field,
Taught them to sow and reap an undredfold.
To sow the seed of truth and hope and peace,
And take the root of error from the sod;
To be of those who make the sure increase,
Forever growing, in the lands of God.

THE NEW WORLD

Read before the Lambda Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, June 24, 1902

Idle gods of Old Olympus—Zeus and his immortal
clan,
Grown in stature, grace and wisdom, meekly serve
the will of man.
Every elemental giant has been trained to seek and
raise
Gates of the "impossible" that lead to undiscovered
ways.
Man hath come to stranger things than ever bard
or prophet saw.
Lo, he sits in judgment on the gods and doth amend
their law.
Now reality with wonder-deed of ancient fable teems—
Fact is wrought of golden fancy from the old
Homeric dreams.
Zeus, with thought to load the fulmen gathered for
his mighty sling,
Hurls across the ocean desert as 'twere ut a pebble-
fling;
Titans move the gathered harvests, push the loaded
ship and train,
Rushing swiftly 'twixt horizons, shoulder to the
hurricane.
Hermes, of the winged sandal, strides from midday
into night.
Pallas, with a nobler passion, turns the hero from
his fight.
Vulcan melts the Sundered mountain into girder,
beam and frieze.
Where the mighty wheel is turning hear the groan
of Hercules.
Eyes of man, forever reaching where immensity
envails,
View the ships of God in full career with light upon
their sails.
Read the tonnage, log, and compass—measure each
magnetic chain
Fastened to the fiery engine towing in the upper
main.
Man hath searched the small infernos, narrow as a
needle's eye,
Rent the veil of littleness 'neath which unnumbered
dragons lie.
Conquered pain with halted feeling, baned the

falling House of Life,
As with breeding rats infested, ravening in bloody
strife.
Change hath shorn the distances from little unto
mighty things—
Aye, from man to God, from poor to rich, from
peasants unto kings.
Justice, keen-eyed, Saxon-hearted, scans the records
of the world,
Makes the heartless tyrant tremble when her stem
rebuke is hurled.
Thought-ways, reaching under oceans or above the
mountain height,
Drain to distant, darkened realms the ceaseless
overflow of light.
In the shortened ways of travel Charity shall seek
her goal,
Find the love her burden merits in the commerce
of the soul.
Right must rule in earth and heaven, though its
coming here be slow;
Gods must grow in grace and wisdom as the mind
of man doth grow;
Law and Prophet be forgotten, deities uprise and
fall
Till one God, one hope, one rule of life be great
enough for all.

FAITH

Being some words of counsel from an old Yankee to his son Bill when the latter is about to enter college.

Faith, Bill? You remember how ye used to wake
an' cry,
An' when I lit a candle how the bugaboos 'u'd fly?
Well, faith is like a father in the dark of every
night—
It tells ye not t' be afraid, an' mebbe strikes a
light.
Now, don't expect too much o' God, it wouldn't
be quite fair
If fer anything ye wanted ye could only swap a
prayer;
I'd pray fer yours, an' you fer mine, an' Deacon
Henry Hospur,
He wouldn't hev a thing t' do but lay abed an'
prosper.
If all things come so easy, Bill, they'd hev but little
worth,
An' some one with a gift o' prayer 'u'd mebbe own
the earth.
It's the toil ye give t' git a thing—the sweat an'
blood an' care—
That makes the kind o' argument that ought to
back yer prayer.
Fer the record o' yer doin'—I believe the soul is

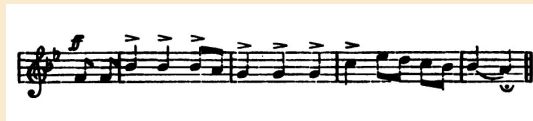
planned
With some self-workin' register t' tell jest how ye
stand.
An' it won't take any cipherin' t' show, that
fearful day,
If ye've multiplied yer talents well, er thrown 'em
all away.
When yer feet are on the summit, an' the wide
horizon clears,
An' ye look back on yer pathway windin' thro' the
vale o' tears;
When ye see how much ye've trespassed, an' how
fur ye've gone astray,
Ye'll know the way o' Providence ain't apt t' be
your way.
God knows as much as can be known, but I don't
think it's true.
He knows of all the dangers in the path o' me an'
you.
If I shet my eyes an' hurl a stun that kills—the
King o' Siam,
The chances are that God 'll be as much surprised
as I am.
If ye pray with faith *believin'*, why, ye'll certainly
receive,
But that God 'll break His own good law is more 'n
I'll believe.
If it grieves Him when a sparrow falls, it's sure as
anything,
He'd hev turned the arrow, if He could, that broke
the sparrow's wing.
Ye can read old Nature's history that's writ in rocks
an' stones,
Ye can see her throbbin' vitals an' her mighty rack
o' bones,
But the soul o' her—the livin' God, a little child
may know
No lens er rule o' cipherin' can ever hope t' show.
There's a part o' God's creation very handy t' yer
view,
All the truth o' life is in it an' remember, Bill, it's
you.
An' after all yer science ye must look up in yer
mind
An' learn its own astronomy the star o' peace t' find.
There's good old Aunt Samantha Jane that all her
journey long
Has led her heart to labor with a reveille of song.
Her folks hev robbed an' left her, but her faith in
goodness grows;
She hasn't any larnin', but I tell ye, Bill, *she* knows!
She's hed her share o' troubles; I remember well
the day
We took her t' the poor-house—she was singin' all
the way.
Ye needn't be afraid t' come where stormy Jordan
flows,
If all the l'arnin' ye can git has taught ye half *she*
knows.
There's a many big departments in this ancient
school o' God,
An' ye keep right on a l'arnin' till ye lay beneath

the sod,
All the books an' apperaytus, all the wisdom o'
the seers
Will be jest a preparation fer the study o' the years.

