

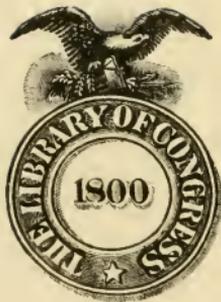
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The SPIDERS  
and  
OTHER POEMS.



Hilton R. Greer:



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THE SPIDERS  
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

HILTON R. GREER

Author of "Sun-Gleams and Gossamers"

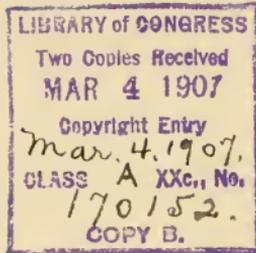
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HILTON R. GREER

THE SPIDERS AND OTHER POEMS



To the Memory of My Mother



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THE SPIDERS.



*THE SPIDERS.*

CLOSE by Life's gardenside,  
Silently, ceaselessly,  
Tangling the hearts of men  
Deep in its meshes,  
Spinneth a spider.

Silently, ceaselessly,  
Weaving a web that is  
Fashioned of filminess,  
Sun-gleams and gossamers  
Dew-pearled and odorous ;  
Weaving a web that is  
Frailer than mist at times,  
Steel-strong at others,  
Tangling the hearts of men  
Ever and hopelessly  
In its soft thonging,  
Spinneth the blithe-footed  
Spider of Love!

Close by Life's gardenside,  
Swiftly, relentlessly,

THE SPIDER.

Stifling the hearts of men  
In its thick meshes,  
Spinneth a spider.

Silently, ceaselessly,  
Swiftly, relentlessly,  
Weaving a web that is  
Dull-hued and lusterless ;  
Weaving a web so dense  
Yet so impalpable,  
Soft and insidious,  
None may escape it—  
Spinneth the thousand-eyed,  
Eager, implacable,  
Gray, gaunt, and terrible  
Spider of Death !

*DUST OF STARS.*

MEN are but clods incarnate, we are told ;  
    Frail creatures, fashioned of a common clay.  
But soul-filled soil which, to the mother-mold  
    From whence it sprung, one day returneth. Nay,

Fashioned of dust are we, but dust of stars !  
    Why else this beating of wild spirit-wings,  
Striving to break earth's sordid prison bars  
    And soar, sod-spurning, unto astral things ?

*TO ANY SCOFFER.*

OUT on you, babbler! You, and all your breed  
Who dare assail the potency of rhyme!  
Saying the bard's best songs but go to feed  
The insatiate hunger of the tapeworm, Time!

Know'st not, O fool, Time woke with song? That life  
Itself is one long epic, years on years,  
Pulsing with martial measures, stir of strife,  
And changing cadences of smiles and tears?

Know'st not that spirit which, from David's lyre  
Outbreathed, drove demons from the breast of Saul.  
Has in it something of a living fire  
Which shall endure no little while, but all?

Yea, not for now, nor unborn years alone;  
But when Earth's little peoples cease to be,  
The soul of Song shall echo round God's throne  
Through endless eons of eternity!

*MEMORY.*

SHRINED in the inmost chamber of the heart  
There is a vase of sheer and beaten gold,  
A fragile thing and exquisite, wherein  
The fairest flowers of departed Junes  
Are kept perennial—the slender vase  
Which men call Memory!

*A VILLAGE STREET.*

WHERE swaying branches lace and meet  
In canopies of green  
Above an old-time village street,  
Quiet and cool and clean,  
The mellow sunbeams filter slow  
And, interwrought with shade,  
Trace on the velvet sward below  
A shimmering brocade.

No sound disturbs the holy hush  
That wraps the silent street  
Save when at times some trill of thrush  
Drifts tremulously sweet;  
Or else, when purple twilight flings  
A gauzy veil and thin,  
Wake echoes from the tinkling strings  
Of mellow mandolin.

This is the street, serene and sweet,  
Down which in days ago  
I tripped with bare and buoyant feet  
Through dews of dusk and dawn;

A VILLAGE STREET.

Or romped at play with comrades gay  
While some long afternoon  
Droned slowly, drowsily away  
Like bees in fields of June.

Old quiet street! the steps that learn  
The city's crowded ways  
Once more and eagerly will turn  
To scenes of other days,  
And, sick of ceaseless fray and fret,  
Cacophonous and rude,  
Will seek, while eyes grow dim and wet,  
Thy restful quietude!

*THE GIFT.*

ONE gift he claimed as his and, miser-souled,  
Kept it close-prisoned, lest on sudden wing  
It seek some day a keeper new, and leave  
His life all gleaned of joy and colorless ;  
But looking in one morn, solicitous,  
Viewed, horror-eyed, a puny, shriveled thing,  
Void of all grace and strength and loveliness.

Wide-flinging then the door that prisoned it,  
He bade it seek the outer, ampler airs,  
The stretching world ways, teeming haunts of men !  
But ere the day had waned, it came again,  
Back to the selfsame door that prisoned it,  
And he who waited, leaping, flung it wide  
With eager, trembling fingers—and beheld,  
Not the one hoarded gift, but ten instead !

*AFTER MUCH WANDERING.*

SOME day when you're tired of the toiling,  
And sick of the stress and the strain,  
When you've mingled Life's rue with its hyssop,  
And eaten the fruit with the husk,  
You will follow the footprints of Fancy  
Down some old-fashioned garden again,  
Where the hollyhocks flame and the roses  
Gleam white on the breast of the dusk!

And you'll think on the years that were wasted  
For the place that you purchased with peace,  
Of how hollow a bauble is glory—  
How fleeting the guerdons you gain;  
And your eyes will grow blind with the blurring  
Of sorrow that knows not surcease,  
Some day when you're tired of the toiling,  
And sick of the stress and the strain.

For the world may be yours for the winning,  
And the prospect stretch broad to the view,  
But the fruit that shone fair in the distance  
Seems shrunken when grasped in the husk,  
And your spirit, God knows, will be weary,  
And you'll long for the peace that you knew  
Where the hollyhocks flame and the roses  
Gleam white on the breast of the dusk!

*STANTON.*

WHEN Stanton, up in Georgia, tunes his magic lyre  
and sings,  
The very air grows murmurous with rhythmic riot-  
ings!  
The lisp of leaves and scent of sheaves blend in his  
song's refrain,  
The hum of bees in locust trees and meadows drenched  
with rain;  
Beneath his spell Life's pathway lies through sunlit  
fields of June,  
Where Time trips lightly onward to a banjo's tinkling  
tune,  
And sluggish aims grow stronger, and newborn hopes  
upstart,  
And burst to bud and blossom in the gardens of the  
heart!

