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1. Poetry, American—Collection
DEMOS FOR THE STUDY
OF LANGUAGE

ESCRIBED IN THE COURSE OF STUDY
FOR THE COMMON SCHOOLS
OF ILLINOIS

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES
AND ILLUSTRATIONS

CHESTINE COWDY
TEACHER OF GRAMMAR IN ILLINOIS
STATE NORMAL UNIVERSITY

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

In 1889 a Course of Study for the State of Illinois consisting of eight years' work was compiled by a committee of six county superintendents appointed by a convention of county superintendents and other leading educators of the state who had been called together for this purpose by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

This course has since been revised three times; the last revision was made in August, 1903, by the Standing Committee of the County Superintendents' Section of the State Teachers Association, composed of Alfred Bayliss, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; George R. Shawhan, Ex-County Superintendent of Champaign County; U. J. Hoffman, County Superintendent of La Salle County; Joseph M. Piper, Ex-County Superintendent of Ogle County; James Kirk, Professor of Pedagogy in the Southern Illinois Normal University; John W. Cook, President of the Northern Illinois State Normal School; David Felmley, President of the Illinois State Normal University; C. L. Gregory, County Superintendent of Mercer County; L. C. Lord, President of the Eastern Illinois State Normal School; R. T. Morgan, County Superintendent of Du Page County; Mrs. Hester M. Smith, County Superintendent of Pulaski County.

Under the supervision of this committee the work in language was revised by Miss Chestine Gowdy, assisted by the work of the third and fourth years by Miss Lora Exheimer. This language course calls for the study of a large number of poems. Many of these poems were difficult to find, while others were published only in ex-

1 Published by C. M. Parker, Pekinville, Ill., price 25 cents.
PUBLISHERS' NOTE

pensive editions. A demand, therefore, arose for a
which should contain all of the poems recommended,
the collection of this material into this volume was un
taken by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., as they are the author
publishers of more than half of the poems recom
in this they were assisted by other publishers and by auth
who kindly granted permission for the use of poems control
by them.

Acknowledgment is due to Charles Scribner's Sons for
use of The Ruby-Crowned Kinglet, taken from The I
ing of Felix and Other Poems, by Henry van Dyke;
for Nightfall in Dordrecht, taken from Second Book
Verse by Eugene Field; to Little, Brown and Company
October's Bright Blue Weather, Down to Sleep, and S
tember, by Helen Hunt Jackson; to J. B. Lippincott Co
pany for Sheridan's Ride, by Thomas Buchanan Ra
to E. P. Dutton and Company for Christmas Everywh
by Phillips Brooks; to Fleming H. Revell Company for
Flag, taken from Lyrics of Love, by Margaret Sangster
Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company, and to the author
Christmas Tide, by Richard Burton.

Thanks are also due to the following authors for court
permission to use the poems mentioned: to Mrs. L
Avery Coonley Ward for Why do Bells for Christ
Ring; to Eben E. Rexford for The Bluebird.

The value of this book has been greatly enhanced by
introduction by Miss Gowdy, who, as author of the co
is especially qualified to offer suggestions for the stud
the recommended poems. The biography of Lowell
also written by Miss Gowdy. It is to be hoped that
book will prove useful to many teachers not only in Ill
but also in other States where the course is followed.
SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

Literature in a Language Course.

Language work in our elementary schools should deal chiefly with the art of speech. Only when pupils have reached the last years of their common-school course are they ready for any study of the science of language. But long before this time they should begin to acquire power in self-expression. Such language training should be provided as will tend to give some measure of clearness, freedom, and virility, as well as formal correctness of speech.