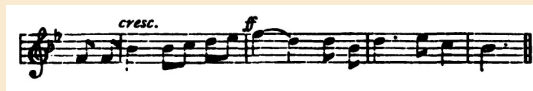
BALLAD OF THE SABRE CROSS AND 7

A troop of sorrels led by Vic and then a troop of
bays,
In the backward ranks of the foaming flanks a
double troop of grays;
The horses are galloping muzzle to tail, and back
of the waving manes
The troopers sit, their brows all knit, a left hand
on the reins.
Their hats are gray, and their shirts of blue have
a sabre cross and 7,
And little they know, when the trumpeters blow,
they'll halt at the gates of heaven.
Their colors have dipped at the top of a ridge—
how the long line of cavalry waves!—
And over the hills, at a gallop that kills, they are
riding to get to their graves.
"I heard the scouts jabber all night," said one;
"they peppered my dreams with alarm.
"That old Ree scout had his medicine out an'
was tryin' to fix up a charm."
There are miles of tepees just ahead, and the
warriors in hollow and vale
Lie low in the grass till the troopers pass and then
they creep over the trail.
The trumpets have sounded—the General shouts!
He pulls up and turns to the rear;
"We can't go back—they've covered our track—
we've got t' fight 'em here."
He rushes a troop to the point of the ridge, where
the valley opens wide,
And Smith deploys a line of the boys to stop the
coming tide.
A fire flames up on the skirt of the hills; in every
deep ravine
The savages yell, like the fiends of hell, behind a
smoky screen.
"Where's Reno?" said Custer. "Why don't he
charge? It isn't a time to dally!"
And he waves his hat, this way and that, as he
looks across the valley.
There's a wild stampede of horses; every man in
the skirmish line
Stands at his post as a howling host rush up the
steep incline.
Their rifles answer a deadly fire and they fall with
a fighting frown,
Till two by two, in a row of blue, the skirmish line
is down.

A trooper stood over his wounded mate. "No use
o' yer tryin't' fight,
"Blow out yer brains—you'll suffer hell-pains
when ye go to the torture to-night.
"We tackled too much; 'twas a desperate game—
I knowed we never could win it.
"Custer is dead—they're all of 'em dead an' I
shall be dead in a minute."
They're all of them down at the top of the ridge;
the sabre cross and 7
On many a breast, as it lies at rest, is turned to the
smoky heaven.
Three wounded men are up and away; they're
running hard for their lives,
While bloody corpses of riders and horses are
quivering under the knives.
Some troopers watch from a distant hill with hope
that never tires;



There's a reeling dance on the river's edge; its
echoes fill the night;
In the valley dim its shadows swim on a lengthening
pool of light.
The scattered troops of Reno look and listen with
bated breath,
While bugle strains on lonely plains are searching
the valley of death.



"What's that like tumbled grave-stones on the
hilltop there ahead?"
Said the trooper peering through his glass, "My
God! sir, it's the dead!
"How white they look! How white they look!
they've killed 'em—every one!
"An' they're stripped as bare as babies an' they're
rotting in the sun."
And Custer—back of the tumbled line on a slope
of the ridge we found him;
And three men deep in a bloody heap, they fell as
they rallied 'round him.
The plains lay brown, like a halted sea held firm
by the leash of God;
In the rolling waves we dug their graves and left
them under the sod.

WHISPERIN' BILL

So ye 're runnin' fer Congress, mister? Le 'me tell
ye 'bout my son—
Might make you fellers carefuller down there in
Washington—
He clings to his rifle an' uniform—folks call him
Whisperin' Bill;
An' I tell ye the war ain't over yit up here on
Bowman's Hill.
This dooryard is his battle-field—le's see, he was nigh
sixteen
When Sumter fell, an' as likely a boy as ever this
world has seen;
An' what with the news o' battles lost, the speeches
an' all the noise,
I guess ev'ry farm in the neighborhood lost a part
of its crop o' boys.
'T was harvest time when Bill left home; ev'ry stalk
in the fields o' rye
Seemed to stan' tiptoe to see him off an' wave him
a fond good-bye;
His sweetheart was here with some other gals—the
sassy little miss!
An' purtendin' she wanted to whisper 'n his ear, she
give him a rousin' kiss.
Oh, he was a han'some feller! an' tender an' brave
an' smart,
An' though he was bigger 'n I was, the boy had a
woman's heart.
I couldn't control my feelin's, but I tried with all
my might,
An' his mother an' me stood a-cryin' till Bill was
out o' sight.
His mother she often tol' him, when she knew he
was goin' away,
That God would take care o' him, maybe, if he
didn't fergit to pray;
An' on the bloodiest battle-fields, when bullets
whizzed in the air,
An' Bill was a-fightin' desperit, he used to whisper
a prayer.
Oh, his comrades has often tol' me that Bill never
flinched a bit
When every second a gap in the ranks tol' where
a ball had hit.
An' one night, when the field was covered with the
awful harvest o' war,
They found my boy 'mongst the martyrs o' the cause
he was fightin' for.
His fingers was clutched in the dewy grass—oh,
no, sir, he wasn't dead,
But he lay kind o' helpless an' crazy with a rifleball
in his head;
An' he trembled with the battle-fear as he lay there
in the dew;
An' he whispered as he tried to rise: "God 'll take
care o' you."
An officer wrote an' toL' us how the boy had been
hurt in the fight,