O Stanton, up in Georgia! O singer, strong and true!  
Here's one in Texas drains a bowl in hearty health to  
you!  
Long may you live to bless us and drive our woes  
away  
With songs that breathe the redolence and riotry of  
May!

*SHORE LIGHTS.*

As one, adrift on some tempestuous deep,  
Of friendly port or favoring gale denied,  
Where black night rules, nor star-gleams wake to  
guide,

And wind and wave demoniac revel keep ;  
As such an one might gladly note the sweep  
Of beacon light athwart the tossing tide  
And feel within the doubt gates sundered wide,  
And joy unpent through all the pulses leap—

So oftentimes on Life's uncertain main,  
When, tempest-lashed and wrapt in rayless night,  
With warring winds and hostile waves we cope,  
And, struggling, sink—and, sinking, strive again—  
There burst like beacons on our dazzled sight  
The lights that mark the smiling shores of Hope!

*SEEDTIME.*

HASTE ye, my soul, for the sowing  
Deep in the garden of years ;  
Truths that may grant ye in growing  
Meed for the toil and the tears.

Long have the furrows lain fallow,  
Waiting the husbandman's share ;  
Haste to thy task, while ye hallow  
All of the plodding with prayer.

Haste ye, my soul ; on the morrow  
Season and sun may be past.  
Haste ye, lest sighing and sorrow  
Strangle the seed that ye cast.

Haste, while the green ways are glowing ;  
Off with vain doubtings and fears.  
Haste ye, my soul, for the sowing  
Deep in the garden of years.

*AT HARVEST.*

WHEN comes Life's autumn time—as come it must,  
Some not far-distant day, to you and me—  
What shall we tell the Landlord of our trust,  
What shall we yield Him of our husbandry?

Shall we bring ruddy vintage, stores of corn,  
Rich golden harvests from the yester-lands,  
Or shriveled sheaves, inmixed with tare and thorn,  
Or greet him, sadder still, with empty hands?

Ah me! when comes Life's autumn—as it must,  
Some not far-distant day, to you and me—  
What shall we tell the Landlord of our trust,  
What shall we yield Him of our husbandry?

*AFTER STORM.*

As some frail reed, that through a night of storms  
    A stricken suppliant lies,  
Helpless, submissive, spent with vain alarms,  
Yet quickened, strengthened, robed in fresher green,  
Lifts to the wind beneath the blue serene  
    Of cloudless morning skies—

So souls that, stricken in the gloom of grief,  
    Bow to the storm-swept sod,  
Chastened and cleansed and clothed in newer leaf  
Of hope and trust and all-abiding strength,  
From the low earth may lift themselves at length  
    In the clear light of God!

*THE TRUEST THANKFULNESS.*

NOR song, nor speech, may fittingly express  
    The soul's deep thankfulness ;  
There is a gratitude which stands confessed  
In lips slow-trembling, and in heaving breast,  
Which speaks, up-welling in the unbidden tear ;  
    It is the most sincere !

*AT THE STABLE DOOR.*

AWED by seraphic strains  
That stir and thrill the still Judean plains,  
Lured by the luster of a strange, new star,  
From alien lands and far—

To this low stable door  
Throng simple peasants, wizards learned in lore ;  
Rich gifts of frankincense and myrrh they bring  
To aid their worshiping.

For one rapt moment's space  
Their glances sweep the shining stable place,  
Note the low rafters and the littered stall,  
Then, dazed and blinded, fall :

For, waking on their sight,  
Has burst a vision of celestial light  
Where lies, encradled in a manger dim,  
The Babe of Bethlehem !

A moment's space, then each  
Is bowed in homage far too deep for speech :  
The homage, hollow words may not express,  
Of speaking silentness.

AT THE STABLE DOOR.

Little you dream or know,  
Shepherd and sage in worship bended low,  
What paths of pain these baby feet must tread,  
What crowns must deck its head!

Not yours to pierce the rift  
Of years where grim Golgotha's crosses lift,  
To know this Babe of Bethlehem must be  
The Christ of Calvary!

*TO A LITTLE CHILD.*

COULD I but go before a little way  
    Along the road your tender feet must fare,  
    And put aside the bramble and the tare  
That wait to wound you on a later day;  
Mark the low paths that, luring, lead astray  
    With sight made clear long since in sterner air,  
    Point out the pitfall and the hidden snare  
That lurk to bring you sorrow and dismay:

Could I but go a little way before—  
    Untutored child heart! Trusting innocence!—  
How gladly would I suffer for your sake  
    Old wounds reopened to the keen, quick core!  
All-pitying God! that such soft feet should take  
    The long, hard highway of Experience!

## QUATRAINS.

### CONES.

THE tree of Time a pine is, green and tall,  
Where to, like clustered cones, we cling and cleave  
Our little season. Ah, God grant we leave  
Some after-breath of fragrance when we fall!

### AT DUSK.

O'ER-RIPENED Day falls from its fading husk;  
And look! where Sunset loosed her rosy bars,  
Deep in the purple pastures of the dusk  
A wan moon-shepherd leads the straggling stars!

### LOST.

ACROSS the hot Sahara of the sky  
Long caravans of cloud, slow-winding, crawl;  
Wild Bedouin winds sweep down with sudden cry,  
And the deep desert blueness swallows all!

### CHALLENGED.

PRAY, spend thy scorn, old Time, and wreak thy wrath!  
Why should I reck though Fame and Fortune flee,  
If the blithe beggar, Love, along Life's path  
But choose to comrade me?

QUATRAINS.

CANDELABRA.

To the hushed house of dead Midsummer, lo!  
Sandaed with silentness, October comes  
And sets each dusk-dim corridor aglow  
With candelabra of chrysanthemums!

ANTLIKE.

MAN'S but a little ant, say you, that crawls  
Down Time's hot, tortuous highway? Yea, in sooth!  
But not for naught if, haply, he but bear  
Some fallow field one golden grain of truth!

THE TRUMPETER.

BLARING with bronzed lips till aisle and arch  
Of wood and sky with sounding echoes stir—  
Hark where, hard-galloping, rides trooper March,  
The young year's trumpeter!

APRIL.

AND now comes April, fair and fickle maiden,  
Fit prototype of Life's vain hopes and fears;  
One moment bowed in grief and sorrow-laden,  
The next one smiling bravely through her tears!

*FORGETFULNESS.*

I PLUNGED me deep within a solitude  
Of gloomy wood,  
Where I might rid me of the wild unrest  
That clamored in my breast.