The outline for language work in the Illinois State Course of Study was prepared in the belief that wealth of thought and power in expression must develop together. In the series of composition exercises suggested in the course of study, the natural interests of the child are recognized,—the interests that grow out of his home life, the life of the community, and the character of the surrounding country. To write acceptably he must write about subjects of which he has knowledge. But any series of language lessons that does not tend to make his own life and the world of which he is a part more interesting to him, more full of things to write about and talk about, is likely to fail of large language results. To help broaden and deepen the interests of the pupils, as well as to provide high ideals of expression, one or two poems for study are named each month in addition to the composition exercises and the more formal work of the course. Nearly a hundred poems are included in the six years’ work outlined. They are all brought together for the first time in this volume.
Poems to be Studied Primarily as Literature.

The wise teacher will ask about each poem first of all, how it may be made to give pleasure and awaken thought. She will see in it a piece of literature, not merely material for a language lesson. The chief aim in teaching a descriptive poem should be to make the pictures in the poem more vivid, and thus to awaken the imagination or to kindle an appreciation of kindred beauties in the pupil's immediate environment. In teaching a narrative poem the sequence of events must first be made clear. After that is accomplished, the aim should be to give fuller meaning to the story by bringing out clearly the causes, motives, and results of acts.

The younger pupils will enjoy the poems without any thought of why they like them, but unconsciously their thought and speech will be moulded by the study. In the higher classes effective expressions and passages should be pointed out, and the means of producing effects should be noted.

Language Values in the Work.

But while the poems are to be studied primarily as literature, the teacher should be keenly conscious of the possibilities for language training connected with the work.

The study of literature more than any other subject demands leisurely work, time for thought to ripen and to find fitting expression. The true literature class is a conversation class,—a class in which each pupil is led to interpret the author, and to express his own thoughts without self-consciousness. It is of necessity a class in the art of expression.

Studying and memorizing the poems must enlarge the reading vocabularies of the pupils. The teacher should see that the work is made to enrich their writing and their speaking vocabularies as well. Children are too often satisfied with a slender list of words representing very general
SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

dees. One word is made to serve for a variety of special
uses, the hearer being trusted to interpret it according to
the circumstances under which it is used. In the talk about
the poem the teacher should use the new and more definite
words of the poet, thus leading his pupils to do the same.
Professor George Herbert Palmer says, "Let any one who
wants to see himself grow, resolve to adopt two new words
each week. It will not be long before the endless and en-
hancing variety of the world will begin to reflect itself in
his speech and in his mind as well." Does not this suggest
an ideal which every language teacher should have for his
pupils, and which he should strive to impart to them before
their school lives end?

A few special word exercises may be suggested:

1. Make a list of descriptive words in the poem. What
   does each describe? Use it to describe something else.

2. Make a list of words that you never use. What word
   should you have used in the place of each if you had tried
   to express its meaning? Which word is better, yours or the
   author's? Why?

3. Give as many synonyms as you can for the following
   words (these to be selected by the teacher from the poem).
   Did the author make a good choice in each case?

Relation of Study to Composition Exercises.

Compositions should not often be based directly upon
the poems. Pupils must be able to tell or write the story
presented by a narrative poem, but no paraphrasing of de-
scriptive passages should be called for. The conversations
of the class hour will, however, often suggest subjects for
compositions; and the general character of a poem studied
in a given month has often determined the character of
a composition suggested for the month. For example, a
descriptive poem is often accompanied by a descriptive
composition; and a narrative poem by a narrative compo-
sition.
Method of Presentation.

With younger children every poem should be studied first in class. After a few words of introduction fitted to arouse the interest of the children or to remove any bar between them and the poet, the teacher should read the poem as well as she can, not stopping for comment unless it seem necessary to do so in order to hold the interest of the children. After this first reading, the poem should be read again part by part. This is the time for question, explanation, and discussion. If time permit, the teacher should now read the poem a third time, that the final impression may be left by the author's own words. The whole or a part of the poem should now be memorized. Children will in this way learn with delight poems which they could not read by themselves with understanding or pleasure. Miss Dexheimer has used with children in the first grade many of the poems named in the third and the fourth year work.

