

PART I



*The inner garden*

Idorace Holley, Bertha Herbert Holley

THE INNER GARDEN  
*A BOOK OF VERSE*

BY  
HORACE HOLLEY

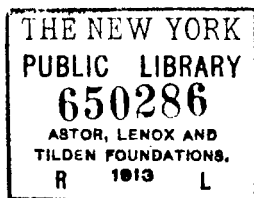
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## PART I

	PAGE
PROPHECY . . . . .	1
INVOCATION . . . . .	2
TO THE GOD OF NATURE . . . . .	3
TOUCHSTONE . . . . .	4
EVOCATIVE . . . . .	6
THE CRY . . . . .	7
"STILL MUST THE SUMMER HOPE" . . . . .	8
THE LEAVES . . . . .	10
DECEMBER . . . . .	12
A LANDSCAPE IN NEW ENGLAND . . . . .	14
THE STORM . . . . .	16
THE THREE BIRDS . . . . .	18
IN ITALY . . . . .	27
THE INVITATION . . . . .	28
THE INNER GARDEN . . . . .	29
SUNSET ON ARNO . . . . .	32
HOLIDAY . . . . .	34
PRIMAVERA . . . . .	35



# CONTENTS

## PART II

	PAGE
PRIDE O' YOUTH . . . . .	39
AD MUNDUM . . . . .	40
CIRCE . . . . .	41
OUTCASTS . . . . .	42
"OH! WHAT AM I?" . . . . .	43
TO A FRIEND . . . . .	44
MUSIC . . . . .	45
"THE PROUDEST SOUL" . . . . .	46
VALEDICTORY . . . . .	47
POET . . . . .	48
TO W. A. G. . . . .	50
SONG FOR COMRADES . . . . .	51
TO A FRIEND IN ABSENCE . . . . .	52
ON A DAY OF SAD OMEN . . . . .	53
TO THE UNKNOWN FRIEND . . . . .	54
INNOCENCE . . . . .	55
LOVE . . . . .	56
THE FALLEN . . . . .	58
"FORGET THE GRAVES OF HEROES" . . . . .	59
THE LOVELESS . . . . .	60
VALE . . . . .	61
ON THE OCCASION OF A BIRTHDAY . . . . .	62

## PART III

THE IMMIGRANTS . . . . .	65
AMERICA . . . . .	66
THE SPANISH WAR SOLDIER . . . . .	67

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
A HARPER ON THE CAMPUS . . . . .	68
ON THE RETIREMENT OF DOCTOR HEWITT AND PROFESSOR SPRING . . . . .	69
CHATTERTON IN ELYSIUM . . . . .	70
TO A YOUNG GIRL . . . . .	75
BEAUTY . . . . .	76
MINIATURES . . . . .	77
INVOCATION . . . . .	80
CASHMERE LADY . . . . .	81
TO HERTHA . . . . .	82
THE MIRROR . . . . .	83
THE SICK CHILD . . . . .	84
THE WIFE . . . . .	85
THE LOST EPIC . . . . .	86
THE LITTLE WORLD . . . . .	87

## PART IV

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD . . . . .	91
INDICTMENT OF TIME . . . . .	92
EPIGRAM: INSOMNIA . . . . .	93
THE RESIGNED . . . . .	94
GOD-IN-MAN . . . . .	95
LUCIFER . . . . .	96
THE STRICKEN KING . . . . .	97
CHRISTI AMOR . . . . .	99
"AS WHEN FROM OUT A HOME" . . . . .	100
MEMORABILIA . . . . .	101

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
WAR AND PEACE . . . . .	102
TIGER . . . . .	104
THE BEGINNING OF LAUGHTER . . . . .	105
THE POET . . . . .	110
THE HYPOCRITE . . . . .	111
IDOLATOR . . . . .	112
CRISIS . . . . .	113
MASTER . . . . .	114
PROMETHEAN . . . . .	115
PILGRIMS . . . . .	116
FREE CAPTAINS . . . . .	117
THE EMPTY BOWL . . . . .	119
THE MATERIALISTIC SCIENTIST . . . . .	122
IMMORTAL . . . . .	123
EPIGRAM . . . . .	124
ORTHODOXY . . . . .	125
ELEGY . . . . .	126
THE RETURN OF RELIGION . . . . .	130

PART I







## PROPHECY



ALL verse, all music, artistry  
Of cunning hand and feeling heart;  
All loveliness, whate'er it be,  
Shows but a hint and broken part

Of that vast beauty and delight  
Which man will know when he is free,  
When in his soul the alien night  
Folds up like darkness from the sea.

For ev'n in song man still reveals  
His ancient fear, a mournful knell,  
Like one who dreams of home, but feels  
The bonds of an old prison cell.

## INVOCATION



WAKE in me, O Spring, the passion  
gay

That stirs delight in every sullen  
clod;

That steeds the mind to ride the Milky Way  
And makes the heart a Bethlehem of God.

## TO THE GOD OF NATURE



HEALING God, upon my throat  
Let cool and joyous breezes blow  
That bear the lone, contented note  
Of meadow rivers wimpling low ;

And prayers from the solemn trees  
That o'er the night their anthems roll  
To hearts like mine, to fears like these,  
From earth's unconquerable soul.

Let pleating rains make me demure  
In silent growth and healthy powers  
Like forest children, boldly pure,—  
Like sober, self-sufficient flowers.

For I would be as they, and dwell  
True son of nature, strong yet mild,  
Touched with her universal spell,  
Her chosen priest, obedient child.



## TOUCHSTONE



H! give to him a forest place  
Made lustrous with triumphant  
spring  
And mellowed by the sober grace  
Of autumn's pageant perishing;

Oh give to him an ancient tree  
By gossip wind and stream begirt,  
Whose druid speech, whose silence, free  
Too conscious spirits from their hurt;

Give solitudes of noble days  
That still unspoiled by sullen woe,  
Before his mild, prophetic gaze  
Like epic chiefs in glory go,—

These give. His nature does implore  
As other men their daily bread,  
For surely from our common store  
Such lives on beauty can be fed.

Oh surely they can dwell apart  
From fiery pit, from blinding steam,  
To cherish with a faithful heart  
Our lost felicities of dream;

Who, grateful for the gifts of men  
Shall render dearer gifts than those,  
Recovering from the earth again  
Shy gods of rapture and repose.

## EVOCATIVE



H see! o'er yonder hill afar,  
Steeped in serenest June,  
The plaintive wonder that's a star,  
The magic that's the moon;

Which throng the corners of the night  
With people of dead years,  
Now glistening with their shy delight,  
Now hidden by their tears.

We shall not die. Our passion brings  
One wistful love the more,  
Heaps magic on these stedfast things,  
Adds wonder to their store.

## THE CRY



E'ER hoary night a cry is heard,—  
O'er hoary night, more dark than  
old,—

A cry that doth earth's passion  
hold:

The anguish of a lonely bird;

A sudden, thin, affrighting cry,  
The wail of some too-fearful soul  
Which writhing in her hopeless dole  
Sobs o'er the night against the sky;

A cry that risen lingers still,  
Its single pulse including life.  
It cleaves the darkness like a knife,  
It cleaves the spirit like a chill.

It wavers hollow, ringing far  
High o'er the blanket of the night,  
To mingle with celestial light  
And greet the ruin of a star.

## "STILL MUST THE SUMMER HOPE"



HE summer comes upon her time of  
cold,

Yet in some sunny corner of the  
world,—

A wall that drinks the south, or stilly wold,—  
Flaunts in her hair a crimson rose uncurled.

She tricks her faded wardrobe with a flower  
Of later blooming, hidden from the sun;  
With fallen leaves makes shift to mend her  
bower

And sings when her dear labor all is done.

Yet doth the wind discover her in sleep,—  
The wind that driveth doom to woodland ways:  
Her bosom shivers and her closed eyes weep,  
Her white hands grope i' the leaves and hide  
her face.

All night her sleep is haunted by a dream  
Of thieves that steal the flower from her hair.  
The red dawn wakes her with its glaring  
gleam,—  
When feeling quick, her blossom is not there!

Then hand on heart that bursting it not break,  
She sees one petal ashen in the mold,  
And crouches low and presses it to cheek:  
Still must the summer hope against the cold.

## THE LEAVES



HOPPITY skip! the leaves are free,  
Down the lane of the world they go  
Farther and farther in wreathy  
blow.

Hoppity skip! but wait for me!

Truant all, that left the tree,  
Heartless all, that left him so.  
Down the lane of the world you go  
Hoppity skip! but wait for me!

Whirling and curling o'er lane and lea,  
Hoppity skip! in a huddled row  
Racing all day the winds that blow,  
Free at last! but wait for me!

Over and over, mad with glee,  
Drunk in November's tawny glow,  
On to the edge where light is low—  
Hoppity skip! but wait for me!

Elfin leaves, O wait for me!  
Together before the wind we go.  
The winds of the year behind us blow  
Hoppity skip! untethered, free!

On up the titled world go we,  
Over the edge in the sun's last glow,—  
Over and down,—and Night below:  
*"Take us at last, the leaves and me!"*



## DECEMBER



ARTH and man are now December's;  
hill to valley yields the light  
Of the sun's pathetic embers  
dropped from his remoter  
flight.

Who foresaw the magic changes winter flings  
on lake and wood?—

Grander rise the mountain ranges, deeper  
throbs the forest mood,

Trees stand still with inward passion, waters  
pause and hold their breath

In a blind, prophetic fashion caught by  
dreamy sleep not death.

Nature's central spirit trembles in an agony  
of rapture

Which her spring-pomp mild resembles but may  
never wholly capture.

Nay! nor birdsong nor bright blossom nor the  
mad delight of horses

Half reveal what through her bosom in the mat-  
ing season courses

When in secret caverns mingle heaven-sire and  
nature-mother

And the far-most planets tingle with the love  
of each for other.