But ever keen remembrance followed me  
Relentlessly,  
And all the lisp of leaves and south wind's strain  
Seemed but to mock my pain.

So, quick I turned, and sought with hasting feet  
The surging street,  
And there amid the unceasing strife and stress  
I found forgetfulness.

*OUT OF THE DUSK.*

Out of the dusk—a song,  
A mellow cadence, touched with tenderness,  
And sweet with solace as the soft caress  
Of mother lips that bowed them but to bless  
In twilights vanished long.

Out of the dusk—a song,  
A mist of melody more silver-sweet  
Than rune of rain in popped fields of wheat  
To one who, loitering with slow-lagging feet,  
Halts in the surging throng.

Out of the dusk—a song,  
Wafted from unseen lips, a breath of peace  
That brings the dim-eyed dallier release  
From thonging sorrows and a sweet surcease  
Of wrath and woe and wrong.

*A SMILE AND A SONG.*

GIVE to the world a smile. There is enough,  
God knows, of sullen scowls and churlishness!  
What if thy footsteps fare through highways rough—  
Can futile frowning make thy burdens less?  
Nay, though thy secret soul be sad the while,  
Give to the world a smile!

Give to the world a song. The very air  
Seems charged with keen complainings and with  
sighs  
That are but echoings of dark despair.  
What if a surly sun forsake the skies,  
Or if thy pilgrimage be overlong?  
Give to the world a song!

*THEN AND NOW.*

THE olden days  
Were the golden days—  
Aye, they were fair, I know—  
But the present days  
May be pleasant days  
If only we make them so.

If the heart be light,  
All the days are bright  
As skies in the blossomy May;  
If the soul be rent  
With a discontent,  
Why, all of the days are gray.

A smile and a song  
As we journey along  
May brighten the way a bit,  
For the world is a stream  
That will gloom or gleam  
In turn as we look at it.

Aye, the olden days  
Were the golden days,  
Freighted with joys, I know;  
But the present days  
May be pleasant days  
If only we make them so.

*THE BUBBLE CHASER.*

To her side one day the mild-eyed Mother  
Called her Best Beloved, and for his joyance  
Blew from out a slender reed a bubble  
Like a sphere of sheer, pellucid silver,  
Shining with the seven hues of heaven,  
Miracles of color—rose of morning,  
Tawny tints of noonday, twilight purples,  
Emerald glintings like the summer sea's breast.

And the Best Beloved, with eyes enchanted,  
Watched the radiant sphere go floating from him;  
Then with lips disparted, childlike, eager,  
Started forth on flying feet to follow!

Far and far the burnished bubble lured him;  
Onward still, and onward, ever onward,  
Near at times, yet, phantomlike, eluding  
Trembling, straining hands upraised to grasp it;  
Onward still, and onward, till its luster,  
Blending with the bending heaven's blueness,  
Vanished from the range of yearning vision.

THE BUBBLE CHASER.

So, with eyes grown pitiful with sorrow,  
And with feet outwearied from pursuing,  
Turned he then and sought the mild-eyed Mother,  
Who, with heart made tender by compassion,  
Loving arms outstretched, and to her bosom  
Strained the weeping child and gently told him :  
“Know, my Best Beloved, this shining bubble  
Which afar on flying feet you followed  
Countless others have pursued before you,  
Sometimes touching, never all-possessing ;  
Keats and Poe and Shelley, all my children,  
Chased such silver bubbles and, despairing,  
Knew the glory of immortal longing !  
'Tis the spirit of elusive Beauty,  
Real in seeming, but as evanescent  
As the rose tint in the clouds of sunset !”

WHO DWELLS WITH NATURE.



*WHO DWELLS WITH NATURE.*

WHO dwells with Nature, clasps her hand  
In cordial comradery,  
Her best bestowals may command ;  
No niggard hostess she.

With lavish grace she offers up  
All wholesome gifts and good ;  
She bids him drain her sparkling cup  
And share her daily food.

A roof of blue she arches o'er  
As shelter for his head ;  
Spreads for his feet a fragrant floor  
With pine cones carpeted.

She drapes his couch in curtains cool,  
Of sheer and lacey mist ;  
A mirror makes of some still pool  
By shifting shadows kissed.

She wakes wild melody in sounds  
Of silver-singing rills ;  
The hoarse-mouthed bay of distant hounds  
At dawn among the hills.

WHO DWELLS WITH NATURE.

Wielding a magic brush, she spreads  
Rare pictures for his eyes,  
And dazzles with warm golds and reds  
Of Autumn tapestries.

She opens wide her book of days,  
A classic clasped with gold;  
Creation's moving tale displays,  
And legends weird and old.

She leads him to some cloistered shrine,  
Shut in from sordid gaze,  
Where deep-toned organs of the pine  
Chant solemn hymns of praise.

And as he bows in worship there,  
She sets his spirit free  
From sordid care, and bids him share  
Her sweet tranquillity.

## CONQUEST.

SPRING and Winter met one day  
Near the huddled hills—  
Scant his locks as lichens gray ;  
Spring's, like daffodils.  
They were known as open foes  
Over all the earth.  
Spring detested ice and snows ;  
Winter, blooms and mirth.

Long his tense and tyrant clutch  
Prisoned fen and field,  
Long the streams to bar his touch  
Raised an icy shield ;  
Spring, to break their fetters free,  
Summoned all her charms,  
All her wondrous witchery  
To take the King of Storms.

“May I pass, kind sir?” she said,  
Beaming, blossom-wise,  
Up at him with lips of red,  
Eyes of April skies ;  
Winter wavered, loath to go,  
Smiled and stepped aside,  
Bowed his head and, bending low,  
“Certainly!” he cried.

*AN APRIL LYRIC.*

BURST of bud and miracle,  
Of snowy orchard blooming;  
Lures of laughter lyrical,  
Flung from tinkling rills;  
Stir and swish of swallow wing  
And purple lilacs pluming;  
Wake, my soul, for following—  
'Tis April on the hills!

*INTER-PINES.*

FAR from the fevered fret of trade and town,  
Far from the noontide's pulsing hum and heat,  
Past stream and stile, up shaly slope and down,  
A dim path winds  
And, winding, finds  
Deep in the pines a cloistering retreat  
Where ripened cones and needles crisp and brown  
Outspread a fragrant carpet for the feet.

Like ancient monks, uplifting priestly arms  
High overhead in blessings murmured low,  
The pine trees stand; and all life's vain alarms,  
Its wild unrest  
Of brain and breast,  
Speed swift as blooms when winds of Autumn blow,  
And in their stead, as silence after storms,  
Glides gentle Peace with noiseless tread and slow.