With older pupils the amount of help given by the teacher should depend upon the character of the special poem to be studied. In the seventh month of the sixth year *A Legend of the Northland* and *The Voice of Spring* are the poems named. The former is a simple narrative poem, involving no difficulties in meaning or phraseology. It may be studied from the book with no help from the teacher but a simple statement of the character of the preparation to be made. When class time comes, the pupils may be expected to tell the story clearly and to explain allusions. They may be trusted to see the moral with no help from the teacher. The last stanzas may well be ignored, as the incidental moral lesson is more effective with young people than the sermon. No poem should be memorized until it has been read in class.

*The Voice of Spring* is a descriptive poem, dependent for its charm upon the music of the rhythm and its appropriateness to the joyous progress described by the poem, and upon the pictures presented, many of which are unfamiliar to Illinois children. The teacher's success here depends
SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

Upon his own appreciation and enjoyment of the poem and its power to arouse these feelings in his pupils. This poem must be studied in class before the pupils are asked even to read it.

Four Poets most Largely Represented.

More than half of the poems named in the course were written by four men, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, and Bryant. There were two leading reasons for including so many poems by these authors. In the first place, it was thought that they would be more generally accessible than others, as school and home libraries would be likely to include the works of these four writers. In the second place, it was thought that every American child should come to have, as a part of his rightful heritage, a sense of kinship with those poets who have done so much to gain European recognition for American literature and to develop a spirit of nationality at home.

Special Study of Authors.

Younger children should enjoy literature for its own sake, with little interest in the personality of the writer. The names of authors may be given them, but only gradually should pleasure in the work of an author arouse interest in the writer himself. But in the seventh and eighth years of the course, opportunities are suggested for giving special attention to the life and writings of each of the four poets whose names have become most familiar to the pupils.

At the close of the sixth month of the year in which, by the system of alternation common in Illinois, classes may be expected to be doing third, fifth, and seventh year work, an afternoon may be given to Longfellow exercises with very little special preparation. All classes have been studying poems written by him; these may be recited. The last compositions of all classes are suitable for such an occasion and some of them should be read. An older pupil may be called upon to tell of the author's life.
For the morning exercises of the eighth month of the same year, the eight poems of Lowell that have been learned during the year may be recited by different pupils, and others may be asked to tell the school about the author's life and character.

An examination of the course will suggest that the fifth month of the alternate year is a suitable time for a special study of Whittier, and that a joint Bryant and bird celebration may come during the eighth month of this year.

Biographical sketches are included in this volume as helps in the study of the four authors named. Other material, such as pictures and magazine clippings, should be collected gradually, and each school library should contain one complete copy of each author's poems.

Chestine Gowdy.
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POEMS FOR THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

THIRD YEAR

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
  Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
  Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
  Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat,
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his merry note:
  Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
  Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
  Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln’s Quaker wife,
  Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
While round and round those big white wings
Grimly and ghostlike creep,
My little one hears that the old mill sings
"Sleep, little tulip, sleep!"

The sails are reefed and the nets are drawn,
And, over his pot of beer,
The fisher, against the morrow's dawn,
Lustily maketh cheer.
He mocks at the winds that caper along
From the far-off clamorous deep,—
But we — we love their lullaby song
Of "Sleep, little tulip, sleep!"

Old dog Fritz in slumber sound
Groans of the stony mart:
To-morrow how proudly he'll trot you round,
Hitched to our new milk-cart!
And you shall help me blanket the kine
And fold the gentle sheep,
And set the herring a-soak in brine,—
But now, little tulip, sleep!

A-Dream-One comes to button the eyes
That wearily droop and blink,
While the old mill buffets the frowning skies
And scolds at the stars that wink;
Over your face the misty wings
Of that beautiful Dream-One sweep,
And rocking your cradle she softly sings,
"Sleep, little tulip, sleep!"
THE CORN-SONG

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Heap high the farmer’s wintry hoard!
    High heap the golden corn!
No richer gift has Autumn poured
    From out her lavish horn!