But he said the doctors reckoned they could bring
him around all right.
An' then we heard from a neighbor, disabled at
Malvern Hill,
That he thought in the course of a week or so he'd
be comin' home with Bill.
We was that anxious t' see him we'd set up an'
talk o' nights
Till the break o' day had dimmed the stars an'
put out the Northern Lights;
We waited an' watched fer a month or more, an'
the summer was nearly past,
When a letter come one day that said they'd started
fer home at last.
I'll never fergit the day Bill come—'twas harvest
time again—
An' the air blown over the yeller fields was sweet
with the scent o' the grain;
The dooryard was full o' the neighbors, who had
come to share our joy,
An' all of us sent up a mighty cheer at the sight o'
that soldier boy.
An' all of a sudden somebody said: "My God!
don't the boy know his mother?"
An' Bill stood a-whisperin', fearful like, an' a-starin'
from one to another;
"Don't be afraid, Bill," says he to himself, as he
stood in his coat o' blue,
"Why, God 'll take care o' you, Bill, God 'll take
care o' you."
He seemed to be loadin' an' firin' a gun, an' to act
like a man who hears
The awful roar o' the battle-field a-soundin' in his
ears;
Ten thousan' ghosts o' that bloody day was marchin'
through his brain
An' his feet they kind o' picked their way as if
they felt the slain.
An' I grabbed his hand, an' says I to Bill, "Don't
ye 'member me?
I'm yer father—don't ye know me? How frightened
ye seem to be!"
But the boy kep' a-whisperin' to himself, as if
'twas all he knew,
"God'll take o' you, Bill, God'll take care o'
you."
He's never known us since that day, nor his
sweetheart, an' never will;
Father an' mother an' sweetheart are all the same
to Bill.
An' he groans like a wounded soldier, sometimes
the whole night through,
An' we smooth his head, an' say: "Yes, Bill,
He 'll surely take care o' you."
Ye can stop a war in a minute, but when can ye
stop the groans?
Fer ye've broke our hearts an' sapped our blood
an' plucked away our bones.
An' ye've filled our souls with bitterness that goes
from sire to son,
So ye best be kind o' careful down there in Washington.

THE RED DEW

Being some small account of the war experience of an East River pilot, whose boat was the Susquehanna, familiarly known as the Susq, and who lost his leg and more at Gettysburg.

At de break o' day I goes t' bed, an' I goes to work
at dusk,
Fer ev'ry night dat a boat can run I takes de wheel
o' de Susq.
De nights is long in de pilot-house? Well, now
d'ye hear me speakin'?
No night is long since de one I spent wid me sta'b'ard
side a-leakin'.
I'd gone t' de war an' was all stove in, an' I seen
how a little white hand
Can take holt of a great big chump like me an'
make him drop his sand.
An' her face! De face o' de Holy Mary warn't
any sweeter 'n hern!
If ye like I'll set de wheel o' me mind an' let 'er
drift astern.
We'd fit all day till de sun was low an' I t'ought de
war was fun,
Till a big ball skun de side o' me face an' smashed
de end o' me gun.
Den anodder one kicked me foot off—see? an'
I tell ye it done it cunnin',
An' I trun meself in de grass, kerplunk, but me
mind kep' on a-runnin'.
Next I knowed I was feelin' o' somebody's face,
an' I seen de poor devil was cryin',
An' he tumbled all over me tryin't' r'ise, an' he
cussed an' kep' turnin' an' tryin';
"Good Gawd!" sez I, "what's de matter wid you?
Shut up yer face an' hark,"
An' s' help me, de odder man's face was mine an'
I was alone in de dark.
When I lay wid me back ag'in de world I seen how
little I was
An' I knowed, fer de firs' time in me life, how deep
an' broad de sky was;
An' me mind kep' a-wanderin' off 'n de night, till
it stopped where de Bowery ends,
An' come back a-sighin' an' says t' me dat it couldn't
find no friends.
Den I fumbled me breat' till I cert'inly t'ought
I never could ketch it ag'in.
If I'd bin a-bawlin' t' git a prize ye bet cher life
I'd 'a' win.
If ye're dyin' an' ain't no home in de world an'
yer fr'ends is all on de shelf,
An' dere's nobody else t' bawl fer ye—ye're goin'
t' bawl fer yerself.
De sun peeped over de hills at last, an' as soon as
I seen his rim
De dew in de valley was all afire wid a sort o' a