The cravings keen for all the vain may vaunt,  
The tense desires for worldly power and place,  
Find sweet surcease within this holy haunt  
Where, spreading wings  
From sordid things,  
The soul mounts upward for a fleeting space,  
While winds and pines lift grand cathedral chaunt,  
And meets its God and Maker face to face.

*THE HILLS OF JUNE.*

CRY truce in the struggle for place and gain,  
    With its stress and its din and glare!  
And it's off with the pangs of a nameless pain,  
    And the gyves of a dull despair,  
And it's out for a day in the ampler air  
    To the lilt of a lightsome tune;  
O, it's hey and away from the house of Care,  
    And it's ho for the hills of June!

When the ways rang shrill with the wild refrain  
    Of the North wind's trumpet blare,  
It were well to house from the roar and rain  
    And the joys of the field forswear;  
But now when the sun spreads a golden snare,  
    And the dawn flings a balsamed boon—  
O, its hey and away from the house of Care,  
    And it's ho for the hills of June!

For a breath of balm for the breast and brain,  
    Let the buoyant footstep fare,  
Through the meadows wide and the spangled  
    plain,  
    By the song-sweet hedge to where

THE HILLS OF JUNE.

A dim path winds like a spiral stair  
Up, up, where the dark pines croon ;  
O, it's hey and away from the house of Care,  
And it's ho for the hills of June !

*Envoi.*

Have done with the laurels that Fame may share,  
Like youth they are fled too soon ;  
O, it's hey and away from the house of Care,  
And it's ho for the hills of June !

*A GARDEN ROMANCE.*

A DEWDROP lay on a leafy spray  
In the rosy morn of a summer's day,

And the wee coquette with a shy glance met  
The flashing eye of the Day God, set

In the heavens old like an orb of gold  
Whose beaming burnished the blossomed wold.

He, wise old beau, for an hour or so  
Bethought to flirt with the wight below,

And the court he paid to the mist-born maid  
The robins watched from the scented shade.

How the sun would smile at the dew the while  
And her thoughts from earth to the skies beguile!

How the dew would blink at the sun and wink  
And change from opal and pearl to pink!

Till a moss-rose cried, near the dewdrop's side:  
"False one, thou hadst promised to be my bride!"

A GARDEN ROMANCE.

But the rose must sigh with no dewdrop nigh,  
And droop and wither and fade and die!"

When the dewdrop heard, quick her slight form  
stirred,  
And she sprang to his heart like a frightened bird!

And when Ladye Grace in ye robe of lace  
Came tripping down through the fragrant ways,

She found—it is said—in the garden bed  
A red, red rose and a dewdrop wed!

*THE GOAL.*

WHEN blue-eyed Morn fares forth on fairy feet  
From out the envermeiled east,  
And chaste-lipped blossoms lift confession sweet  
To the great sun, their priest ;  
While the deep world-heart throbs with waking bliss  
And wild birds sing, and singing, soar the blue—  
Ever my songs upon the day's first kiss  
Go speeding, love, to you !

Or when, betimes, in gilded halls of noon  
The day sits throned in state  
While amorous winds to fragrant fields of June  
Breathe vows inviolate ;  
When the slow hours in languid currents glide  
Like soundless streams with sungleams thriddled  
through—  
Then all my dreams upon the drowsy tide  
Go drifting, dear, to you !

And when Eve stands upon the blue day's brim  
Where Night's dim courtiers bow,  
Thronging with dream-shod feet to diadem  
With stars her dusky brow ;

THE GOAL.

When from the heavens fades the last faint flush  
And distant tinklings drown in seas of dew—  
My thoughts go winging through the scented hush  
Always, my sweet, to you!

Always to you, for you, incarnate, hold  
Morn's virgin charms, and weave  
With all the Moontide's regal heart of gold  
The tawny tints of Eve;  
Always to you! In Daytime's transient gleam  
Or when Night stalks with somber retinue  
The goal and theme of all my song and dream  
Shall ever, dear, be you!

*AT A MOCKBIRD MATINEE.*

EVER spend an afternoon  
Of a day in jocund June  
At a mockbird matinee?  
Never? Honest? Well-a-day!  
Where've you lived at, anyway?  
Not a quicker cure for care  
Manufactured anywhere;  
Not a better balm for blues;  
Not a dull soul but will lose  
All its sluggishness, I say,  
At a mockbird matinee!  
Not a hint of trade or town  
In the path one loiters down;  
Not a thought of shops or desks  
Where the sun weaves arabesques,  
Fragile-fair and fairy-hued,  
In the wood's deep solitude;  
Not a thing but God's pure air,  
Shine and shadow everywhere!  
Pick yourself a mossy seat  
In some dim and cool retreat,  
And with sighs of deep content

AT A MOCKBIRD MATINEE.

Settle down all indolent  
With your head against the trunk  
Of some hoary forest monk ;  
Bare your forehead while the breeze  
Plies its gentle ministries ;  
Close your eyes in rapture deep,  
Feel yourself grow sleepy—sleep—

Then a-sudden—hist ! a stir  
From some hidden chorister,  
As along a branching spray  
Where the sunbeams plash and play  
Fares he forth in modest coat,  
Flinging from his throbbing throat  
Clear cascades of tinkling song,  
Silver-sweet and subtle-strong ;  
Strains of soul-compelling sound,  
Streams of symphony unbound,  
Lures of lyric riotry,  
Miracles of melody,  
Soft at times, and sweet and low,  
As the slow and measured flow  
Of some placid river tide  
Down through meadows lush and wide ;  
Or from breast aflame, afire,  
Wild with passion, hot desire,

AT A MOCKBIRD MATINEE.

High and high and high and higher  
Leap the frantic notes until  
Fen and forest, haunt and hill,  
Pulse and pant and throb and thrill,  
Overawed and overcome  
By the keen delirium!

Then as if such riotings  
Had consumed symphonic springs,  
For a solemn space, a hush!  
But once more a rhythmic gush  
Flashing downward fleet and free,  
Mad with mirthful minstrelsy;  
Ravishing the raptured ear  
With a cadence crystal-clear  
As the lisp of limpid rain  
In autumnal fields of grain;  
Stilling spirit strife and stress  
With a rune of restfulness;  
Purging blood and breast and brain  
Of their poignant pangs of pain;  
Rousing noble aims and true  
In the slumbrous soul of you!

Ah! a man can drive away  
Care and sorrow any day  
At a mockbird matinee!

*TO A BLASTED PINE.*

STOUT yeoman of the wood! Plebeian pine!  
Good honest friend of mine,  
In cordial fellowship I lift my hand  
To meet your rugged clasp.