Let other lands, exulting, glean
    The apple from the pine,
The orange from its glossy green,
    The cluster from the vine;

We better love the hardy gift
    Our rugged vales bestow,
To cheer us when the storm shall drift
    Our harvest-fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers
    Our ploughs their furrows made,
While on the hills the sun and showers
    Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o’er hill and plain
    Beneath the sun of May,
And frightened from our sprouting grain
    The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June
    Its leaves grew green and fair,
And waved in hot midsummer’s noon
    Its soft and yellow hair.
Has it in her power again:
Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjurer;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.
Were her antics played in the eye
Of a thousand standers-by,
Clapping hands with shout and stare,
What would little Tabby care
For the plaudits of the crowd?
Over, happy to be proud,
Over wealthy in the treasure
Of her own exceeding pleasure!

A THANKSGIVING SONG

SELECTED

FOR flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass so fresh, so sweet,
For song of bird and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see,
Our Father, we thank Thee.

For blue of stream and blue of sky,
For pleasant shade of branches high,
For fragrant air and cooling breeze,
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Our Father, we thank Thee.

For mother love and father care,
For brothers strong and sisters fair,
For love at school and home each day,
For guidance lest we go astray,
Our Father, we thank Thee.

For Thy dear everlasting arms
That bear us o'er all ills and harms,
For blessed words of long ago,
That help us now Thy will to know,
Our Father, we thank Thee.

DOWN TO SLEEP

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

November woods are bare and still;
November days are clear and bright;
Each noon burns up the morning’s chill;
The morning’s snow is gone by night;
Each day my steps grow slow, grow light,
As through the woods I reverent creep,
Watching all things lie “down to sleep.”

I never knew before what beds,
Fragrant to smell, and soft to touch,
The forest sifts and shapes and spreads;
I never knew before how much
Of human sound there is in such
Low tones as through the forest sweep
When all wild things lie “down to sleep.”

Each day I find new coverlids
Tucked in, and more sweet eyes shut tight;
Sometimes the viewless mother bids
POEMS FOR THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

Now such a story who ever heard?
There was a little shivering bird!
A sparrow, that in at the window flew,
Had crept into Piccola’s tiny shoe!

“How good poor Piccola must have been!”
She cried, as happy as any queen,
While the starving sparrow she fed and warmed,
And danced with rapture, she was so charmed.

Children, this story I tell to you,
Of Piccola sweet and her bird, is true.
In the far-off land of France, they say,
Still do they live to this very day.

NOBILITY

ALICE CARY

True worth is in being, not seeming,—
In doing each day that goes by
Some little good—not in the dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in blindness,
And spite of the fancies of youth,
There’s nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth.

We get back our mete as we measure—
We cannot do wrong and feel right,
Nor can we give pain and gain pleasure,
For justice avenges each slight.
The air for the wing of the sparrow,
   The bush for the robin and wren,
But alway the path that is narrow
   And straight, for the children of men.

'T is not in the pages of story
   The heart of its ills to beguile,
Though he who makes courtship to glory
   Gives all that he hath for her smile.
For when from her heights he has won her,
   Alas! it is only to prove
That nothing's so sacred as honor,
   And nothing so loyal as love!

We cannot make bargains for blisses,
   Nor catch them like fishes in nets;
And sometimes the thing our life misses,
   Helps more than the thing which it gets.
For good lieth not in pursuing,
   Nor gaining of great nor of small,
But just in the doing, and doing
   As we would be done by, is all.

Through envy, through malice, through hating,
   Against the world, early and late,
No jot of our courage abating—
   Our part is to work and to wait.
And slight is the sting of his trouble
   Whose winnings are less than his worth;
For he who is honest is noble,
   Whatever his fortunes or birth.
Now such a story who ever heard? There was a little shivering bird! A sparrow, that in at the window flew, Had crept into Piccola’s tiny shoe!

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Though he who makes courtship to glory
    Gives all that he hath for her smile.
For when from her heights he has won her,
    Alas! it is only to prove
That nothing 's so sacred as honor,
    And nothing so loyal as love!