Hence from every dim horizon creeps a thick  
and early eve,—  
'Tis the earth's attempt to prison heaven's god  
ere he can leave;  
Hence the winter-dream of mortals, melancholy  
while elate,  
Baffled just outside the portals of the moated  
house of fate;  
Hence the gleam of wistful magic on the turn-  
ing of the days,  
Hence the courage more than tragic of our  
sympathetic gaze.

## A LANDSCAPE IN NEW ENGLAND



THE sudden lights of sunset fall.  
I tire, and pausing turn to lean  
Upon a weather-dampened wall  
That bounds, like sleep, the dreamy  
scene.

Before me, worn, a pasture lies  
And careless, truant breezes blow  
Puffing, from gusty April skies  
The feeble grasses as they go.

A swollen brook, half-underground,  
Its hidden voice now clear, now still,  
O'erflows the world with droning sound  
Like elfin throats beneath the hill.

To bearded hills the pasture runs  
And orchard-slopes of twisted trees,  
That warmed in vain by modern suns,  
Huddle in patient agonies.

I see a pillar, ashen-gray,  
Fallen upon the hillside lone . . .  
And yearn, as though my father lay  
Beneath that unremembered stone.

The mossy wall has chilled my hand,  
A fresh wind drives the clouds to foam;  
The day's dim embers light the land  
And light a house no more a home.

The roof-tree sags, the gables flare,  
A locked door trembles to the wind;  
The broken windows darkly stare  
Like empty sockets of the blind.

But more than blind, old house, alas,  
No inward being warms your breast  
And never foot those chambers pass  
Save Time's, the last, the saddest guest.

Ah, more than weak and blind and dark  
Like hearts in failure and disgrace,  
You, full of death and ruin, mark  
A sadder grave, that hold a race.

Beneath the gradual stars I wait,  
A watchman stationed in a dream.  
My thoughts, like prophets moved by fate,  
Lament destruction, then redeem.

"O God!" within my heart I cry;  
"Man fails, the lands their harvest cease,—  
No lonelier hill implores the sky,—  
Yet here is beauty, here is peace."

Here, from our broken human mold  
An austere spirit floats abroad  
And decks with reverent faith this old  
Forgotten breathing-place of God.

## THE STORM



How wild the night! How wild the  
will!  
The sullen skies contract to black  
And all the cope of heav'n is shrill  
With hurricane and thunder-wrack,

And o'er the scared and cowering lands  
The reckless armies of the blast  
Fulfill ten thousand mad commands  
Before they sheathe the blade at last.

They shatter old, patrician trees,  
They stem the torrent in its bed,  
They plow the barren, tumbled seas  
And plant them with the pallid dead;

They gather o'er our city streets  
Where men are huddled close in pain  
And loose, from hidden, far retreats,  
The lightning and the driven rain.

They shake the ancient towers of kings,  
They pause to snatch a diadem,  
They rouse the anarchy of things—  
Only the prisoner smiles at them!

With wilder threats, with madder boast  
They seize the underworld's allies  
And marshalling its fiery host  
Attack the fortress of the skies.

In vain! In vain! The gods awake,  
Girding themselves in mild alarm,  
And soon the sun's bright chariots break  
The jealous league of night and storm.

How fair the dawn, how calm the will!  
The soul looks out upon the day;  
His pure and earnest passions thrill  
In sudden gladness to obey.

## THE THREE BIRDS



So gloomy-dull the ancient wood,  
The trees so close, so darkly stood  
That sight nor hearing could de-  
clare

If sunlight ever entered there.  
It seemed as nature, long ago,  
Had drunk some goblet mixed in woe  
And while elsewhere the world spun round  
Here time and effort lay aswound.  
In hidden caves and hollow trees  
The gaping brutes forebore to seize  
The rabbit, deer, or other prey  
Which, weary, had not run away.  
The very brooks did dream along  
Like verses in a shepherd's song  
And had no will or heed to go  
Save always round, and round, and slow;  
But in their thick, distorted glass  
No bright and lovely shapes could pass,  
For in that ancient twilight-place  
The fairest vision lost its grace  
In vain repose and empty sleep.  
'Twas merely slumber laid too deep  
And merely darkness fall'n too long  
That made of trees a wizard-throng,  
And in the branches overhead  
Put bats and owls, a wingèd dread,

And twisted every barren root  
To catch, like dead hands, at the foot,  
And pulled the leaves to cling and drag  
And hold the night in, like a bag,  
And made the forest sanctity  
A portent and fatality.

A little bird there was, all white,  
Oppressed to silence by the night,  
That restless flew from limb to limb.  
An ancient wonder leapt in him,  
Some longing native to his heart  
That stretched his milky wings apart  
And seldom let him droop his bill  
In heedless slumber, dull and still.  
While shadow held that wood in pawn  
And blotted even, noon and dawn,  
Within his breast, close-folded, lay  
The joy of sweet, recurrent day;  
For gladder customs moved in him  
And nature's spell could only dim  
The world's delight and lustihood  
In one not born within the wood.  
Yet thickly hung the dismal spell!  
How many times (I could not tell)  
The bird in blind bewilderment  
About his leafy prison went;  
But flew he low or flew he high  
The cavy forest shed the sky



And all the beating of his wings  
Could not surmount those fragile things.  
(Water's more strong, by wizardy,  
Than man's determined masonry.)  
A pine, nathless, whose aged growth  
A little topped the common sloth,  
Upraised a stern, compelling crown  
Above the twilight, sifting down  
(Like laughter early scared away),  
A timid, truant rill of day.  
But what's too small for chance to use?  
Enchantment falls by its abuse,  
And darkness rolled from blackest night  
Spreads finest background for a light;  
So hither, hither, hither flew  
The bird at last and instant knew  
The sun himself, the kindly sun  
Was laboring in that flicker dun,  
Then to the highest twig-point sped  
And poised to sing with tilted head.  
Through lucent windows of the dawn  
The sun was painting brook and lawn,  
And like a sea-wet pearl, there stirred  
Soft glimmering colors on the bird.  
He sang a little, joyous hymn  
Of trilling echo, bland and dim,  
That might, by its pure spirit, seem  
The measure of a fairy's dream,  
Or serve to waken, without dread,  
A baby smiling in his bed.

For days as many as you'd find  
Of terrors in a coward's mind,  
Of sorrows in a prisoner's heart,  
No joyous song had any part  
Within that crushed and cabined place.  
The hymn he sang, by beauty's grace,  
(That hymn of glad, recovered things),  
Daring the wood's dumb wanderings,  
Bore plaintive summons to arise  
And join in worship of the skies.  
But all the furry ears were closed,  
Nature still in the forest dozed  
And even echo sobbed and died ;  
But like a love-song to a bride  
She hears while others heed it not,  
The hymn, low-throbbing through each spot,  
Struck quick excitement in one bird  
And passed the snoring beasts unheard,  
Though here and there a paw upraised  
And eyes a moment stared, unglazed.  
Now higher wheeled the healthy sun,  
For earth elsewhere was day begun  
When like a lover to his mate  
This bird flew to the other straight  
And perched him on the pine-tree high.  
He shone as blue as burnished sky,  
And 'twas a rare, a pleasant sight,  
The azure bird, the bird so white.  
Kindled in that religious blue  
Ev'n daylight burned more rich, more new,

Some strange and august visiting.  
A prouder song had he to sing,—  
The second bird,—of deeper note  
And sped abroad from fuller throat,  
As when a conscious, vital power  
Leaps eager into use. An hour  
Though brimmed with swift cascades of song,  
For ecstasy gave none too long  
Nor drained his effortless, deep mirth.  
But lo, within the forest-girth,  
Through all that lonely isle of night  
Our joyous world of change and light  
Flowed murmuring in; the ancient spell  
Like smoke rose heavily from the dell,  
Rose heavily close-packed gloom and dread.  
The huddling isolation fled,  
And as a sleeper opes his eye  
That wold unlidded to the sky.  
The trees exalted then their brows  
And all unlocked their tangled boughs,  
The runnel-brooks precipitously  
Churned forward to the stalwart sea,  
The caverned bears for hunger roared,  
Squirrels their autumn-wealth unstored  
And rabbits, quickened from old trance,  
Over the greensward leapt in dance,  
The active spirit of the wood  
Stirring in April lustihood.  
Yet as a dreamer waked doth see  
The forms of lingering fantasy

And on the world awhile will brood  
To tally it with inner mood,  
So the sweet dawn of that delight  
Took fever from the lapsèd night  
And day and time seemed all too slow  
Till each must in his prison go  
And reassume the dreary spell.

Now the brisk bird to silence fell;  
His song had driven gloom away  
But could not tie the ebbing day;  
The natural twilight of the eve  
Made all the woodland droop and grieve,  
And solemn silence fell on all  
As if the place again were thrall  
To endless night; yet sudden,—lo  
On mighty wing aloft did go  
As lordly bird as e'er was seen!  
His beak shone white, but mellow green  
His body and his rapid wings  
(The color of enduring things).  
No silence now, nor sluggard sleep  
This kingly bird could prisoned keep  
When once, from his low nesting-place  
He saw day fade from heaven's face.  
'Twas light, more light he sought, and light  
He dragged from the set teeth of night  
Where high the furrowed clouds among  
The sunset's golden flowers upsprung.

So brimmed with light as bowls with wine  
He faced the setting sun, divine,  
Then like a free, unlaboring breeze  
Dropped flight among the dusky trees.  
Still, still the pine upraised his head  
But now, but now in rueful dread  
And expectation spendèd quite,  
The azure bird, the bird of white  
Huddled in silence. What's so still  
As throats that once a song did fill?  
But hark! O forest, sleep not yet!  
Too soon you grieve, too soon forget,  
And liken evening's natural dark  
To hateful magic.—Forest, hark!  
To the hushed wood the green bird sang,  
And like a victor's bugle rang  
Redoubled echo near and far.  
It might have risen to a star  
And pierced the young moon's empty mask  
Flouting the world's unfinished task,  
Or dipping in the roaring sea  
Have learned its audibility;  
But whatsoe'er its journey's end,  
(Or where the seas or skies extend),  
The song, vibrating through the dell,  
O'erawed and banned the ancient spell!