I do not ask what scurvy trick of wind,  
What weight of storm or spite of summer suns,  
What sustenance of mother soil denied,  
Made thee low-statured, stunted, dwarfed of mien,  
Whilst thy patrician brother rears his head  
High o'er his fellows, lordliest of the wood,  
And flaunts his princely purple in the sun!

Nor do I care to know  
That thou canst boast as proud a sire as he—  
Some honored patriarch of the ancient wood,  
Whose sturdy sap  
Courses through every fiber of thy frame—  
For in the sight  
Of that clear-seeing and impartial Eye  
Which measures all things under sky or roof,

TO A BLASTED PINE.

Trees and their little earthborn cousins, men,  
By service, not by stature, thou art thrice  
More tall than thy patrician brother pine  
Who flaunts his princely purple in the sun!

For thou, near earth, dost spread a denser shade  
Where weary pilgrims and sun-stricken kine  
May rest them from the burning heat of noon :  
And, bent to bear the brunt of wintry blasts,  
Dost grant a safer shelter to the birds,  
The little shivering orphans of the air ;  
Dost hold as much of healing in thy heart,  
And fling as fair a fruitage on the sward !

Would I might claim within my narrow sphere  
Of daily usefulness a service rare  
As thou in thine, stout yeoman of the wood,  
Plebeian pine! Good honest friend of mine!

*THE THUNDERSTORM.*

LIKE hostile armies massing for the fray,  
Somber and dark, the westering storm clouds swarm  
And line on line in threatening array.  
Low-muttering, their grim battalions form.  
Then, like to wrath-dumb furies, black and still,  
They crouch one death-tense space with bated breath  
And hurl them headlong from their highmost hill  
To grapple in the fearful lists of death!  
Hark! how their hoarse artillery rends the air  
With peal on peal and deafening crash on crash!  
Hark! how their shrill-lipped battle trumpets blare!  
Look! where their sheathless lightning-sabers flash!  
Then faint, then fierce, and fiercer yet again—  
Listen! a sweeping enfilade of rain!

*A CROSSROADS SCHOOLHOUSE.*

Two country roadways writhe and wind  
Like lizards lithe and lazy  
Down shaly hillsides, purple-pined,  
And clearings dim and hazy,  
Past shallow fords where brooks that run  
Through shoals of painted pebbles  
Blur robin songs with antiphon  
Of tuneful trills and trebles,  
Till deep within the woodland's dusk,  
As if to shun detection,  
They join and pass with meeting brusque  
To form an intersection.

There, stained by storm and Summer's frown  
And warped by Winter's fingers,  
Dingy and dark and bare and brown,  
A country schoolhouse lingers,  
Just as it did when, days ago,  
Through shiny, steel-rimmed glasses,  
Professor Biglow beamed upon  
The crossroads lads and lasses,  
Who dulled the sweets of simple lives  
Above their blue-backed "spellers,"  
Droning like bees in orchard hives  
When June the apple mellows.

A CROSSROADS SCHOOLHOUSE.

These aisles which now no note disturbs  
Once rang with struggling stammers  
Of youth and maid o'er nouns and verbs  
Of Smith's and Butler's grammars,  
Or haply caught the teacher's zest  
Of sudden satisfaction  
When some apt pupil led the rest  
And multiplied a fraction;  
And oft on Fridays heard the calls  
For essay, song, and story,  
While loud-lunged bumpkins stormed the walls  
With rustic oratory.

Or caught, perchance, an exchange fleet  
Of glances laughter-laden  
When book or flower from seat to seat  
Passed to some anxious maiden.  
At times, along the drowsy ranks,  
There swept a chorused giggle  
When some bold youngster, caught at pranks,  
Would squirm and writhe and wriggle  
Within the master's brawny grasp,  
The while with footsteps jogging  
He circled round with groan and gasp  
Beneath a storm of flogging.

A CROSSROADS SCHOOLHOUSE.

Ah, me! more fleet than rose leaves blown  
The years fly fast and faster!  
Full many a spring have daisies grown  
Above the kind old master;  
While we, who, struggling, strove to learn  
Beneath his admonition,  
Have long since grappled lessons stern  
Of Life's severe tuition;  
And some have caused strong hearts to thrill  
With eloquence and beauty,  
While some, unknown, are greater still  
Through simple lives of duty.

And Time on many a joyous brow  
Has set his seal of sadness;  
And many a heart is careworn now  
That once brimmed full of gladness;  
Yet, stained by storm and Summer's frown  
And warped by Winter's fingers,  
Dingy and dark and bare and brown,  
A country schoolhouse lingers  
Just as it did when, days ago,  
Through shiny, steel-rimmed glasses,  
Professor Biglow beamed upon  
The crossroads lads and lasses.

*THE HUSH AT HARVEST.*

How speaking seems this hush on wood and field!  
As if the year, all suddenly grown mute  
Before such opulence of harvest yield,  
Gold-glinting sheaves, and orchards bowed with  
fruit,

Had bared his head, and for a moment's space,  
From deeps of soul surcharged with gratitude,  
Upbreathed a prayer of thankfulness and praise  
Unto the Giver of all grace and good!

*THE WOOD GYPSY.*

IN scarlet skirt and bodice gay,  
A bold-lipped, tawny thing,  
Comes brown October down the wood,  
A gypsy wandering.

Her light limbs shame the leopard's lithe  
Abandonment of grace,  
Her dark eyes prison all the old  
Wild passion of her race.

Crooning, she lifts her voice in song,  
Some strain of weird romance,  
And, timed to clashing tambour bells,  
Whirls in a wanton dance.

And ere the cadence dies away  
In echoes wild and sweet,  
The oaks and maples shower gold  
About her twinkling feet!

*A HEALTH TO OCTOBER*

HERE'S a health to October, dream-sandaed October,  
Queen of the quiet lands, dusk-eyed and sober—  
Long be the reign of her, gladsome and good!

    The fay folk have kept her  
    A golden-rod scepter,  
Have raised her a shrine in a still solitude,  
Where crisp, crinkled dead leaves, gold-dappled and  
    red leaves,

        Mellowly,  
        Yellowly,  
Flame in the wood!

Long stilled is the singing, the silvery singing  
Of brooks that down June-lands tripped blithely, out-  
flinging

Notes soft as the chimes of a clear-cadenced bell:

    The quail's shrill insistence  
    Has died in the distance;  
Sabbatical silence wraps all in its spell,  
Save when through the hushes some brown-throated  
    thrush's

        Lyrical  
        Miracle  
Drifts from the dell.