We cannot make bargains for blisses,
    Nor catch them like fishes in nets;
And sometimes the thing our life misses,
    Helps more than the thing which it gets.
For good lieth not in pursuing,
    Nor gaining of great nor of small,
But just in the doing, and doing
    As we would be done by, is all.

Through envy, through malice, through hating,
    Against the world, early and late,
No jot of our courage abating —
    Our part is to work and to wait.
And slight is the sting of his trouble
    Whose winnings are less than his worth;
For he who is honest is noble,
    Whatever his fortunes or birth.
Now such a story who ever heard?
There was a little shivering bird!
A sparrow, that in at the window flew,
Had crept into Piccola’s tiny shoe!

“How good poor Piccola must have been!”
She cried, as happy as any queen,
While the starving sparrow she fed and warmed,
And danced with rapture, she was so charmed.

Children, this story I tell to you,
Of Piccola sweet and her bird, is true.
In the far-off land of France, they say,
Still do they live to this very day.

NOBILITY

ALICE CARY

True worth is in being, not seeming,—
In doing each day that goes by
Some little good—not in the dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in blindness,
And spite of the fancies of youth,
There’s nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth.

We get back our mete as we measure—
We cannot do wrong and feel right,
Nor can we give pain and gain pleasure,
For justice avenges each slight.
The air for the wing of the sparrow,
The bush for the robin and wren,
But alway the path that is narrow
And straight, for the children of men.

'T is not in the pages of story
The heart of its ills to beguile,
Though he who makes courtship to glory
Gives all that he hath for her smile.
For when from her heights he has won her,
Alas! it is only to prove
That nothing 's so sacred as honor,
And nothing so loyal as love!

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Nor catch them like fishes in nets;
And sometimes the thing our life misses,
Helps more than the thing which it gets.
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Nor gaining of great nor of small,
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As we would be done by, is all.

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Against the world, early and late,
No jot of our courage abating—
Our part is to work and to wait.
And slight is the sting of his trouble
Whose winnings are less than his worth;
For he who is honest is noble,
Whatever his fortunes or birth.
OUR FLAG

MARGARET SANGSTER

Flag of the fearless-hearted,
Flag of the broken chain,
Flag in a day-dawn started,
Never to pale or wane.
Dearly we prize its colors,
With the heaven light breaking through,
The clustered stars and the steadfast bars,
The red, the white, and the blue.

Flag of the sturdy fathers,
Flag of the royal sons,
Beneath its folds it gathers
Earth's best and noblest ones.
Boldly we wave its colors,
Our veins are thrilled anew
By the steadfast bars, the clustered stars,
The red, the white, and the blue.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.
I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded,
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

7–28. Near Bingen on the Rhine is a little square Mouse-
er, so called from an old word meaning toll, since it was
1 as a toll-house; but there is an old tradition that a certain
kop Hatto, who had been cruel to the people, was attacked
be tower by a great army of rats and mice. See Southey's
poem, Bishop Hatto.
Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

SELECTION FROM HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

29. Banditti, an Italian word for bands of robbers.
31. An old moustache, a translation of the French phrase
eux moustache, which is used of a veteran soldier.
There the wrinkled old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha,
Rocked him in his linden cradle,
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews;
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,
"Hush! the Naked Bear will hear thee!"
Lulled him into slumber, singing,
"Ewa-yea! my little owlet!
Who is this that lights the wigwam?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam?
Ewa-yea! my little owlet!"
Many things Nokomis taught him
Of the stars that shine in heaven;
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses;
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits,
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs,
Flaring far away to northward
In the frosty nights of winter;
Showed the broad, white road in heaven,
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.
At the door, on summer evenings,
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder;
"Minnie-wawa!" said the pine-trees,
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water;
Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening.
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him:
"Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"
Saw the moon rise from the water
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight;
Right against the moon he threw her;
'Tis her body that you see there."
Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky, the rainbow,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there;
All the wild-flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,
When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us."
When he heard the owls at midnight,
Hooting, laughing in the forest,
"What is that?" he cried, in terror;
"What is that," he said, "Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"That is but the owl and owlet,
Talking in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in summer,
Where they hid themselves in winter,
Talked with them whene’er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha’s Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene’er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha’s Brothers."