As custom to his wont must keep,  
Came night and drowned the wood in sleep,

But slumber, settling o'er the trees,  
Showed no more dreary fantasies  
And in the brooklet's dimpled glass  
Henceforth but lovely shapes could pass—  
Ev'n winter, yellowing the leaf,  
Told no irremediable grief—  
For now, i' the forest's sunlit bound  
The world of time and change spun round  
And 'tis enchantment's utter bane  
When the world's seasons roll again.

All this the singing birds had done  
Who found, and heralded, the sun.

. . . . .

If in your spirit's hid expanse,  
O if (as I) you knew the trance  
Which like enchantment o'er a wood  
Prisons the soul in twilight mood;  
And bows, like darkly-huddled trees,  
The proud, exultant ecstasies;  
And roils the passions' silver glass,  
Dwarfing the pleasures as they pass;  
And drugs the thoughts in stupor deep  
Like the wood-folk in dreary sleep,  
(As if the spirit long ago  
Had drunk some goblet mixed in woe),—  
Then *happy, happy*, if (as I),  
You put such mournful magic by

And raise at last the painful spell  
By Hope's, Love's, Faith's sweet miracle!  
These are the soul's three singing birds:  
This, all the meaning of my words.

## IN ITALY



BEGGAR slept among the weeds  
And Hertha said to me:  
"God loves the tare, if anywhere,  
In Italy."



## THE INVITATION



SWEET, 'tis morning! come, arise,  
Dawn unpetals in the skies;  
To the garden quickly go.  
See, the cosmos to and fro  
Nodding to the friendly East.  
I have honey for a feast,  
Milk and bread, with yellow wine  
From the bland Italian vine.  
Here, where nature riots, we  
Rightly dare such revelry  
As shall stir a garden-mood  
In our sympathetic blood.  
Hasten, sweet! the heavens turn  
To their dark, funereal urn,  
Let us greet the rapid hour  
'Neath the shedding of a flower,  
And, like bees, take riches hence  
For our winter's indigence.

## THE INNER GARDEN

TO L. H. B.



It is enough to feel  
The farthest, faintest beat  
Of life's invigorating heart;  
Oh sweet, sweet  
To seize on things, as all may, by the five senses,  
Create an inward world lovelier, more real  
Than this cold counterpart  
Of plumbless, void immenses.  
It is enough, and leaves no more to ask  
Creator or Destroyer, Maker, Changer  
For in itself it gives a godlike task.

The wind blows, the sea rises in storm;  
People pass and repass, the loved, the stranger  
Each with his landscape about him, his mood,  
His virtue to help or harm.  
The cloud  
From its own moment's personality,  
Its share in our whole fellowship—  
Listen! it cries a secret aloud!

Thus attentive, not otherwise, we learn  
The use of things we touch and hear and see,  
Their places in our inward garden-dream  
Enduring each, evocative, complete.  
Thus, though the cloud-form turn

Into the blue again  
And every brotherhood and scheme  
Of sympathetic men  
Scatter, destroyed, undone;  
Something, if only a faith, remains  
Added to the world's store  
That never was before,  
Worthy, significant and sweet.

Oh, 'tis enough for one  
To hail within himself the faintest beat  
Of that warm, central heart!  
Who reckons life by passing joys and pains?  
These are but scales that jealousy and spite  
Hold to each other's emptiness of life;  
They own no part  
In man's innate capacity and might,  
Living for life itself, whether 'tis peace or  
    strife,  
Glad only, glad always for living!

While we are still whole-souled and glad  
For that small nature we had  
And fling no curse on others' ampler giving,  
The powers, the gods can never quite forget  
We wait obedient yet,—  
Never they dare withhold  
Their fees of purple and gold.  
Nay, while we wait  
Our lives are senses needful to the world:

Eyes which if darkened could not be  
God's witness to some modern mystery;  
Ears which too-closely furled,  
Voices too-early still,  
Could never listen His prophetic will  
Or cry abroad His fate.

## SUNSET ON ARNO



THE sun has gathered o'er his face  
A veil of amber mist  
And to his evening resting-place  
Leans slowly, having kissed  
Each snowy summit set with grace  
In bays of amethyst.

Slow twilight and calm river met  
Like music in the eyes,  
For each exultant glance beget  
A moment's paradise  
Where beauty's Eden lingers, yet  
Unbanished to the skies.

A changed world pleads for worship while  
These mystic colors pass  
That from ecstatic heavens file  
Like officers of mass,  
The Arno a cathedral aisle  
Lit by memorial glass.

All common things of sky and earth  
Seem moving to a rhyme  
As if the sense took finer worth  
From vision more sublime;  
The soul recalls a holy birth  
In other place or time.

From what far, secret mountain-stream  
These solemn waters flow ;  
What springs of disavowed esteem  
Their deep enchantment throw,—  
Oh from what source of ancient dream  
And vales of long ago?

Proud stream, with tribute beauty lined,  
Palace and cypress trees,  
Triumphant down thy current wind  
The past's rich argosies ;  
Such craft as bear a willing mind  
Out to infinite seas.

## HOLIDAY



AKE dulling sleep away  
Too-anxious gods of labor!  
We laugh to scorn your gifts of  
calm repose.

Bring rarer gifts than those,—  
The garland and the tabor;  
Meadow and grove are bright with holiday!

Oh raise the wreathèd pole  
In ancient, pagan fashion;  
Summon the piper and the fiddler round  
To voice with ardent sound  
Our deepest, dumbest passion,  
Silent too long in our devoted soul.

What though our bodies bow  
Or earthward droop our glances?  
These are but servants to our hearts' desire,  
Which catching secret fire  
From songs and May-day dances,  
The laggard limbs with eager grace endow.

Yea, every joy you give,  
Each soul-intoxication,  
Turns back the gathering tide of doubts and  
fears,  
Restores our jubilant years  
As by divine creation,  
And frees the rhythmic powers by which we live.

## PRIMAVERA



HE bud whose joyous odor first  
Fills April winds with wine,  
As long in nature's heart 'twas  
nursed

'Twas longer nursed in mine.

To every passion of the earth  
And glamour of the spring  
I give a spiritual birth  
Transmuting everything.

The blush upon that rose demure,  
Yon ripple o'er the sea,  
This proudly warbling robin, sure  
Are all but parts of me!

The rapture like a warming fire  
That makes the year divine,  
Could only burn from love's desire—  
Could only burn from mine.

Though nature show her ancient bill,  
Boast loves of other years,  
She brought no spring to me, until  
I watered it with tears.

My heart has paid its winter, now  
My heart acclaims its spring,  
And life is like a barren bough  
Where sudden blossoms cling.



Through winter-ways of grievous thought,  
Up darkened paths of doubt,  
My own, my rightful love I sought—  
At last I found her out!

In drear indifference she passed  
Like spring to prisoned men.  
I never cared; I care at last:  
She will not pass again.

The tender beauty of her face  
I molded from despair;  
My sorrow crowned her inward grace,  
My faith made her so fair.

As from a shining, golden bowl  
Men turn the eager wine,  
I poured the nectar of her soul  
From this pure hope of mine.

From thence the spring and she arise,  
Glad pilgrims of the earth,  
Who vainly ask among the skies  
The secret of their birth.

Roll on, inexorable year!  
Take spring, take love from me;  
The heart that finds fulfillment here  
Requires eternity.

PART II





## PRIDE O' YOUTH



PRAY thee, Lord, when thou hast  
mind to take me,

Bear me on swiftly through the  
toothless days.

Let howsoe'er destruction seize and break me  
If but no blindness trip me and amaze.

Let me not grope for Death, nor asking,  
mumble

In my wet beard the words that fiercer came;  
Crush as thou wilt, and as thou must, me  
humble—

But Lord, I pray, let no one see my shame!

## AD MUNDUM



'DRAW me not with marshalling of  
numbers,  
Thy thousands perished woeful as  
I deem,  
Who lived their lives like dreams of one who  
slumbers,—  
Then shall I add more failure to their dream?

But I would live! would live! and so not be  
A godlike force in witless motion spent,  
An idle ripple on a barren sea  
Or shadow flung across the firmament.

## CIRCE



CIRCE-WORLD," I cried, "who dost  
beguile

Youth to its ruin, age to dumb  
despair,

Dressing with fresh deceit each mortal mile  
To coil our souls in thy delusive snare;  
Discovered wanton, lovely though thou be  
Thy lust shall never spoil my healthy years  
While I, forewarnèd life, can labor free,  
Untainted of the world's degrading tears."  
But now, alas, the world on every side  
And time's scarred reign confirmed upon my  
heart,

The closer, sadder truth disarms my pride—  
*This same world's I and I of it am part.*

"Poor Circe-world," I moan, "whose siren  
bane

Ourselves do mix, do proffer and . . . do  
drain!"

## OUTCASTS



WE of the world who shuffle to our  
doom,  
Who dull with basest lead the gold  
of time,  
Despoiling where we may the tender bloom  
Of all unworldly souls that rise sublime;  
Still scorning wisdom nobler than our use  
And scourging pity bent on our despair,  
Fouling earth's seldom beauty by abuse,  
In rage at strength more strong, at fair more  
fair;  
We suffer pain with them we hate and slay  
And more than they, as we their death survive.  
Weep not for them so glorious in decay,—  
Weep thou for us, inglorious and alive:  
Stricken ourselves in their destruction, till  
To us that Life appear we may not kill."

"OH! WHAT AM I?"



H, what am I that the cold wind af-  
frays,  
Oh, what am I the ocean could con-  
found,  
A fort so open to the rebel days,  
To nature's mutiny and human wound?  
Oh, what am I so weak against the world,  
Yea, weaker in my heart that should be strong;  
On whom this double warfare is unfurled,  
Of outer violence first, then inward wrong?  
I am a fair, a fleeting glimpse of God  
One moment visible in mortal state,  
A bit of heaven caught i' the prison-clod,  
That I nor nature's self may violate;  
Ev'n like a jewel fallen from a crown  
That's royal still, though fingered by a  
clown.