ruby glim.
De blue coats lay in de tumbled grass—some
stirrin' but most o' 'em dead—
'Pon me word, de poor devils had bled so much,
de dew in de valley were red!
An' what d'ye t'ink? de nex' t'ing I knowed, a
lady had holt o' me hand,
An' smoothed de frills all out o' me face an' brushed
off de dew an' de sand.
No lady had ever mammied me an' I were scairt
so I dassent say boo,
I warn't in no shape t' help meself an' I didn't
know what she'd do.
An' me heart was a-t'umpin' ag'in me ribs, an' me
lettin' on I was dead!
Till she put down her cheek so close to me mug
dat I had t' move me head.
An' she lifted me head wid her sof' white hands
an' I don't know all she done;
I was blubberin' so dat I couldn't see, but I knowed
I were havin' fun.
I lay wid me head 'n de lady's lap while de doctors
cut an' sawed,
An' dey hurted me so dat me eyes was sot, but I
never cussed er jawed.
An' she patted me cheek an' spoke so sof' dat I
didn't move a peg,
An' I t'ought if dey'd let me lay dere awhile dey
could saw off de odder leg.
Fer de loss o' me leg, t'ree times a year, I gets me
little wad,
But dere ain't any pension fer losin' yer heart
unless it comes from Gawd.
If anythin' busts ye there, me boy, I t'ink ye'll be
apt t' find
Ye'll either drop out o' de game o' life, er else go
lame in yer mind.
I never c'u'd know de reason why, till de lady
helt me head,
Dat a man 'll go broke fer de woman he loves er
mebbe fight till he's dead.
When I t'inks dat I never had no friends an' what
am I livin' fer?
I fergits dat I'm holdin' de wheel o' de Susq, an'
I sets an' t'inks o' her.
An' I t'inks how gentle she spoke t' me, an' I t'inks
o' her sof', white hand,
An' de feel o' her fingers on me face when she
brushed off de dew an' de sand.
An' I set a-t'inkin' an' turnin' me wheel, sometimes
de whole night t'rough,
An' de good Gawd knows I'd a giv' me life, if she'd
only 'a' loved me too.

Being some account of the little cadets of the Virginia Military Institute, who stood the examination of war at New Market, Va. May 15, 1864, in the front line of the Confederate forces, where more than three hundred answered to their names and all were perfect.

We were only a lot of little boys—they called us a
baby corps—
At the Institute in Lexington in the winter
of '64;
And the New Year brought to the stricken South
no end of the war in sight,
But we thought we could whip the North in a week
if they'd only let us fight.
One night when the boys were all abed we heard
the long roll beat,
And quickly the walls of the building shook with
the tread of hurrying feet;
And when the battalion stood in line we heard the
welcome warning:
"Breckinridge needs the help o' the corps; be
ready to march in the morning."
And many a boastful tale was told, through the
lingering hours of night,
And the teller fenced with airy foes and showed
how heroes fight.
And notes of love were written with many a fevered
sigh,
That breathed the solemn sacrifice of those about
to die.
Some sat in nature's uniform patching their suits
of gray,
And some stood squinting across their guns in a
darkly suggestive way.
The battalion was off on the Staunton pike as soon
as the sun had risen,
And we turned and cheered for the Institute, but
yesterday a prison.
At Staunton the soldiers chaffed us, and the girls
of the city schools
Giggled and flirted around the corps till we felt like
a lot of fools;
They threw us kisses and tiny drums and a volley
of baby rattles,
'Til we thought that the fire of ridicule was worse
than the fire of battles.
We made our escape in the early dawn, and, camping
the second night,
Were well on our way to the seat of war, with
Harrisonburg in sight;
And the troopers who met us, riding fast from the
thick of the army hives,
Said: "Sigel has come with an awful force, and
ye'll have to fight fer yer lives."
But we wanted to fight, and the peril of war never
weakened our young desires,
And the third day out we camped at dusk in sight
of the picket fires;
Our thoughts, wing-weary with homeward flight,
went astray in the gloomy skies,
And our hearts were beating a reveille whenever
we closed our eyes.
"Hark! what's that? The sentry call?" (A

galloping horseman comes.)
"Hey, boys! Get up! There's something wrong!
Don't ye hear 'em a-thumpin' the drums?"
Said the captain, who sat in the light of the fire
tying his muddy shoes:
"We must toe the line of the Yankees soon, an'
we haven't much time to lose.
"Hats off!" And we all stood silent while the
captain raised his hand
And prayed, imploring the God of war to favor
his little band.
His voice went out in a whisper at last, and then
without further remark
He bade the battalion form in fours, and led us
away in the dark.
We lamed our legs on the heavy road and a long
rain cooled our blood
And every time we raised a foot we could hear the
suck of the mud.
At noon we came—a weary lot—to the top of a
big clay hill,
And below were miles of infantry—the whole bunch
standing still.
The league-long hills are striped with blue, the
valley is lined with gray,
And between the armies of North and South are
blossoming fields of May.
There's a mighty cheer in the Southern host as,
led by the fife and drum,
To the front of the lines with a fearless tread our
baby cadets have come.
"Forward!" The air is quaking now; a shrill-
voiced, angry yell
Answers the roar of the musketry and the scream
of the rifled shell.
The gray ranks rushing, horse and foot, at the
flaming wall of blue
Break a hole in its centre, and some one shouts:
"See the little cadets go through!"
A shell shoots out of its hood of smoke, and slows
mid-air and leaps
At our corps that is crossing a field of wheat, and
we stagger and fall in heaps;
We close the ranks, and they break again, when a
dozen more fall dying;
And some too hurt to use their guns stand up with
the others trying.
"Lie down an' give 'em a volley, boys—quick there,
every one!
"Lie down, you little devils!—Down! It's better
to die than run."
And huddling under the tender wheat, the living lay
down with the dead,
And you couldn't have lifted your finger then
without touching a piece of lead.
"Look up in the sky and see the shells go over
a-whiskin' their tails";
"Better not lift yer hand too high or the bullets
'll trim yer nails."
Said the captain, "Forward, you who can!" In a
jiffy I'm off on my feet
An' up to their muzzles a-clubbin' my gun, an'