A HEALTH TO OCTOBER.

Each dawning of day grants a boon of wild fragrance,  
Borne in by light-hearted, light-footed wind-vagrants  
From haunts where the sumac and wood-aster gleam;  
    The morning light lusters  
    The pendant grape clusters,  
Empurpling the glens by the dim-shadowed stream;  
Its light kisses strike some to soft shining, like some  
    Shimmery  
    Memory  
    Burning in dreams.

So, a health to October, dream-sandaled October,  
Queen of the quiet lands, dusk-eyed and sober,  
Long be the reign of her, gladsome and good,  
    And dark days not seek her!  
    Up, up with a beaker!  
A health to October—I pledge her again!  
A beaker of darkling, light-beaded and sparkling  
    Muscadine  
    Dusky wine—  
Bright to her reign!

AND ONE HAD LOVE.



*AND ONE HAD LOVE.*

ONE man had riches for his gift, and knew  
The emptiness thereof;  
Another, where Fame's topmost summits lift  
All pigmy peaks above,  
Felt the keen pangs of lofty loneliness;  
And one had love!

Down in the lowly valley paths of life  
His years were spent  
Where, far removed from moiling din and strife,  
Brook-song and bird-song blent  
Babbled of quiet things, of restful peace  
And deep content.

Yet there was something in his cup of days  
Ineffably more sweet  
Than e'er he knew who in the giddy maze  
Of fortune set his feet  
Or quaffed Fame's goblet, wreathed with rue and bays,  
And found it incomplete!

*LOVE'S HOUR.*

THIS is love's hour, sweetheart—mine and yours!—

    This fleeting hour the dreamer's soul deems best  
Of deepening dusk-time, when the sunset pours  
    A warm cascade of color down the west,  
And tinkling strains of twilight troubadours  
    Float from the poplar's crest.

This is love's hour, sweetheart—gracious gift!

    When, hand in hand, alone, 'tis ours to go  
Down purpling paths where white-lipped roses lift  
    Their light-blown kisses in the starry glow,  
And o'er the sward the locust blossoms drift  
    As soundlessly as snow!

The clashings keen, the clamors that infest

    The noon-wrapped city and its clanging mart,  
Subdued to silence all, have sunk to rest;

    No sounds discordant from the marshes start;  
This is the hour the dreamer's soul deems best—  
    This is love's hour, sweetheart!

*MEMORIAL DAY.*

FAR in the gloom-wrapt wilderness,  
Where crooning pine trees wave,  
The wild winds wail a requiem  
Above a soldier's grave ;  
No gleaming shaft uprears its head  
To mark the nameless tomb,  
No comrades come with martial tread  
To deck the spot with bloom.

Yet ever when the fields are clothed  
In richest hues of May,  
One woman holds within her heart  
A lone Memorial Day ;  
And on that distant, unmarked grave  
In somber shadows set,  
She lays a wreath of fadeless love  
And garlands of regret.

*BLOSSOMS OF MAY.*

BLOSSOMS of May at your feet, my sweet,  
Dew-dappled blossoms of May;  
Would that the lips of them, sweet, might repeat  
All I am yearning to say!  
Yearning to say of a heart that is true,  
True unto you as the dawn to the dew;  
Ah, could they whisper Love's secret to you,  
Then might I treasure them aye and for aye,  
Redolent, meadow-lent blossoms of May!

Blossoms of May at your feet, my sweet,  
Wind-rumpled blossoms of May;  
Look how I pluck them and lift them to meet  
Smiles that are sunny as day!  
Take them for pledge of a heart that is true,  
True unto you as the dawn to the dew.  
Sweet, let them whisper my secret to you,  
These were Love's messengers ever and aye,  
Dutiful, beautiful blossoms of May!

*CASTLE AND CABIN.*

I.

A MELLOWED light through stained-glass windows falls  
On marble stairways and on stately halls,  
With old rare portraits on the frescoed walls;  
But silence reigns and sadness and a dearth  
Of woman's laughter and of childish mirth.

When Love's a stranger, what's a palace worth?

II.

A low-roofed cabin and a rude-built floor,  
Pink-petaled roses romping round the door,  
And God's unfettered sunlight streaming o'er;  
The happy housewife at her sewing sings,  
The vine-clad porch with baby laughter rings.

With Love for guest, pray, who would sup with kings?

*SONG OF A SUMMER'S DAY.*

O, it's gold of the meadows and blue of the sky—  
Was ever a June day rarer,  
With a breath of the pines from the purple inclines  
And the breeze for a balsam bearer?  
O, it's gold of the meadows and blue of the sky—  
Was ever a June day rarer?

O, it's gold of your tresses and blue of your eye.  
Was ever a charm denied you?  
And was ever a bliss that is equal to this  
Out here in the fields beside you?  
O, it's gold of your tresses and blue of your eye,  
Was ever a charm denied you?

*CARITA.*

Do you ever dream, Carita, of a twilight long ago,  
When the stars rained silver splendor from the skies  
of Mexico?

When the moonbeams on the plaza traced a shimmer-  
ing brocade,  
And the fountain's tinkling tumult seemed a rippling  
serenade?

When the velvet-petaled pansies, lifting light lips in  
the gloom,  
Breathed their yearning for the night-winds in a  
passion of perfume?

When in soft cascades of cadence from a garden dim  
and far  
Came the mournful mellow music of a murmurous  
guitar?

Years have flown since then, Carita, fleet as orchard  
blooms in May,  
But the hour that fills my dreaming—was it only  
yesterday?

CARITA.

Stood we two a space in silence while the southern sun  
slipped down,  
And the gray dove, Dusk, with brooding pinions wrapt  
the little town.

Then you raised your tender glances, darkly, dreamily  
to mine,  
And my pulses clashed like cymbals in a rhapsody  
divine,

And the pent-up fires of longing burst their prison's  
weak control,  
And in wild hot words came leaping madly from my  
burning soul ;

Wild hot words that told of passion hitherto but half-  
expressed ;  
And I caught you close, Carita, clasped you, strained  
you, to my breast,

While the twilight-purpled heavens reeled around us  
as we stood,  
And a tide of bliss swept surging through the currents  
of our blood !

CARITA.

And I spent my soul in kisses, crushed upon your scarlet mouth!

O Carita! Señorita! Dusk-eyed daughter of the South!

It was well that Fate should part us; it was well my path should lead

Back to slopes of high endeavor—nay, and was it well, indeed?

You were of a tropic people, steeped in roses and romance,

Lovers of the gay fiesta, music, and the mazy dance!

I was from a northern country, scion of that colder race

Who have missed the most of living in their foolish phantom-chase!