## TO A FRIEND



o me, dear friend, be better than the  
best,

Be not so wise to taste before you  
eat:

True love is in its own sweet palate blest,—  
To love alone, could such as I be sweet.  
No, do not as the world which hating hate  
And branding scorn on every sensual brow,  
Keeps them, like slaves, in fixt, unbettered state  
Who born to chains will die as they are now;  
But rather love when I have least desert,  
When I am stupid bid me sweetly stay,  
Smile on me tenderest when I cause you hurt  
And praise me most in my most barren day.  
So shall you be as God, whose grace divine  
Flings keys of heav'n to this poor world  
of mine.

## MUSIC



HERE are some who learn apart  
Music's high, mysterious art;  
There are some, of whom am I,  
Minded in simplicity,  
That do feel a rapt heart-beat  
For the singer in the street;  
Whom a beggar's violin  
Seizeth by the soul within.

## “THE PROUDEST SOUL”



THE proudest soul that ever dared  
aspire,  
Though stuffed with all the chosen  
fruits of power,  
Must learn the barren, melancholy hour  
When spirits fail and aspirations tire.  
No man unto himself is wholly sire;  
His mind is subject to the world's debate.  
So many voices urging, soon and late,  
Perplex the vision like a smoky fire.  
But ever faster, old age comes apace,  
At last by memory we stand accused.  
Our little share of godliness misused  
We seek the dread oblivion of the race.  
O Father, come with passion and with grace,  
That so in me Thyself be not abused!

## VALEDICTORY



WHILE other youth went joyous to the  
chase

And gathered trophies, laurel for  
the brow

And praise from men and maidens fair enow  
Who smile upon the victors of the race;  
I bided prizeless in this silent place  
Companioned by the presence of the dead,  
Dreamed of invisible garlands for my head  
And approbation on a ghostly face.  
Call it not pride or self-consuming scorn,—  
I never curled the lip at other men:  
I reverence all as brothers,—yet for me  
There is a brotherhood, a sanctity  
In Truth and Beauty that turns my feet again  
To solitude, though lonely and forlorn.

## POET



Y ou are but one man only; I, many  
as I would be.

I am heir to all existence,—to  
every lover's joy,

The wisdom of old men, the lonely singer's min-  
strelsy,

The bannered ranks of heroes that give battle  
and destroy.

Oh, you are but one man only; how many,  
many I

Who seize the lives I would live as fish are taken  
from streams

And live them through till I weary, kings or  
saints in the sky,

Then throw them away like masks and turn me  
to fresher dreams.

Whoever has lived I can be; I show to time  
again

The spirit, if not the form, of them he has slain  
of yore.

Nature, if ever were lost the mold and pattern  
of men,

Could break my life into fragments and all her  
line restore.

You are but one man only; how many, many  
am I!

The world is hung like a stage I gaze on within  
my breast.

So many lives I may live?—so many deaths I  
must die,

So often yearn for heaven, so long be denied  
my rest.

TO W. A. G.



How many days of love have slipped  
away,  
Pearls from a necklace falling in  
the sea,  
That trail their lucent course to caverns gray  
And lie through time unstrung for you and me!

Let not one spring, O friend, break overhead  
Her cloudy gourd of rain and sun and bloom,  
And we not trip like April from our dead,  
Who spurns, with dancing feet, her broken  
tomb.

## SONG FOR COMRADES



H! let us feed our hungry hearts  
And let the world's need go,  
No man whose own desire departs  
Can mend another's woe.

For what's the world but one great heart  
Divided in all men?  
If each with love contents his part,  
How gay the whole world then!



## TO A FRIEND IN ABSENCE

TO J. P.



Our lives will meet, if they meet at all,  
Where low winds blow and the dead  
leaves fall,  
The old year, bent o'er the foun-  
tain-brim,  
Asleep in an autumn interim.

## ON A DAY OF SAD OMEN



Y thoughts are barks the wind has  
blown  
On desolate, unhappy seas  
Which men in dread have left alone  
For slow, unholmèd craft like these.

Uncargoed of earth's labored plan,  
Its endless and consuming strife,  
They rest, unknown to mortal man,  
On old, forgotten wastes of life.

In tideless waste between the lands  
Incessant breezes lay the foam  
And overcast, with pallid hands,  
The ancient tracks that pointed home.

## TO THE UNKNOWN FRIEND



Lost in sorrow, never dare  
Pray for more and sterner  
power  
That unbroken you can bear  
Secret pang from hour to hour;

But with holy passion, pray  
Heav'n your courage will deny,  
Send you weakness to betray  
One unbosoming, full cry!

Mountain rock be fixed and cold  
And unfathomed lie the wave;  
Heart of mortal should not hold  
Corpse within it, like the grave.

## INNOCENCE



SINKING, midnight moon doth  
burn

Above the cloudy, somber  
pines,

When from my window-ledge I turn  
To write these casual lines.

I weary, looking on the sky;  
I sadden, dreaming of the world,—  
No star but points in enmity  
The pit where I am hurled.

In time and space, where'er it seeks,  
My thought unbars no tranquil room,  
For beauty, once so gentle, speaks  
A judgment and a doom.

Yet on my hot, averted face  
Like friendly, pleading hands I find  
A calm, a reassuring grace  
From passive depths of mind.

The hopeless thief on Calvary,  
Meeting the Saviour's conscious eyes  
Might know an inward sanctity  
The common world denies.

## LOVE



E do wrong to seek content  
And a changeless, snug re-  
pose;

'Twas for mortal never  
meant:

While the spirit lives, it grows.

When you seem no longer strange  
If I say *my love, my own*,  
In that moment you do change  
And I stand afar, alone.

Let us weave no golden tie!  
We must come and we must go  
Like the wingèd winds on high  
And the sea's unlabored flow.

There is peril in our love!  
You and I, no witless flower,  
To our consummation move  
In an idle summer hour,—

Love's a bridge across the deep  
Where the tempests maddened roll  
And the tameless demons leap  
Lusting for the risen soul.

'Tis the truce of hate and wrong  
Which the moments must renew,  
Which by courage we prolong  
And destroying, render true.

There is peril in our love!  
Like the island wizard's elf,  
Power of spirit it must prove  
O'er the Calibans of self.

Fling thy banners high, Romance,  
Sound thy trumpets loud and gay  
For the triumph we advance,  
For the peril kept at bay.

## THE FALLEN



HOUGH he is fallen, give him  
praise  
More than to hosts of them  
who win,

Who lived no fear-tormented days  
Nor nights that were a war with sin.  
Ah, think! he was not good or brave  
Yet tired at last, without a cry  
He sang his song and dug his grave  
And laid him down, alone, to die!

## “FORGET THE GRAVES OF HEROES”



FORGET the graves of heroes and no  
more laurel give,  
Or raise ten thousand more which  
every day renew ;  
So many lives are lived by those too sick to live,  
So many deeds are done by those too weak to do.



## THE LOVELESS



Me not despise, who when the jocund  
Spring  
With lusty passion brims the eager  
clod ;  
Me not despise, who lone-forgotten thing,  
Hold up an empty goblet to the God.

## VALE



My joy returns. Farewell! I go  
Thrilling to my own sphere of  
light.  
Weep not, nor stay in starry  
flight  
The arrow from Apollo's bow.

## ON THE OCCASION OF A BIRTHDAY



PRAY Thee, Lord, for some great  
task to do

Full worth the years I wait be-  
neath the sky ;

Like Solomon, who reared Thy temple high,  
Or Milton, who did the Muse of Sinai sue.  
Ev'n this the prayer that I most oft renew  
Urged on by eager thoughts that in me cry,  
Blind voices, craving freedom lest they die,  
At best their years of animation few.  
O 'tis enough these bones shall turn to dust,  
The clay pain hallowed in my mother's womb ;  
It is enough that earth keep them in tomb  
And not that spirit which they hold in trust.  
The living soul to highest labor must  
Or lie with bones in unaspiring doom.

PART III





## THE IMMIGRANTS



PON my ear a deep, unbroken roar  
Thunders and rolls, as when the  
brooding sea  
Too long asleep, pours out upon the  
shore

Full half her cohorts, tramping audibly.  
Yet here's no rushing of exasperate wind  
Booming revolt amid a factious tide,  
Nor lordly shock on reef in ambush blind  
Of foaming waves that with a sob subside.  
No! but more fateful than the restless deep  
Whose crested hosts leap high to sink again,  
I hear, in solemn and portentous sweep,  
The slow, deliberate marshalling of men.

No monarch moves them, pawns, to win a  
goal;  
They felt life's fever rising in the soul.

## AMERICA



OR this I know thy soul not yet has  
broke

The teeming silence of her modern  
sleep:

Whenas the storm has slipped his windy yoke,  
Revolving on, encompassing the deep;  
Small gulfs at first and shallow inland seas  
He hissing ruffles; but Atlantic last,  
Long-played upon, responds with harmonies  
Prophetic-vague, sublime, and tragic-vast.  
So thou, the lordliest instrument of time,  
The last, supreme, gigantic master-pipe,  
Wilt loose titanically thy solemn rhyme,  
Atlantic thunder, when the hour is ripe.

Thus from the noble teaching of the sea  
I arm my faith with valiant prophecy.

## THE SPANISH WAR SOLDIER

Statue by Bela L. Pratt



Y such a youth, the bright, the epic  
morn,  
A flaming brand, is caught from  
jealous skies;  
Earth leaps revived. See, potent in his eyes,  
Grave modern Iliads eager to be born.



## A HARPER ON THE CAMPUS



HE forms of loveliness the Argives  
wot

Still with all men abide enduringly  
As though our modern stupor could  
not blot

From stifled hearts their passion utterly,  
But sometimes to this day relents a jot  
To stir old pride with desperate memory.