the Yanks have begun a retreat.
Said a wounded boy, peering over the grain,
"Hurrah! See our banner a-flyin'!
"Wish I was there, but I can't get up—I wonder
if *I'm* a-dyin'?"
"O Jim! did you ever hear of a man that lived
that was hit in the head?
"Say, Jim! did you ever hear of a man that
lived— My God! Jim's dead!"
A mist, like a web that is heavy with prey, is caught
in the green o' the fields;
It breaks and is parted as if a soul were struggling
where it yields;
The twilight deepens and hushes all, save the beat
beating of distant drums,
And over the shuddering deep of the air a wave of
silence comes.
By lantern light we found the boys where under the
wheat they lay
As if sleep—soft-fingered, compelling sleep!—had
come in the midst of play.
The captain said of the bloody charge and the
soldiers who fought so well:
"The army had to follow the boys if they entered
the flames o' hell."

PICTURE, SOUND AND SONG

The battle roar is ended and the twilight falls
again,
The bugles have blown, the hosts have flown save
they in the dusky grain.
And lo! the shaking barley tells where the wounded
writhe and roll;
With a panting breath at the pass of death the body
fights for the soul.
Some rise to retreat and they die on their feet in
this terrible fight for the soul.
And horses urged by the spur of Death are galloping
over the grain;
Their hoofs are red, their riders are dead, and
loose are the stirrup and rein.
A ghost in the saddle is riding them down, the
spurs of Pain at his heels;
They are cut to the bone, they rush and they groan,
as a wake in the barley reels:
And faces rise with haggard eyes where the wake
in the barley reels.
The blue and the gray lie face to face and their
fingers harrow the loam,
There's a sob and a prayer in the smoky air as
their winged thoughts fly home.
The Devil of war has dimmed the sky with the
breath of his iron lungs,
And he gluts his ear on the note of fear in the cry
of the fevered tongues;

Like the toll of a bell at the gate of hell is the wail
of the fevered tongues.
One rising, walked from the bullet shock, seems to
reel 'neath the weight of his head,
He feels for his gun and starts to run and falls in a
hollow—dead.
The wagons are coming and over each the light of
a lantern swings,
And a holy thought to the soul is brought, as the
voice of a driver sings;
And the cry of pain in the trampled grain is hushed
as the driver sings:
My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.

THE VEN'SON-TREE

The busy cranes go back an' forth, a-ploughin' up
the sky,
The wild goose drag comes down the wind an'
goes a-roarin' by;
The song-birds sow their music in the blue fields
over me
An' it seems to grow up into thoughts about the
ven'son-tree.
The apple-blossoms scatter down—a scented summer
snow,
An' man an' wind an' cloud an' sun have all begun
to sow.
The green hopes come a-sproutin' up somewhere
inside o' me,
An' it's time we ought to see the sprouts upon the
ven'son-tree.
The velvet leaves the willow an' adorns the ven'son
bough,
There's new silk in the tree-top an' the coat o' horse
an' cow.
The woods are trimmed fer weddin's, an' are all
in Sunday clo's,
An' the bark upon the ven'son-tree is redder than
a rose.
The days are still an' smoky, an' the nights are
growin' cold,
The maples are a-drippin' blood, the beeches
drippin' gold;
The briars are above my head, the brakes above
my knee,
An' the bark is gettin' kind o' blue upon the ven'son-
tree.
What makes the big trees shake an' groan as if
they all had sinned?
'Tis God A'mighty's reaper with the horses o' the
wind.
He will hitch with chains o' lightnin', He will urge
with thunder call,

He will try the rotten-hearted till they reel an'
break an' fall.
The leaves are driftin' in the breeze, an' gathered
where they lie
Are the colors o' the sunset an' the smell o' the
windy sky;
The squirrels whisk, with loaded mouths, an' stop
an' say to me:
"It's time to gether in the fruit upon the ven'son-
tree."
"What makes ye look so anxious an' what makes
ye speak so low?"
"It's 'cause I'm thinkin' of a place where I'm
a-goin' to go.
"This here I've, been a-tinkerin' which lays acrost
my knee
"Is the axe that I'm a-usin' fer to fell the ven'son-
tree."
I've polished up the iron an' I've covered it with ile,
Its bit is only half an inch, its helve is half a
mile.
(The singer blows an imitation of the startled deer)
"Whew! what's that so pesky—why, it kind o'
frightened me?"
"It's the wind a blowin' through the top o' the
cute ol' ven'son-tree."

HIM AN' ME

Being a story of the Adirondacks told by me in the words of him who had borne with buck-fever and bad marksmanship until, having been long out of meat and patience he put his confidence in me and we sallied forth.

We'd greased our tongues with bacon 'til they'd
shy at food an' fork
An' the trails o' thought were slippery an' slopin'
towards New York;
An' our gizzards shook an' trembled an' were most
uncommon hot
An' the oaths were slippin' easy from the tongue
o' Philo Scott.
Then skyward rose a flapjack an' a hefty oath he
swore
An' he spoke of all his sufferin' which he couldn't
stan' no more;
An' the flapjack got to jumpin' like a rabbit on
the run
As he give his compliments to them who couldn't
p'int a gun.
He told how deer would let 'em come an' stan' an'
rest an' shoot
An' how bold an' how insultin' they would eye the
tenderfoot;
How he—Fide Scott—was hankerin' fer suthin'
fit to eat
"——" says he. "Le's you an' me go out an'
find some meat."