You have wed some swarthy Southron; long have learned his every whim,

Rolled cigarros, poured the mescal, sung the Southern songs for him;

I have fought my fight and triumphed: all the world repeats my name;

But I prize one hour of loving more than fifty years of fame!

CARITA.

It was but a summer madness that possessed me, men  
will hold,  
That the mellow moon bewitched me with its wizardry  
of gold.

As they will! But oft, when wearied of the world, I  
close my eyes,  
And in dreams drift back where stars rain silver splen-  
dor from the skies,

And I clasp you close, Carita, while each vibrant pulse  
is thrilled  
With a low and mournful cadence that shall nevermore  
be stilled.

*THE CONQUEROR.*

ONE built about his heart a mighty wall,  
Thick-moated, bastioned, ample-based, and tall,

And laughed secure at Love's first bugle-blast :  
Scoffed at the next ; but at the third and last

The thick wall trembled, crumbled, crashed, and fell :  
Love leaped the breach and stormed the citadel !

*ONE GOLDEN DAY.*

DEEP in her casket of old treasured things  
September hoards for us one golden day!  
Ah me! how joy made murmurous the way  
And young Love lured us on with shining wings!

A day to dream of! What if dreaming brings  
No shimmer of lost other days? For aye  
Deep in her casket of old treasured things  
September hoards for us one golden day!

What though the swarming years with waspish stings  
Have brought us smarting sorrows? Though astray  
Youth's rosy feet forsook our wanderings?  
Not all is lost, for smiling, we can say:  
"Deep in her casket of old treasured things  
September hoards for us one golden day!"

*WHERE LOVE HOLDS SWAY.*

'Tis always summer where Love holds sway,  
Though skies be glooming and clouds hang gray;  
    For a glint of June  
    Lights a wintry noon  
If Love be lord in the heart, I say!

'Tis always summer where Love holds sway  
Though sad rains croon down the desolate day;  
    Though a wild wind shrills  
    Through the haunted hills  
December harbors a glimpse of May!

'Tis always summer where Love holds sway,  
Glad hearts heed not what the wind-lips say,  
    For if Love be king  
    They are like to sing  
With a rollicking lilt in the roundelay!

*BUENAS NOCHES, SENORITA.*

SLOWLY from the southern sky  
All the silver stars are fading ;  
Tremulously drift and die  
Sounds of distant serenading ;  
Yearning moon and sighing sea,  
Breast to breast, impassionedly,  
Cling in close farewell ; ah me !  
Moon and sea part ; sweet, must we ?  
Buenas noches, Señorita !

Wooing night-winds long have left  
Pink-lipped petals spent with kisses ;  
Homing fireflies have reft  
Oleander hearts of blisses ;  
Swiftly down the garden close,  
Like a fragrant whisper, goes  
White moth lover from his rose ;  
Rose-queen regnant ! Adios !  
Buenas noches, Señorita !

*TO A RED-HAIRED MAIDEN.*

DECOROUS damsel! Pink of paragons!

I sing the glory of thy tawny tresses

Blown by a wild wind's wantoning caresses

About thy brow in arabesques of bronze!

Say, did the garish flame of wintry dawns

Stream on thy head from the sky's far recesses?

Didst filch thy fire from autumn wildernesses

Or ruddy splendor from envermeiled lawns?

I know but this: that it accentuates

Thy blue-veined temples' white transparency

And frames thy face—a lily, snowy fair;

But ah! that the inexorable Fates

In Freedom's noon should thus imprison me

And bind me captive with a strand of hair!

*AN AUTUMN LURE.*

A LURE from the lands of autumn  
And a prospect rare unfolds  
Of the dusky wine of the muscadine  
And the maple's flaunting gold ;  
A lure from the lands of autumn,  
And who could such lure withstand ?  
Through the keen, crisp air let us blithely fare—  
Carissima, your hand !

For out where the sumacs beckon  
With beacons that glimmer red,  
And a murmurous music wakens  
In the pine leaves overhead,  
Comes a stir to the vibrant heart-strings  
While the soul from its care leash slips,  
And your eyes seek mine with a warmth divine—  
Carissima, your lips !

*AN OCTOBER SONG.*

WHEN October flings her banners  
Over all the russet hills  
And the thrush-choirs lift hosannas  
In a thousand tuneful trills,  
When the summer-haunted heather  
Swims in mellow, yellow haze,  
Let us wander, love, together  
Through the golden autumn ways!

Let us take the paths that bring us  
Where the sunlight gilds the sod,  
And the bandit breezes fling us  
Fragrances of golden-rod;  
Let us breathe the old, sweet story  
Where the sumac shimmers red  
And the maple leaves, in glory  
Flaming, flutter overhead.

Let us pray when Life's October  
Comes to dim the summer flowers,  
Waking thoughts half bright, half sober,  
Deep within this soul of ours,  
That it brings Hope's sun, dispersing  
Cares that may encloud the land,  
That it find us, love, traversing  
Sunset meadows, hand in hand!

*A ROSE OF YESTERDAY.*

WITHIN a book of Browning's, where he weaves  
Symphonic sunshine for our winter's gray,  
I found, close-pressed between the songful leaves,  
A rose of yesterday.

Time's thievish touch has robbed it of its scent,  
No mid-year luster lingers in its leaves ;  
And yet to me 'tis richly redolent  
Of bygone summer eves.

The moonlit glammers of a night in June  
Stream, as I dream, about me mellowly,  
The lisp of leaves, the cricket's low bassoon,  
Waken again for me.

Just for one fleeting space I catch the gleam  
Of soulful glances, surf of billowy lace,  
Of locks, cascading down an auric stream,  
About a flowerlike face.

A flowerlike face, a lily glorified  
With Love's impassioned pureness, strangely sweet ;  
And once again my soul, a pulsing tide,  
Lies, throbbing, at her feet.

A ROSE OF YESTERDAY.

Trembling, from off her bosom's heaving snows,  
She plucks one rosebud, wet with twilight dew ;  
"Know, love"—to me—"that with this summer rose  
I give my heart to you!"

. . . . .

Ah, me! ah, me! that all Youth's golden charms  
Are for one joyous June decreed to last!  
That I should reach outstretched, imploring arms  
To a relentless past!

Gone with their blossoms are the days that were,  
About me falls December's gloom and gray ;  
And in my hand one lone remembrancer,  
A rose of yesterday.

*A LOVER'S QUESTION.*

You plucked a purple pansy from its bed  
And pressed its perfumed petals to your lips,  
And then with rosy, ruthless finger tips  
You tore it into fragments, shred by shred,  
And flung it from you, odorless and dead.