But soon, too soon, the hour of vision goes.  
The booming measure sinks upon the din  
Of lesser things as waters claim and close  
Around all sunsets.—Gloomy shades begin  
To stride upon a prostrate world, and woes  
Of Night surround us, with the dread therein.

# ON THE RETIREMENT OF DOCTOR HEWITT AND PROFESSOR SPRING

Williams College



Two scholars go, and our community  
Is reft of beauty time may not re-  
pair.  
The portico her pillars' ill doth  
spare,  
That fall by night beside the wine-dark sea.

## CHATTERTON IN ELYSIUM .



HE stricken past full many a haven  
built

Beyond the sullen borders of de-  
spair

Where eager fancy, free from human guilt,  
Might roam in bliss. And 'twas a poet's care  
To sing of happy field and island fair,  
That when a weary world did covet rest  
Such lovely vision, like an answered pray'r,  
His wistful sorrow soothed. Oh, hearts were  
blest,  
That found so bright abode, low-lying in the  
west.

Though Time, the master-mariner, whose sail  
Hath whitened every port of sea and sky,  
Now sad returned upon the droning gale  
That old familiar vision would deny;  
Yet dreams reveal the soul, they never die,  
And mourned Elysium, fled beyond the pole,  
Is raised anew in every human sigh,  
For 'tis a region of the inward soul  
Which Time shall not destroy, nor the sick  
world control.

Oh boldly fashion, with religious power,  
The bounty of Elysium; let there be  
(Covert against th' inhospitable hour),  
A brighter heav'n, a purer ecstasy!  
Thus men achieve celestial liberty  
Seeking the true Elysium where 'tis spread  
Within the soul's remoter sanctity,  
The glamour of a garden; habited  
By nobly-joyous lives the world laments as  
dead.

Thither as poets feign, a spirit fled,  
An eager being broken by despair,  
To seek that approbation of the dead  
The living had denied his haughty prayer.  
In grace he came and solemn beauty fair  
That beamed through desolation as the Sun,  
Deep-peering God, doth pierce the murky air  
With unrepressive glance. It proved him one  
The Muses richly dowered as they but few have  
done.

Arrived before that portal of repose  
The panting soul in sudden terror stood;  
Not as a spy that slinketh from his foes,  
But childlike; for a full ecstatic mood  
O'erbrimmed his faculties in copious flood.  
The hope and recognition, long-denied,

Now pained by sheer abundance. Low he  
sighed,  
Then dared that haughty place, a boy, yet old  
in pride.

As when the poignant breath of spring doth  
meet

All sleeping nature, and the startled trees  
Bend with their grateful boughs as if to greet  
The kindly Goddess; movings faint like these,  
Auspicious mood of welcome, then did seize  
The quiet of Elysium. Slowly came  
Like white clouds gathered on the flowery leas  
A shining host with lofty gift of fame,  
Lured by the faint aroma of his delicate name.

To tell their blessed names were nothing slight  
Though joyous matter for a winter's day,  
So many generations gave them light  
Since Time was born in gardens of Cathay.  
Our kings and warriors grave, our poets they,  
Whom we vouchsafe this jealous Paradise.  
No lump and portion of the common clay  
Doth there attain, but, temperate and wise,  
Who show the God-in-man by patient sacrifice.

Foremost who from the tedious darkness drew  
Most life into the light and use of men,  
Shakespeare and Homer. Gravely sweet they  
view

The pallor of the poet. "Welcome," then  
They utter kindly word, and smile again  
The echo, "Welcome."—"Woe to earth," they  
say,

"That blotted from its use a poet's brain!  
How many idle years will waste away  
Ere spirit so inform the cold, uneager clay!"

Somewhat aloof, in dark austerity,  
Dante and Milton gaze upon the boy.  
Mayhap, a truant gust of memory  
Hath blown upon their minds,—his naked joy  
How strange and lovely!—Though the long  
employ  
Of God-enquiring thought had tempered cold  
Their hearts' humanity, the fond alloy  
Of sensuous love refined to fairest gold,  
Yet now in gracious warmth his passion they  
behold.

Others approach with murmurs of applause,  
Fair gentle spirits all, but none so sweet  
As lucid Virgil. Tenderly he draws  
That lordly brow to lip. Thus fathers greet  
A favorite son; but kin are these who meet  
Across what gulf of dark, barbaric time!  
"Lost many a ruder age, thou dost repeat  
The magic of my verse in modern rhyme.  
Once more I hear on earth that low, regretful  
chime."

Their tenderness and kind fraternity  
Knit close the desperate wounds of ancient woe.  
As one new-born he smiles. How good to see  
That soothèd pain must like a nightmare go  
Or braggart rebel Love may overthrow!  
Now bland among his peers he doth assume  
Their blessed station, nevermore to know  
A lonely poet's tragedy of doom,  
Secure in earth's regard, so raised from the  
tomb.

So rose the misty glamour of the dead,  
A shining garment wrapt on every limb  
As 'twere a cloak of cloud upon him spread  
That doth his presence from the world bedim.  
And he is one with god and seraphim,  
With all the ghostly part of humankind  
Whose dreams inspire, or beautiful or grim,  
Our present labor,—lovingly resigned,  
A radiant thought within the universal mind.

## TO A YOUNG GIRL



WHEN that I met thee on the country-side,

A maiden Juno in thy grace of form,—

The bosom broad and deep, the rounded arm,  
The stature stately with a native pride,—  
I deemed thy nature with its form allied;  
That some aspiring love in thee did burn,  
Ambrosial nectar meet for holy urn;  
But found thy spirit sleeping or denied.  
And now (thy presence lingers in my thought),  
I breathe a prayer, that heaven send to thee  
Some passion more than daily bread and water;  
So that, though mortal-lived, thou grow to be  
Olympian-souled, earth's consecrated daughter,  
And wed or bear a hero, as thou ought.



## BEAUTY



ER beauty lies upon her face  
As sunlight masks the barren  
    sea,  
A fitful, accidental grace  
That time will ravage utterly.

Not like the beauty all divine  
(The "House of God," a poet saith),  
Which is the inward soul's design,  
Its majesty supreme in death.

## MINIATURES

### I

MARGARET



If I dream upon thy face  
And its beauty comes to me  
'Tis the world's enchanted  
place  
Wheresoever I may be.

'Tis the world's enchanted place,  
And the magic never dies  
From the glory of thy face,  
From the candor of thine eyes.

### II

MIGNONNE

Few have I seen to bless as rich,  
But thou hast wealth of hair and eyes,—  
Such a beauty as in niche  
Of ruined fane when moonlight dies;

And in them such a warmth as lies  
All night above the misty plain,  
When unto dawn the brooding skies  
Hesitate 'twixt wind and rain.

### III

#### HELEN

Thou art more perfect than night,  
Sweet, in thy lover's sight.  
Thy hair hath the tender shade  
In which the world's peace is laid;  
Thine eyes have the intimate glow  
Of mellow moons gone low.  
More perfect than dawn of the skies  
The love that shines in thine eyes,  
A sun that moves to his goal,—  
The unfrequent dawn of a soul.

### IV

#### MILDRED

Time, which gave thee beauty, made me wise,  
In that I know thy beauty and thy worth;  
And thought and suffering take from mine  
eyes  
Their wonted film of midnight and dull earth,  
So now I see thee first without disguise:  
A soul that hides its tenderness in mirth.

### V

#### MARGUERITE

The deeper mood of France thou art;  
That faith of hers that flames in mirth,

Her sense of beauty more than earth;  
God's vicar in the human heart.

In Ronsard young and Hugo old—  
Their love and wisdom meeting now—  
That deeper mood of France art thou;  
The beauty which is truth, best-told.

## INVOCATION



My love, too like a rose thou art  
Whose beauty, odorous with  
delight,  
Hangs feebly now upon my  
heart  
To scatter soon, like fragile night.

My love, a queenly tigress be!  
That when I quit thee in disdain  
Thy wrath shall make thy spirit free  
And fetter mine with stronger chain.

## CASHMERE LADY



DAVEN-DARK the lady's eyes,  
The lady of the Persian stream.  
Love, in oriental wise,  
Shone and shimmered through her  
dream.

A shawl about her brow did gleam,  
Softly floating from her brow;  
Unflushed her cheek and pallid now  
But rich the shawl like mellow cream.

O'er her throat the linen lay,  
Her arms were shaded by the shawl;  
Thence it shivering fell away,  
Misty-silent waterfall.

White lilies lapped the mossy wall  
Offering fragrance at her feet;  
A mating bulbul trebled sweet,  
The lady wondering heard its call.

By her hand a crystal cup  
Rested upon the river brink.  
Ruddy liquor filled it up  
Sweeter than a man may think.  
The sleepy moonlight deep did sink,  
Dulled the flame upon its tip.  
Whose boat adown that stream will slip,  
What prince that crimson goblet drink?

## TO HERTHA



ESSENCES of old love I bring  
To make the new love sweet;  
Oh many a wondrous, broken  
thing  
Makes love complete.

What memories that buried lay  
In graveyard of the past,  
Take resurrection from this day,  
Divine at last.

What whispers on what summer eves,  
What worship overthrown,  
What faith a loveless man believes  
No more his own;

What scattered, hopeless dreams arise  
And reign within my heart.  
The union of all prophesies,  
My love, thou art!

## THE MIRROR



WITHIN a wondrous glass,  
A wondrous, magic mirror,  
I gaze and see my features nobler  
shown

Than I can dare to own,—  
Oh nobler, fairer, dearer,  
Which inward graces brighten as they pass.

How beautiful, how strange  
To note so wondrous graces!  
A queen might feel her sceptre cheaply sold  
If she could thus behold  
A glass wherein her face is  
Beyond desire made fair by magic change.

Such mirrors no one buys,  
But they may freely own them  
Who rightly love, who gladly greet the time.  
All these will have, sublime,  
Their souls and features shown them,  
Nobly renewed, within their children's eyes.