We paddled off a-whisperin' beneath the long birch
limbs
An' we snooked along as silent as a sucker when
he swims;
I could hear him slow his paddle as eroun' the
turns he bore;
I could hear his neck a-creakin' while his eye run
up the shore.
An' soon we come acrost a buck as big an' bold
as sin
An' Philo took t' swallerin' to keep his
feelin's in;
An' every time he swallowed, as he slowly swung
eroun',
I could hear his Adam's apple go a-squeakin' up
an' down.
He sot an' worked his paddle jest as skilful as he
could
An' we went on slow an' careless, like a chunk o'
floatin' wood:
An' I kind o' shook an' shivered an' the pesky ol'
canoe
It seemed to feel as I did, for it shook an' shivered
too.
I sot there, full o' deviltry, a-p'intin' with the
gun,
An' we come up clost and closter, but the deer he
didn't run;
An' Philo shet his teeth so hard he split his brier-
root
As he held his breath a-waitin' an' expectin' me to
shoot.
I could kind o' feel him hanker, I could kind o'
hear him think,
An' we'd come so nigh the animal we didn't dast
to wink,
But I kep' on a-p'intin' of the rifle at the deer
Jest as if I was expectin' fer to stick it in his
ear.
An' Philo tetched the gunnel soft an' shook it with
his knee;
I kind o' felt him nudgin' an' a-wishin' he was me,
But I kep' on a-p'intin', with a foolish kind o' grin,
Enjoyin' all the wickedness that he was holdin' in.
An' of a sudden I could feel a tremble in his feet;
I knew that he was gettin' mad an' fillin' up with
heat.
His breath come fast an' faster, but he couldn't
say a damn—
He'd the feelin's of a panther an' the quiet of a
lamb.
An' his foot come creepin' for'ards an' he tetched
me with his boot
An' he whispered low an' anxious, an says he:
"Why don't ye shoot?"
An' the buck he see the time had come fer him an'
us to part
An' away he ran as Philo pulled the trigger of his
heart.
He had panthers in his bosom, he had horns upon
his mind;
An' the panthers spit an' rassied an' their fur riz

up behind;
An' he gored me with his languidge an' he clawed
me with his eye
'Til I wisht that, when I done him dirt, I hadn't
been so nigh.
He scairt the fish beneath us an' the birds upon the
shore
An' he spoke of all his sufferin' which he couldn't
stan' no more;
Then he sot an' thought an' muttered as he pushed
a mile er so
Like a man that's lost an' weary on the mountain
of his woe.
An' he eyed me over cur'ous an' with pity on his
face
An' he seemed to be a sortin' words to make 'em
fit the case.
"Of all the harmless critters that I ever met," says
he,
"There ain't not none more harmlesser—my God!—
than what you be."
An' he added, kind o' sorrowful, an' hove a mighty
sigh:
"I'd be 'shamed t' meet another deer an' look him
in the eye.
God knows a man that p'int's so never orter hev no
grub,
What game are you expectin' fer t' slaughter with
a club?"
An' I answered with a riddle: "It has head an'
eyes an' feet
An' is black an' white an' harmless, but a fearful
thing to meet;
It's a long an' pesky animal as any in the county;
Can't ye guess?—I've ketched a pome an' I'll give
ye half the bounty."

A VOICE OF THE FIELDS

The red was on the clover an' the blue was in the
sky;
There was music in the meadow, there was dancing
in the rye,
An' I heard her call the scattered flock in pastures
far away
An' the echo in the wooded hills: "Co' day! Co'
day! Co' day!"
O fair was she—my lady love—an' lithe as the
willow-tree,
An' like a miser's money are her parting words
t' me.
O the years are long an' lonesome since my sweet-
heart went away!
An' I think o' her as I call the flocks: "Co' day!
Co' day! Co' day!"
Her cheeks have stole the clover's red, her lips the

odored air,
An' the glow o' the morning sunlight she took away
in her hair;
Her voice had the meadow music, her form an'
her laughing eye
Have taken the blue o' the heavens an' the grace
o' the bending rye.
My love has robbed the summer day—the field,
the sky, the dell,
She has carried their treasures with her, she has
taken my heart as well;
An' if ever, in the further fields, her feet should
go astray
May she hear the good God calling her: "Co' day!
Co' day! Co' day!"

THE WEAVER'S DYE

There's many a hue an' some I knew in the skeins
of a weaver old—
Ah, there is the white o' the lily hand an' the glow
o' the silky gold!
An' the crimson missed in the lips we kissed an'
the blue o' the maiden's eye;
O, look at the wonderful web of life, an' look at
the weaver's dye!

THE SLUMBER SHIP

A LULLABY

Jack Tot is as big as a baby's thumb,
And his dinner is only a drop and a crumb
And a wee little sailor is he.
Heigh ho!
A very fine sailor is he.
He made his boat of a walnut shell;
He sails her at night, and he steers her well

With the wing of a bumblebee.
Heigh ho!
The wing of a bumblebee.
She is rigged with the hair of a lady's curl,
And her lantern is made of a gleaming pearl,
And it never goes out in a gale.
Heigh ho!
It never goes out in a gale.
Her mast is made of a very long thorn;
She's a bell for the fog, and a cricket's horn,
And a spider spun her sail.
Heigh ho!