Pray, if Love's flower were yours to pluck, perchance,  
Would you uplift it for a space and press  
Its petals to your lips in brief caress,  
Then fling it down in sudden petulance  
As if no longer worthy of your glance?

*A DREAM IN THE DUSK.*

OFTTIMES, outworn with warring in this strife  
That men call Life,

This hotly raging fever of unrest  
At battle in my breast,

When the keen clash of day, its clamors rude,  
Sink, half subdued,

Dulled to a low and muffled monotone,  
I dream alone

While Twilight's fingers shatter one by one  
The roses of the sun,

And lightly over purpling copse and hill  
The fading petals spill;

And truant thought on Hermes' sandals speeds  
As Memory leads

Where snowy dogwoods star the dusky shades  
Of tranquil glades,

A DREAM IN THE DUSK.

And shy, brown-dimpled meadow brooks trip fleet  
On silver feet,

Past league on sunny league—till Fancy sees,  
Shut in with trees,

Green-girdled by a dim-aisled garden place  
Whose shadows race

Where slim crape myrtles strew the sward below  
With blossomed snow,

And brown bees balance on light lily stalks  
Beside the walks,

A quiet Southern country seat, that stands  
As if with hands

Outstretching welcome to each wayworn guest,  
Bidding him pause and rest.

All things about the place bespeak repose,  
Broad porticoes,

White, ample wings, wide hallways, cool and clean,  
And shutters green.

A DREAM IN THE DUSK.

The dawnlight smites the rooftree as of old  
With shafts of gold ;

At noon from beds of sweet, old-fashioned pinks  
The cricket clinks ;

The far, faint flutings of the mocking bird  
At dusk are heard,

When through the gloom each swaying jasmine seems  
A star in dreams.

Twined to the trellis honeysuckles swing,  
And coil and cling,

Flinging thick shadows on the hall below,  
Where long ago,

Within a quaint-carved armchair, used to sit,  
And rock and knit,

A wee old woman with soft locks of snow  
And smiles, I know,

Such as the saints must wear in Paradise ;  
Her gentle eyes

A DREAM IN THE DUSK.

Beaming fond blessings on the urchins gay,  
Who romped at play

Down the dim pathways of the gardenside,  
All happy-eyed,

Routing with upraised hands and sudden cries  
The dappled butterflies ;

Seeking the swallow's fragile house of leaves  
Beneath the eaves ;

Chasing the lizard to his cell of stone,  
Mocking the bumble's drone ;

Finding fresh pastime for each restless mood  
Of youngsterhood.

. . . . .  
Would God that feet, grown older now, might press  
Those paths of pleasantness

That once they knew ere, truantly, they turned  
Worldward and learned

How lying are the luring lips that call,  
How poor and small

A DREAM IN THE DUSK.

The little laurels that Life's battlefield  
At last may yield!

Would God that ears, sore-sickened of the blare  
And tumult, where,

'Neath clacking wheels of Commerce, whirring round,  
Men's souls are ground

To golden powder for the price of bread;  
Where Truth seems dead,

Sincerity a shadow, simple Faith  
A formless wraith—

Might catch the changing cadence of the pines  
On far inclines,

The quail's shrill pipe at dawn; might list again  
The croon of rain

In autumn twilights, and the rhythmic beat  
Of tinkling sleet

Clink on the pane, while up the chimney wide  
A ruddy tide

A DREAM IN THE DUSK.

Of flame sweeps surging, and each pulse is thrilled  
At sound of voices stilled!

Would God that eyes, which latterly have known  
But streets of stone,

Might glimpse the quiet beauty of some wood's  
Deep solitudes,

The changing hues of summer dusks and dawns;  
Star-lighted lawns:

Mad miracles of color springtime throws  
Athwart an orchard close!

That sordid souls, forgetting place or pelf,  
Stripped bare of self,

In Heaven's all-cleansing sunlight purged again  
Of smirch and stain,

Might claim the wholesome candor and the truth  
They knew in youth!

TEXAS.



## TEXAS.

THIS is no stripling, sirs, no yokel youth,  
This bronze-limbed Hercules of giant girth;  
This is the stoutest-thewed, the stanchest-souled  
In all the brawny brotherhood of States!

Time was, perchance, when, indolent, outstretched,  
Sprawled like a lazy urchin at his ease,  
He dozed and dreamed the drowsy hours away  
Beside the shallows of some singing stream,  
Or else, upblinking at a Southern sun,  
Watched while a snowy squadronry of cloud  
Waged mimic Trafalgars on skyey seas.  
His was the fragrance of the fallow field,  
The burst of bird-song and the ample air,  
Purple expanses of primeval pine,  
And undulant wide reaches of the plain.  
But, with the lapse of adolescent years,  
Through his slow pulses swept a sudden thrill,  
The quick, keen impulse of an ichor new  
That stirred his slumbrous soul to stinging life;  
And swift off-flinging from his lithesome limbs  
Inaction's shackles and the gyves of ease,

TEXAS.

Up to the stalwart stature of a man  
Leaped he, erect, and Godlike in his mien,  
And looking worldward with a questing eye  
Saw where his kindred commonwealths had swept  
Far past him on the stretching slopes until  
Dim showed their outlines on the upper steeps!

Thrilled by the thunders of their Titan tread,  
Stung with a sense of sluggish slothfulness,  
Waked to the wanton wastefulness of years,  
He turned his back to ease and dull content  
And, upward faring, set his steadfast step  
Straight toward the peaks of high emprise, nor breathed  
A half-regret for deedless days forsworn:  
Nor paused he in his pilgrimage until  
High on a proud plateau of aims fulfilled  
For a brief breathing-space he stood and swept  
World-ways with gaze far-reaching in its scope;  
Saw the dusk pine lands, that were wont to lie  
Flecked with the saffron sheen of summer suns  
And flinging lures of balsam to the breeze,  
Freighting the creaking cars and groaning ships  
With the upyielding of eon's growth;  
Looked on the prairies, girt with golden sheaves,  
Where full-flanked cattle stalked in sleek content;  
Saw the old haunts, which erst were overgrown

TEXAS.

With brier and bramble and where roamed at will  
All countless crawling creatures of the wild,  
Ribboned with streets of stretching steel that led  
To city steeples signaling the skies ;  
Heard the low croon of commerce and the hum  
Of whirring engines and the lisp of looms,  
Panting of pistons and the strenuous stir  
Of keels, outveering from the harborsides !

Then with fixed purpose and a large resolve  
Upward again and upward turned his tread  
Forward and starward to the highmost peaks !





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