## THE SICK CHILD



N hour ago,—one hour!—she seemed  
as new and bright

As some first-opened bud upon the  
lap of spring.

The wisdom of the world, reborn in her delight,  
Arose in music, changed by this so joyous thing.

But now! I stand abashed in my inadequate  
years,

Awed by the look of one wiser, older than I:

A god's long tribulation broods behind her tears  
And nature's patient hurt is woven through her  
cry.

## THE WIFE




UN-SEEKER and heaven-changer,  
Rise, rich in the power I give;  
Go, glad in the joy I bring.  
What dream you, my love, of  
danger?

You must live as heroes live  
And turn to new wandering,  
Already, alas, a stranger!

"The wings of my amplest pleasure  
Unfold for your boldest flight.  
Your soul perceives in my eyes  
Sky-spaces of spanless measure  
And suns of a fadeless light.  
Arise! I need not arise,  
Lying so close to my treasure.

"I stay, but follows my blessing  
Unnamed but known to your soul  
So strong to take and employ.  
Another needs my caressing,  
I seek for no distant goal;  
Like God, my task is my joy,—  
Possessed, far more than possessing."

## THE LOST EPIC

,  is lost, like stars that roll too high;  
For he who tells his grief and  
mirth  
Had better write upon the common  
earth

What, traced in constellations in the sky  
Others too little heed,  
Or if attracted by the sudden flame  
And rumor of his name  
They raise their glance to read,  
It seems remote and dim, no human gain.  
So having stared, they turn again  
Gladly to nearer, slighter things  
And praise, perhaps, a lesser bard who sings  
Never so nobly, but more plain,  
A man to men.

## THE LITTLE WORLD



MUSE upon the ever-lessening world,  
This scheme of love and thought  
wherein I dwell,  
And wonder,—once so mystical  
and vast,  
Now shrunk, as by my garden wall contained.

Where then, O where the cosmic dream of youth;  
O where the boast I flung about the stars,  
About the lives of men; O wherè the love,  
A key to free so many prisoned lives?

Gone, gone they say, the bubble with the breath  
That blew its moment's luster in the sun;  
Gone, gone they cry; of youth's colossal world  
Remain a garden, half a dozen friends!

So let it be! What though its bounds with-  
draw  
Dream after dream, and hope retires to hope,  
The multitudes for whom I once aspired  
United in the child I now adore?

What though the fruits within this garden  
close  
Consume the days and give my thoughts con-  
cern  
With gossip of the season, wind and rain,  
A little gossip by the mossy wall?

Friends, family, labor, with a loyal hope  
The world goes well, but not too anxious care;  
This is the natural compass of a man,  
A full heart loving best a little world.

The full heart loving best a little world,  
O secret hidden from the heartless boy!—  
And, as the soul develops, it lays down  
Its dizzy frets of parliament and king.

PART IV





## TO THE UNKNOWN GOD



H, doff the wrinkled mask you  
wear,  
This nature motley, worn and  
old,—  
Stand forth, in gaiety or despair,  
Outside the dumb worlds we behold!

No more i' the silly seasons dwell  
Grinning at time with satyr face,  
Nor frown from the cold citadel  
You raised amid the voids of space;

Else, tired of this unfriendly mask  
Our lives avert its stranger-gaze  
And turn them to a worthier task,  
An inward world of works and days.



## INDICTMENT OF TIME



o time I'll never turn a thankful face  
Though, as thou sayest, he will  
fetch a day

When every radiant joy and black  
disgrace

Indifferent seem, like gardens in decay.

I look to him for nought but further woe:

His days ne'er muster for a past defeat,

But still intent on plunder as they go,

Ignoble captains! ever sound retreat.

In him no virtue vests save other days

Which still are thieves, though sorrow be their  
theft;

No more to him let earth present her praise,

Poor Niobe, even of tears bereft.

Physician yes, but not a judge is time,

Who cures the stab but disregards the  
crime.

## EPIGRAM: INSOMNIA



THE silly years, like driven sheep  
File blindly through the gates of  
life.  
We, tossed in dull or febrile strife,  
Count one, two, three . . . and yawn asleep.

## THE RESIGNED



Too blind you will not see the general  
grief

Which voiceless you would hide from  
other minds,

And never learn how nature craves relief

From one disease in men of many kinds.

Oh, fool, how many fools must time consume,

Grim wasted heroes, blindly dumb like thee,

Whose curtained spirits pent tremendous doom

On private stage the world shall never see!

You're like an actor, fool, who argues blame

Upon the author's warm and feeling pen

For every passion, garbling it with shame:

"Tears are for women, gravity for men."

Dear fool, your heart shall tell if I am wrong,

Which is *your* Poet, silenced far too long.

## GOD-IN-MAN



WHEN I do see our human nature  
    stained  
Like beauteous garments trailed  
    upon the ground,  
In tenement and palace alike constrained  
To ominous forms that do my soul confound;  
At lust, at hate, at all the bestial shapes  
Brutality or weakness may assume,—  
Thrice-savage tigers, thrice-despoiling apes  
Nuzzling the world to one degraded doom,—  
Yet, at such monstrous fabric and design  
I cannot lash my heart to righteous hate,  
But murmur still, “Oh, piteous world of mine,  
Such stuff as maketh Christs, whenever fate  
    In some unconscious and reluctant hour  
    Will let mankind disclose his native power!”

## LUCIFER



WHEN you perceive the world's prophetic soul

A prisoner grieving in the common mind,

His cloudy wings bereft of their control,  
His arms downslack, his fiery vision blind;  
Oh when you see him weep at women's eyes  
Or hear his tender moan in children's breath,  
His innocence revealed in sinners' cries  
As by the good man's decent gradual death;  
Do you not wonder oft and seek with me  
What power hath brought this Lucifer so low  
That every ditch bedaubes his brilliancy,  
And foulest huts on him their shadow throw?

For this the bard invokes, in mournful rhyme,  
The awful charity of death and time.

## THE STRICKEN KING



T were a foolish king, indeed, to  
show

A regal brow and sceptre to the  
gaze

But let his robe be muddy-dragged below,  
And think to rule respected all his days ;  
For soon his court will scorn such monarchy  
Nor call him king who is not wholly royal ;  
His slaves will grin, ev'n ministers cease to be  
Respectful subjects, in their heart disloyal.  
Yet man is so, who doth the world o'ersway  
And hold eternal kingdom of the deep,—  
His own conceit doth steal respect away,  
By birth a king, by act a chimney-sweep.  
His sceptre would become him like a star,  
If inward greed did not its glory mar.

Yet, longer dwelling in that ruined court  
Where man, the stricken king, so ill doth reign,  
I find his folly wiser than report  
And his defilement daughter of his pain.  
He's like a king who never knew repose  
But lives in constant dread to be o'erthrown,  
Buying a half-obedience from his foes,  
Still half-a-king to them who would have none.  
And so his robe is stained, his front dismayed,  
His court a mock, himself but half a king ;

And so his magnanimity's arrayed  
So foully-gowned, a self-impeaching thing.  
And so his royalty might be a scorn,  
If it were not too piteous and forlorn.

Himself his foe and bitter regicide;  
Himself the rebel risen in his state;  
Himself his spy and minister, to chide  
Himself to wrong and nourish his own hate;  
Himself his fool that doth himself beguile;  
Himself his scullion, foul to that degree;  
Himself his beggar, skilled in tearful wile  
Himself to sue in his necessity;  
Yet king withal, and proved by future act  
When all that baser self he may resign,  
Leagued with himself and firm in his own pact  
To live a monarch, royal in his line!  
A king withal, and nowise made more clear:  
His clownish self his kingly self doth fear.

## CHRISTI AMOR



How strange my love, O Lord, for see,  
I fight thee;  
Thy word on every lip I do deny.  
No form thou comest in but I shall  
right thee,—  
I shall not take Thee wholly lest I die.

Come thou in word or deed of men soever,  
Be thou incarnate in my heart's best cry,  
The strangeness of my love will leave off  
never,—  
I shall not take thee wholly lest I die.

Yet Lord I love thee; yea, Lord Christ, I love  
thee!

I love thee ere the wounds I make are dry,  
Nathless I hold the dripping scourge above  
thee,  
And shall not take thee wholly lest I die.

Nay, see how great my love! it will not alter  
Not if the sun be withered in the sky.  
All loves on earth but mine will fail and falter  
But, Lord, I shall not take thee lest I die.

And still I must pursue where'er thou goest,  
Yea, loving thee so much must crucify.  
How strange the deepest love of men, thou  
knowest.

I shall not take thee wholly lest I die!



## “AS WHEN FROM OUT A HOME”



s when from out a home the mother  
goes,  
Forth-carried dead and given to the  
earth;  
When sons and daughters, stricken in mid-  
mirth,  
Full sadly gaze upon each other's woes;  
And one tries sobbing comfort, but he knows  
The house is dead forever,—room by room  
Sealed on the joyous past, ev'n with the tomb  
That silently upon her life doth close:  
So with the man from whom stark thoughts  
have ta'en  
The presence and the parenthood of God.  
However mild, however pure he be,  
His mind is locked in loneliness and pain,  
A ruined house.—An anxious orphan he,  
And dreads the drear asylum of the sod.

## MEMORABILIA

How hard it is to explain, in any way to bring back the charm of a person who leaves no adequate record.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER.



EVER dig i' the changing mold  
For their secret when they die,  
Nor inquire them, silent-souled  
In a mild, impersonal sky;

But, when they have parted, gaze  
On these touched, familiar things—  
There the passion of their days,  
All their wistful secret, clings.

Voices, sterner than their own,  
From their books and papers fall,  
From the pipe, the tattered gown,  
From the knapsack on the wall.

## WAR AND PEACE



THE world has sown too long its fertile  
mind in war

And raised its passions for an am-  
buscade;

Our souls and bodies sicken of the common scar,  
The mutual hurt, the mutual treason, made.