A spider he spun her sail.
She carries a cargo of baby souls,
And she crosses the terrible Nightmare Shoals,
On her way to the Isles of Rest.
Heigh ho!
The beautiful Isles of Rest.
The Slumber Sea is the sea she sails,
While the skipper is telling incredible tales

With many a merry jest.
Ho! ho!
He's fond of a merry jest.
When the little folks yawn they're ready to go,
And the skipper is lifting his sail—he ho!
In the swell how the little folks nod!
Ha! ha!
Just see how the little folks nod!
He fluttered his wing as they ast him to sing an'
he tried fer t' clear out his throat;
He hemmed an' he hawed an' he hawked an' he
cawed
But he couldn' deliver a note.
The swallow was there an' he ushered each pair
in his linsey an' claw-hammer coat.
The bobolink tried fer t' flirt with the bride, in a
way that was sassy an' bold,
An' the notes that he took as he shivered an'
shook
Had a sound like the jingle o' gold.
He sat on a brier an' laughed at the choir an' told

'em the music was old.
The sexton he came—Mr. Spider by name—a
citizen hairy an' gray.
His rope in a steeple, he called the good people
That live in the land o' the hay.
The ants an' the squgs an' the crickets an' bugs
came out in a mighty array.
A number came down from ole Barleytown an' the
neighborin' city o' Rye.
An' the little black people each climbed up a steeple,
An' sat lookin' up at the sky;
They came fer t' see what a weddin' might be an'
they furnished the cake an' the pie.

OLD HOME, GOOD-BYE!

The day is passing; I have tarried long;
My way leads far through paths I fear to try;
But as I go I'll cheer my heart with song—
Old home, good-bye!
In hallowed scenes what feet have trod thy stage!
The babe, the maiden leaving home to wed;
The young man going forth by duty led
And faltering age.
And some, returning from far distant lands,

Fainting and sick their ways to thee have wended
To feel the sweet ministry of loving hands,
Their journeys ended.
Thou hadst a soul—thy goodly prop' and stay
That kept the log, the compass and the chart,
And showed the way for many a trusting heart—
The long, long way!
O humble home! thou hadst a secret door
Through which I looked, betimes, with wondering
 eye
On splendors that no palace ever wore
In days gone by.
From narrow walls thy lamp gave glad release
And shone afar on distant lands and powers;
A sweet voice sang of love and heavenly peace
And made them ours.
Thou hadst a magic window, broad and high—
The light and glory of the morning shone
Through it, however dark the day had grown
Or bleak the sky.
Its panes, like mighty lenses, brought to view
A fairer home; I saw in depths above
The timber of the old home in the new—
The oak of love.

THE RUSTIC DANCE

To Jones's tavern, near the ancient woods,
Drive young and old from distant neighborhoods.
Here comes old Crocket with his great bass horn—
Its tone less fit for melody than scorn.
Down through its wrinkled tubes, from first to last,
A century's caravan of song has passed.
The boys and girls, their mirthful sports begun,
With noisy kisses punctuate the fun.
Some youths look on, too bashful to assist
And bear the sweet disgrace of being kissed.
The fiddler comes—his heart a merry store,
And shouts of welcome greet him at the door.
Unlettered man—how rude the jest he flings!
But mark his power to wake the tuneful strings!
The old folks smile and tell how, long ago,
Their feet obeyed the swaying of his bow;
And how the God-sent magic of his art
To thoughts of love inclined the youthful heart,
And shook the bonds of care from aged men
Who 'neath the spell returned to youth again.
He taps the fiddle-back as 'twere a drum;
The raw recruits in Cupid's army come;
And heeding not the praise his playing wins,
The ebullition of his soul begins.
The zeal of Crocket turned to scornful sound,
Pursues the measure like a baying hound.
The fiddle's notes pour forth like showers of rain,
The dancers sway like wind-swept fields of grain,
And midst the storm, to maddening fury stirred,

The thunder of the old bass horn is heard.
Beside the glowing fire, with smiles serene,
An aged couple sit and view the scene.
Grandfather's ears the reveille have caught,
And thronging memories fill the camps of thought.
His heels strike on the floor, with measured beat,
As if to ease a tickling in his feet.
Year after year, for love of kith and kin.
Grandmother's hands have had to toil and spin;
But since the palsy all their cunning stole
Her mind is spinning raiment for the soul,
Of spotless white and beauty fit to wear,
When comes the Bridegroom and the end of care.
So goes the dance until the night is gone
And chanticleer proclaims the breaking dawn.
The waning stars show pale to wearied eyes
And seem to dance cotillions in the skies;
As if, forsooth, upon the journey home
Terpsichore's music filled the starry dome.
Blest be the dance! with noisy pleasure rife
Enough to temper all the woe in life;
What magic power its capering measures hold
To keep the hearts of men from growing old!
Stem Father Time, rejoicing in the scene,
Forbears to reap while yet the fields are green.