Now closelier looking, see within each other's  
eyes

One sorrow shining back, one need the same,—

Yea, all the necessary hate we recognize

From some eternal foe, not man, it came.

Oh, thrust the sword away, that hateful key of  
hell!

We take a manlier weapon for our foe

And courage of a nobler kind to use it well,

Such monstrous dangers lurk where we must go.

The banner had its beauty? let it not be furled

But all one color, all one proud design,

Flaunt to our purer faith the union of this  
world

When sun and sea have joined our battle line.

Our dream is brotherhood; we never prayed for  
peace,

The idleness that slackens arm and brain;

For war, our war, begins when fratricide shall  
cease,  
And lust despair a victory so vain.  
Then lest we drowse may drums in stormy pas-  
sion roll  
The joyous thrill of battle evermore:  
The tiger-man we hate has taught our chas-  
tened soul  
Devotion to the death,—which is war!

## TIGER



TIGER, jungle-laired, thee God created!

His hands thy regal limbs have fashioned,

Yet who so perfect hate impassioned  
With all thy might and fearful beauty mated?

Was't God or jubilant, destroying devil  
Has made my heart a jungle, frantic  
With more than tiger's frenzied antic—  
The sensual feast of skulls, the bloody revel?

Lord, Lord, the heart when tiger rageth  
through it!

A garden gashed of all its lilies,  
A gutted tomb where lethal chill is—  
Canst Thou it sweeten, Lord, canst Thou re-  
new it?

## THE BEGINNING OF LAUGHTER



HERE was no laughter then,  
But something unnamed, unspoken  
Of tears that dripped an unfelt  
course.

For it was evening, and the wolves  
From far off, back, from mountains and the  
trackless woods,  
With thin and wavering-echoed cry and doleful  
shriek and wail,  
Lined round the thoughts of men, bounding  
emotion with incessant fear.

There was no laughter then,  
For suns marked out a waiting fang and bloody  
mouth,  
Morning brought the skulking wretch to light.  
Stones crashed  
From crag with bound on bound;  
Men sideways looked, and saw, and snarled,  
And hungered on.  
Openly a ripple pushed the stream  
And big and black in deep, in shallow, lurked  
The monster, waiting.  
Aye, there was no laughter then.  
Ever in, and round, from above the faces peered,  
Each one fearful.

Nor was there height,—height of thought or  
gaze.

Man crept on earth, a bent thing, never sky-  
ward looking,—

Less, skyward thinking.

At last, one fortunate born,

Whiter skinned than his hairy fellows,—

Whiter skinned and deeper browed,—

Crept up to watch some star that mocked his  
conception,

(Making a feeble wonder in his soul),

And creeping, found a crag that closed the val-  
ley,—

A great rock.

There, all night long, he gazed upon that star,

This new-born child of thought,

Looked upward, looked out.

Dawn found him still awake,

His eyes open, but wider open the heavy-filmed  
eyes of his soul,

His head reflectively rested upon his hands.

Light rolled down through the clefts, flooding  
the valleys.

The watcher gazed where other valleys cleft  
more hills beyond,

And how the river reappeared larger, farther  
down.

So grew the world unto his sight.

He marked, as in another world,  
The drear, hard habitation of the tribe.  
Outstretched, his eager head  
Peered down as to a game whose interest fills  
the heart.

He marked the ant-like goings-out from caves,  
Their swift, instinctive swerve.

He saw the tumult of foolish battles,  
Seizures, thefts, hands uplift in hate.

He marked each rush, each leap from high,  
And felt as in himself the crunch of bones.

He shuddered at the striped beast;  
He saw the woman crouching still, immovable,  
Her head low.

There were deaths and cries.

But he, with eagerness all new  
At this strange scope and spectacle of life,  
Followed the weak thread of being  
Through all its windings; heard with new ears  
the flaring cries.

Now in his heart he felt a stir  
As when a seed bursts, or a tree  
Leaps into springtime and the tension of  
leaves,—

A stir within him, a growing, an increasing,  
A waxing mightier and mightier.  
So brooding he, the pioneer of the human soul,  
The first pilot on the ocean of destiny,



Knew that the stir within him could not stay  
But must break from its prison, as life breaks  
from the egg;  
And rose, open-mouthed, facing the west, the  
huge sources of night,—  
When, stretching his arms as he would fold  
Then to his human heart all sorrows of men  
Past, present, and to come soever,—  
(A prehistoric pitier of men, the child-soul that  
with the generations  
Grew into the stature of Christ),—  
Poised his head higher, and facing the heavens  
full-eyed, square,—  
The first man to question God,—  
Laughed to himself!

Like to water running under the ground,  
Past a bleak pit where a doomed man  
Licks his hand for thirst; who hears the water  
flowing  
But does not cry, and endures to the end of the  
bitter life:  
So the laughter was in sound,  
And like the water it flowed forth, and past,  
and departed,  
And there was an end of it.

Then he, grown to the height of his being,  
Shrunk down the backward slope of growth,

And bowed his head, and crept from the crag,  
sorrowing.

But there was that in his eyes the old fear  
Could never quench, nor the old animalism  
Utterly win back ; which when his fellows saw  
They stood in awe of him,—  
Him, who had first laughed at the world's fear,  
Him, the first poet.

## THE POET



is soul a hid desire obeys  
Which, like dædalian wings,  
Impels him from the prison-maze  
Of customary things.

“I know not how or where,” he said,  
“But from myself I fly  
As leaves must when the tree is dead,  
Wind-blown across the sky.

“When sorrow clogs my active mind  
With dullness worse than death,  
I leave this winter-self behind,—  
Spent thoughts and laboring breath,—

“And rising from that barren home  
In far, unconscious flight,  
To planets of new joy I roam  
And skies of more delight.

“But when I tire and sink again  
Within myself,” he said,  
“It seems as if this world of men  
Had risen from the dead.”

## THE HYPOCRITE



HEAVIER world than God's you  
bear

Upon that misdevoted head;  
Yet when unburdened, being  
dead,

No god,—a pigmy,—totters there.

## IDOLATOR



WANT Thy presence ever nigh,  
Thy love, Thy beauty and  
Thy grace;  
Yet when I sought Thou wert  
not by,

I prayed, but never saw Thy face.

Within my soul Thy glory burns  
Serene, unchanging yet afar,  
So bright its own thick shadow turns  
Like chaos round a lonely star.

I asked of nature; everywhere  
A footstep and a sign of Thee,  
Alas, too grand,—not mine to dare  
Omniscience and infinity!

A little image I have made,  
Behold, dear God, a tiny thing,  
And I have hoped (but half afraid)  
Thou couldst approve its fashioning.

I hoped Thou would its form approve  
And enter, as a temple fit,  
Since Thou, so human in Thy love,  
Might love the shape containing it.

They may have right,—I do not know,—  
Who throne Thee in the solemn sky,  
But oh, dear God, I love Thee so  
I'd have Thee ever small, and nigh!

## CRISIS



VER, ever the wind blows, storm or  
peace;

Rolls, rolls the ocean its eternal  
tides;

The constant sun returns; each star abides  
In heavens that change but never, never cease.  
Only our mortal, loving race  
Feels any reck for time and place.

Ever, ever the wind fares back and forth;  
Eternal rocks the sea-tide outward, in;  
The sun renews all kalends that have been;  
Restore the stars their cycles to the north.  
Only our eager, hopeful eyes  
Mark progress on the wheeling skies.

Ever, ever the wind its tireless flight  
Urges along the ocean's wave-beat shore;  
The day receives and spends, like all before,  
Its portion of the universal light.  
Only our true, devoted breast  
Divides the seasons, worst and best.

O wind, be favorable to my small bark;  
For my sake, ocean, lay your tempest-foam.  
For me the last sun flickers; nearing home,  
Kind stars, direct my harbor through the dark.  
Only within our lonely soul  
God thrust a secret and a goal.

## MASTER



WILL make me a master, I said,  
And seize life where it is eager and  
new,  
Flaming from the Maker, blood  
red.

Across the jungle I crept  
Even to the tiger's cave, and slew  
That beautiful body striped and sleek and  
strong  
While the spirit slept.  
Folly! sobbed nature through her language-  
winds,  
Folly and wrong!  
Go forth, return to man's own jungle of  
minds;  
There, slaying the fierce desire  
And striking dead the brutal thoughts, she said,  
Take to yourself the tiger's primal fire,—  
Live the Master's life, eager and new, blood  
red!

## PROMETHEAN



o fling off name, character and fate;  
To stand still like a tree  
The body all one conscious bloom,  
Head high and stalwart arms out  
straight  
Capable to bear the fruits of life;  
To run like a river  
Undammed, rapid, sped by desire  
For newer landscapes in the soul,  
Feeling some premonition of the sea,—  
A mad, exultant shiver,—  
This is to catch again  
A spark from the lost fire,  
And know once more the mystery of men.



## PILGRIMS



H, what's the toil of foot and hand  
To walk, to touch, to hear, to see,—  
That merely bears from land to land  
This lethal flesh and bones of me?  
Vain pilgrim, without shrine or goal,  
Be still, like nature's patient clod.  
Do thou advance, aspiring soul,  
Through every clime and thought of God!

## FREE CAPTAINS



WE loose our sail to every gale  
And never reef for night or  
squall;  
In spite of all  
The storms that fly about the sky  
And all the plunging breakers hurled  
We ride the foam  
That bears us home  
Beyond the farthest corner of the world.  
  
We give the slip to every ship  
Whose skipper's paid to stay on board.  
He can't afford  
To point her nose where danger blows  
But waits in harbor, safely furled,  
And fears the foam  
That bears us home  
Beyond the farthest corner of the world.  
  
We take the sea because 'tis free  
Of settled towns and roads that bind.  
Out sail, to find  
Some jolly place, some lusty race  
Who cut their sail but never furled;  
Who rode the foam  
That bears us home  
Beyond the farthest corner of the world.