TO A DEAD CLASSMATE

He started on the left road and I went on the
right,
We were young and strong and the way was long
and we travelled day an' night;
And O the haste and O the waste! and the rush
of the busy throng!
The worried eye, and the quick good-bye, and
the need to hurry along!
Odd times we met on the main highway and told
our hopes and fears,
And after every parting came a wider flood of
years.
I love to tell of the last farewell, and this is the way
it ran:
"I don't know when I'll see you again—take care
of yourself, ol' man."
Put the Beta pin upon his breast, with rosemary
and rue,
The cap and gown, the scarlet and brown and the
symbol of '82,
And lay him low with a simple word as the loving
eye grows dim:
"He took care of more than his share—O Christ!
take care of him."
The snow is falling on the head and aye the heart
grows cold;
The new friend comes to claim a share of that we
gave the old,

And men forget while the eye is wet and bend to
the lug of the load,
And whether or when they will meet you again is
ever a chance of the road.
The babes are boys, the boys are men, and slowly,
year by year,
New faces throng the storied halls and old ones
disappear.
As the hair is grayed and the red lips fade let
friend be friend, for aye
We come and go and ere we know have spoken
a long good-bye.

TO MY FRIEND A. B.

The veil of care is lifted from his face!
How smooth the brow where toil had left its trace!
How confident the look, how calm the eyes
Once keen with life and restless enterprise!
And gone the lines that marked the spirit's haste
To do its work, nor any moment waste.
Imperial peace and beauty crown his head,
God's superscription writ upon the dead.
Behold, herein, his dream, his inmost thought
As if in time-washed Parian marble wrought.
Truly he read the law we must obey:
Man moulds the image and God gives the clay,
And if it's cast of God or Cæsar is
To each all render what is rightly his.
Thousands at noontide are climbing the hills under
Nain, like an army
Fleeing the carnage of war, seeking where it may
rest and take counsel;
Some with the blind or the palsied, some bearing
the sick on their shoulders,
Lagging but laboring hard, so they be not too far
from the Prophet;
Some bringing only a burden of deep and inveterate
longing.
Hard by the gate of the city their Captain halts
and is waiting.
Closer the multitude presses and widens afar on
the hillside;
Thronged are the ways to the city with eager and
hastening comers.
Heard ye? A man was delivered from death by
his power, and the story
Crosses the murmuring host like a wave passing
over the waters,
How at the touch of his finger this day, the dead
rose and was living.
Hushed are the people; the Prophet is speaking;
his hand is uplifted—
Lo! the frail hand that ere long was to stop the mad
rush of the tempest.
Quickly their voices are hushed, and the fear of
Jehovah is on them.
Jesus stood high on a hillock. His face, so divinely
impassioned,
Shone with the light that of old had illumined the
dreams of the prophets.
Gently he spake, like a shepherd who calleth his

flock to green pastures.
Hiding her face and apart from the people, a woman
stood weeping,
Daughter of woe! on a rosary strung with her
tears ever counting
Treasures her heart had surrendered and writ on
her brow was the record.
Hope and the love of her kindred and peace and
all pleasure had left her
Chained to the pillar of life like a captive, and
Shame was her keeper.
Long spake the Prophet, and scarcely had finished
when came the afflicted,
Loudly entreating: "Make way for the blind!" and
the people were parted,
Silent with pity, and many were suffered to pass;
but the woman
Felt no miraculous touch, for the press kept her
back and rebuked her.
"Why comest thou to the Prophet?" they said.
"Get thee hence and be silent;
"He hath no mercy for thee or thy kind"; and
the woman stood weeping.
Now when the even was come over Nain, and the
bridge of the twilight,
Silently floating aloft on the deepening flood of the
shadows,
Rested its timbers of gold on the summits of Tabor
and Hermon,
Jesus came, weary, to sup at the house of one
Simon, a Pharisee,
Dwelling at Nain. Far behind him the woman
came, following slowly;
Entered the gate in the dusk, and when all were
reclining at supper,
Stood by the Prophet, afraid, like a soul that has
come to its judgment,
Weeping, her head bowing low, her hair hanging
loose on her shoulders.
Then there was silence, and Jesus was moved, so
he spake to the woman:
"Daughter, what grieves thee so sore?" and she
spake not, but dumb with her weeping
Sank at his feet; and her tears fell upon them like
rain, and she kissed them.
Simon, amazed when the Prophet forbade not the
woman to touch him,
Rose to rebuke her; but seeing His face, how it
shone with compassion,
Waited; and Jesus then spake: "I have somewhat
to say to thee, Simon.
"A man had two debtors of pence, and the one
owed five hundred,
"The other owed fifty; and when they had nothing
to pay he forgave them
"All that they owed; wherefore which of the two
will most love him?"
Simon said, thoughtfully: "He, I suppose, to whom
most was forgiven."
Jesus made answer: "Thou judgest well. Consider
this woman.
"Weary with travel and sore were my feet, but

thou gavest no water;
"She, to wash them, hath given the tears of her
love and her sorrow,
"Wiping them dry with her hair; and hath kissed
them and bathed them with ointment.
"Wherefore, O woman, weep not! I forgive thee
thy sins which are many.
"Go thou in peace."
And those who were with Him at meat were astonished.
"Lo! she spoke not, she asked not and yet He forgave
her," they whispered.

* * * *

Dear to my God are the rills that flow from the
mountains of sorrow
Over the faces of men and in them is a rainbow of
promise.
Strong is the prayer of the rills that oft bathed the
feet of The Master.

THE END

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK IN VARIOUS MOODS: POEMS
AND VERSES ***

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