We fling our boast from coast to coast  
For naught of war or trade we make,  
But for the sake  
Of the free soul and the glad goal  
That shines where seas are maddest curled,—  
To ride the foam  
That bears us home  
Beyond the farthest corner of the world!

## THE EMPTY BOWL

- YOUTH**        What's the soul?  
**AGE**            Empty bowl!  
**POET**        Fill it full of stars and flowers,  
                Fill it full of sun and showers,  
                Beauty earth's and beauty sky's,—  
                Fill it, ere the moment flies  
                Which to none comes after!
- MOTHER**    Nay, not full! Leave many spaces  
                For kind hearts and friendly faces,  
                Children's warmth and women's  
                        graces  
                Human pain and human laughter.
- POET**        Men are noblest when alone  
                With the stars,—
- MOTHER**                  When men have grown  
                Beauty never can atone  
                For the love of woman.
- PRIEST**      Not so weak, so human,  
                Not so wanton-vain!  
                Fill it not with earthly care  
                Since delight will turn to pain.  
                Leave the world's unseemly revel  
                To the devil,—  
                Naught has worth but vow and solemn  
                        prayer!
- CYNIC**        What's the cup devotion fills  
                Or that silly passions brim  
                Blindly-bubbling to the rim?

Fill your soul so fast, my master,  
Death will empty it the faster,  
Breaks each cup he does, and spills  
Red wine, white wine in the dust,—  
Spill it must!

YOUTH      Vain the effort that would fill it?  
Let the Maker take  
What so soon will break!  
Wither, wither flowers,  
Men ungreeted pass,  
Idly fall the hours!  
'Tis a weak, a useless glass  
If I needs must spill it.

POET      Beauty brings an hour's delight,  
Let no rapture pass untasted.

MOTHER      I shall love with all my might  
Home and husband.

PRIEST      Pray aright,  
All but faith is wasted.

YOUTH      Oh, the yearning soul!  
Too, too fragile bowl  
Made for some immortal wine  
And a god's intoxication.  
I will ask the whole creation  
For a permanence divine.  
What I hope so purely  
Must be granted, surely!  
Why not fill our souls with God?

CYNIC      Fool! Who—

GOD      Wheeling star and sleeping clod,

Sunset I, and summer rains,  
Children's voices, homes and household  
    care,  
Friendship, virtue, silence, prayer.  
Let your human souls with these be  
    filled.  
When at last the wine is spilled  
From the life-bowl broken,—

ALL  
GOD

What remains?  
I am there.

## THE MATERIALISTIC SCIENTIST



WITH wondrous powers you make  
intense  
The ear to list, the eye to see,  
Yet feel not in the elements  
An unsubstantial Mystery,—  
O modern wastrel, joylessly  
Living and dying by the sense!

## IMMORTAL



So much, no more, have I descried  
The movings of the Master mind:  
The blowing of a bournless wind,  
The turning of a timeless tide;  
And that the wind blows o'er the lea  
To ripen stores of asphodel,  
And that the tide turns to impel  
Our blissful dead across the sea.



## EPIGRAM



EAR not, for God has many a  
world.

These lives now prisoned in dis-  
tress

Await, like ships in harbor furled,  
Winds of diviner happiness.

## ORTHODOXY



H, let us, like the bitter dreg of wine  
That's stood too long undrunken in  
the bowl,  
Spill out this barren love that once  
divine

So vigorous brimmed the world's aspiring soul!  
Man's not that beggar, sure, that he must drain  
The acid vintage of a broken press,  
Nor dull his heart with unconsoling pain,  
That craves by nature joy and tenderness?  
Ah no, but rather say you never loved  
Nor knew, O world, the passion of delight,  
Else you by such a cheat were never moved  
But discontented, soon would set it right.

For he who truly loves will love again,  
Though on the cross and scourged by jealous  
men.

## ELEGY



is agony upon him, he has passed  
The lonely door of death,  
Leaving the world his body and his  
breath,

His reputation and his character.

With these he has no more concern at last.

The world must take what was the world's to  
give ;

Must take and use again

To house the lingering of another soul,

For he, the wanderer,

No longer fellow to the lives we live,

Has stumbled on and lost the world of men.

Oh he has fled

Beyond the limit of the sun,

Beyond the seasons where they roll,

Beyond the years: the last, remotest one

Shall reach him not, the unattainable dead !

And he is fugitive

Forever from that nature he had worn,

The world-wide searching eyes,

The world-deep loving heart,

The mind wherein were born

Thoughts of an infinite scope and enterprise.

These now are part

Of us, not him, and stay  
Within our world, still subject to a power  
Which, in the agony of one mad hour,  
He learned to put away.

Against the darkened curtain of that doom  
I see his life replayed  
Vivid and stark, like sudden lightning made  
Through tangled storm and gloom.  
I see O God! who could not see before,  
The desperate load he bore  
Merely to live, to linger here awhile  
A servant in the house of thought and sense.  
A single glance, a movement slow, intense,  
One tender smile,  
Affirm the inward failure no one knew  
Louder than Waterloo.  
Failure? He felt it so  
Whose spirit could not stay content with less  
Than states of being joyous and sublime  
We dare not term success;  
Who longed to throw  
A spiritual passion in each word  
And wing our languid time  
With instincts of forgotten loveliness.  
Yet was he like a prisoner, deterred  
By some too-ponderous chain  
Within the dungeon of his physical pain.  
His soul, for self too vast,

Fettered by secret tyrants in the blood,  
Hated the personal mood  
His languor fixed about it, and was strong  
To name such living failure till the last.  
On him, who felt each day  
Some noble purpose gather all in vain,  
Some aspiration hurried to its grave  
He loved but could not save,—  
Who called this failure,—nay,  
On him the wrong!  
He does not fail who brings  
One desperate, purging grief to men;  
Who, faithful to his agony, shows again  
Our need of perfect things.

Nay, but in the moment's awful peace  
That bore him forth  
And gave his body to the jealous earth,  
At last I know  
Too, too irrevocably the dead  
And O too far is fled  
That one may so  
Pity his pain or reverence his success.  
But let this be  
The play of little children, or the scheme  
Of earth-bound, cunning minds, that raise  
Vain trophies to a blatant victory;  
Whose days  
Are shut within this sensuous house; whose  
dream

Deflowers with the winter of the world.  
For he, still penitent  
To that perfection earth can not contain  
Nor thought and sense invent,  
Descrying dimly through each failing nerve  
Beauty he could not serve,  
In brooding desperation, hurled  
The pile of nature's prison all apart  
And trod the fiery tyranny of pain  
Into the dust death mingled with his own.

Roll on, O star implacable, and roll  
To whatsoever good, O fatal time,  
Your seasons may pretend!  
For me these things have end.  
The love that made us single, will and heart,  
With him has passed sublime  
The lonely door of death  
Into its native world, my conscious soul;  
And though your troubled tides upheave  
Interminably, and make my breath  
The common, desolate moan  
Of stricken beast,  
I stand released.  
The very stab of pain whereby I grieve,  
Wherethrough I die,  
Gives surer, sterner strength that I may cry  
Over *this* lethal world, O Elegy!

# THE RETURN OF RELIGION

TO ABDUL BAHA



ODORS from gardens deeply hid  
Remote from spoiling change, and  
tended long,  
Odors and perfumes delicately  
strong

Upon the winds have slid

Into our modern sense.

Oh subtle, oh intense

With more than balm, with healing for the  
mind!

How shall we speak our gratitude to those

Whose hid, devoted garden grows

The flowers of faith, of innocence

And strews their virtue freely on the wind?

Deeper than sense and farther than our blood  
These odors penetrate,

Which pierce within our soul's most secret mood  
And change our fate;

Incorporate

Henceforth with all we feel and think and do,  
Thereby with what we are.

Once more we feel an aspiration rise

From depths of our own nature to renew

Its marriage-vows with God,

To enter, bidden, His adorable skies  
No longer hateful, alien or too far.  
Once more we think, in rapture of new dream,  
Of those forsaken visions prophesied;  
That glorious City long ago descried,  
How long, alas, untrod!  
And once again, with bolder hand and will,  
With hearts fire-purified,  
We turn us to the interrupted scheme,  
Never, never contented now until  
All men foregather to one holy hill.

But many peoples claim our gratitude  
Whose lives release that essence we adore,  
Contributive to our religious mood.  
Not one tradition only, not one race—  
No, all past time and every humble place  
Which blindly groped apart  
Unite at last, at last restore  
Their scattered features to one perfect face,  
Their sundered loves to one fraternal heart.  
We could not spare  
A single prophet, any votive fane,  
One amulet or token, making plain  
Our necessary, life-instinctive care  
For worship and for prayer.  
He is not jealous nor implacable  
Who freely offered His divinity  
In measure portioned to the savage soul;



Who was the druid's tree,  
Who was the voodoo's spell,  
Who was the sun that made the Indian whole!

The prophets in one fellowship return,  
Their holy sanctions bright upon them, each  
Bearing a gift of wondrous act or speech,  
Some fragment of God's personality  
Whereby we learn

The nature He must be.

Adam returns who at the gates of time  
Thrust back the sensuous beast  
Trailing the dormant soul through jungle  
slime;

Moses, that ancient awe,  
Father of social consciousness and law;  
Christ, whose tremendous heart  
Broke to restore the world's exhausted blood;  
Buddha, God's answer to the groping East,  
Whom seekers imitate;

With him Mahomet, battling once apart,—  
Authentic both

Yet revelations of the infinite mood  
Our fathers, snug in one tradition, loathe,—  
And nameless more, forgotten now, who give  
Some else unknown authority to live,  
Some path to man's else night-encompassed  
fate.

Fearful of them no more

As knowing Whom they represent,  
Nor jealous of their delegated power,  
We take their gifts, their certitude and peace  
Renewed like nature's primal element.

Aye, we increase!

All unexpended we, not old or worn  
But vigorous with the glad intent of spring,  
The world redated from new vision born  
Which they, united, loved, could only bring.