THE PLANTING OF THE APPLE-TREE

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Come, let us plant the apple-tree.
Cleave the tough greensward with the spade;
Wide let its hollow bed be made;
There gently lay the roots, and there
Sift the dark mould with kindly care,
And press it o’er them tenderly,
As, round the sleeping infant’s feet,
We softly fold the cradle-sheet;
So plant we the apple-tree.
What plant we in this apple-tree?
Buds, which the breath of summer days
Shall lengthen into leafy sprays;
Boughs where the thrush, with crimson breast,
Shall haunt and sing and hide her nest;
We plant, upon the sunny lea,
A shadow for the noontide hour,
A shelter from the summer shower,
When we plant the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Sweets for a hundred flowery springs
To load the May-wind’s restless wings,
When, from the orchard-row, he pours
Its fragrance through our open doors;
A world of blossoms for the bee,
Flowers for the sick girl’s silent room,
For the glad infant sprigs of bloom,
We plant with the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Fruits that shall swell in sunny June,
And redden in the August noon,
And drop, when gentle airs come by,
That fan the blue September sky,
While children come, with cries of glee,
And seek them where the fragrant grass
Betrays their bed to those who pass,
At the foot of the apple-tree.

And when, above this apple-tree,
The winter stars are quivering bright,
And winds go howling through the night,
Girls, whose young eyes o’erflow with mirth,
Shall peel its fruit by cottage-hearth,
And guests in prouder homes shall see,
Heaped with the grape of Cintra’s vine
And golden orange of the line,
The fruit of the apple-tree.

The fruitage of this apple-tree
Winds and our flag of stripe and star
Shall bear to coasts that lie afar,
Where men shall wonder at the view,
And ask in what fair groves they grew;
And sojourners beyond the sea
Shall think of childhood’s careless day,
And long, long hours of summer play,
In the shade of the apple-tree.

Each year shall give this apple-tree
A broader flush of roseate bloom,
A deeper maze of verdurous gloom,
And loosen, when the frost-clouds lower;
The crisp brown leaves in thicker shower.
The years shall come and pass, but we
Shall hear no longer, where we lie,
The summer’s songs, the autumn’s sigh,
In the boughs of the apple-tree.

And time shall waste this apple-tree.
Oh, when its aged branches throw
Thin shadows on the ground below,
Shall fraud and force and iron will
Oppress the weak and helpless still?
POEMS FOR THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

What shall the tasks of mercy be,
Amid the toils, the strife, the tears
Of those who live when length of years
Is wasting this little apple-tree?

"Who planted this old apple-tree?"
The children of that distant day
Thus to some aged man shall say;
And, gazing on its mossy stem,
The gray-haired man shall answer them:
"A poet of the land was he,
Born in the rude but good old times;
'Tis said he made some quaint old rhymes
On planting the apple-tree."

SELECTION FROM HIAWATHA'S SAILING

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

"Give me of your bark, O Birch-Tree!
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-Tree!

73. In a letter to Dr. Orville Dewey, written from New York in November, 1846, Bryant writes: "I have been, and am, at my place on Long Island, planting and transplanting trees, in the mist, sixty or seventy; some for shade, most for fruit. Hereafter, men, whose existence is at present merely possible, will gather pears from the trees which I have set in the ground, and wonder what old covey, — for in those days the slang terms of the present time, by the ordinary process of change in languages, will have become classical, — what old covey of past ages planted them?" The poem was written in 1849, but not published until 1864.
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley!
I a light canoe will build me,
Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,
That shall float upon the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily!

Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree!
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,
For the Summer-time is coming,
And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white-skin wrapper!"

Thus aloud cried Hiawatha
In the solitary forest,
By the rushing Taquamenaw,
When the birds were singing gayly,
In the Moon of Leaves were singing,
And the sun, from sleep awaking,
Started up and said, "Behold me!
Gheezis, the great Sun, behold me!"

And the tree with all its branches
Rustled in the breeze of morning,
Saying, with a sigh of patience,
"Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!"

With his knife the tree he girdled;
Just beneath its lowest branches,
Just above the roots, he cut it,
Till the sap came oozing outward;
Down the trunk, from top to bottom,
Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,
With a wooden wedge he raised it,
Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.

17. A river of Chippewa County, northeastern Michigan.
"Give me of your boughs, O Cedar!
Of your strong and pliant branches,
My canoe to make more steady,
Make more strong and firm beneath me!"

Through the summit of the Cedar
Went a sound, a cry of horror,
Went a murmur of resistance;
But it whispered, bending downward,
"Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!"

Down he hewed the boughs of cedar,
Shaped them straightway to a framework,
Like two bows he formed and shaped them,
Like two bended bows together.

"Give me of your roots, O Tamarack!
Of your fibrous roots, O Larch-Tree!
My canoe to bind together,
So to bind the ends together
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!"

And the Larch, with all its fibres,
Shivered in the air of morning,
Touched his forehead with its tassels,
Said, with one long sigh of sorrow,
"Take them all, O Hiawatha!"

From the earth he tore the fibres,
Tore the tough roots of the Larch-Tree,
Closely sewed the bark together,
Bound it closely to the framework.

"Give me of your balm, O Fir-Tree!
Of your balsam and your resin,
So to close the seams together

*That the water may not enter,*

*That the river may not wet me!*"
And the Fir-Tree, tall and sombre, 70
Sobbed through all its robes of darkness,
Rattled like a shore with pebbles,
Answered wailing, answered weeping,
"Take my balm, O Hiawatha!"

And he took the tears of balsam,
Took the resin of the Fir-Tree,
Smeared therewith each seam and fissure,
Made each crevice safe from water.

"Give me of your quills, O Hedgehog!
All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog!
I will make a necklace of them,
Make a girdle for my beauty,
And two stars to deck her bosom!"

From a hollow tree the Hedgehog
With his sleepy eyes looked at him,
Shot his shining quills, like arrows,
Saying, with a drowsy murmur,
Through the tangle of his whiskers,
"Take my quills, O Hiawatha!"

From the ground the quills he gathered,
All the little shining arrows,
Stained them red and blue and yellow,
With the juice of roots and berries;
Into his canoe he wrought them,
Round its waist a shining girdle,
Round its bows a gleaming necklace,
On its breast two stars resplendent.

Thus the Birch Canoe was builted
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest;
And the forest's life was in it,
All its mystery and its magic,
All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar,
All the larch's supple sinews;
And it floated on the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily.

THE BROOK

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
    I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
    To bicker down a valley.

    By thirty hills I hurry down,
    Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
    And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
    To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
    But I go on forever.

106. "The bark canoe of the Chippeways is, perhaps, the most beautiful and light model of all the water crafts that ever were invented. They are generally made complete with the rind of one birch-tree, and so ingeniously shaped and sewed together with roots of the tamarack, which they call wattap, that they are water-tight and ride upon the water, as light as a cork."—Catlin, p. 605.
I chatter over stony ways,
   In little sharps and trebles;
I bubble into eddying bays;
   I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my bank I fret
   By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
   With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
   To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
   But I go on forever.

I wind about, and in and out,
   With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
   And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
   Upon me as I travel,
With many a silvery waterbreak
   Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along and flow
   To join the brimming river,
For men may come, and men may go,
   But I go on forever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
   I slide by hazel covers,
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
   That grow for happy lovers.
I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernes;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

SPRING

CELIA THAXTER

The alder by the river
Shakes out her powdery curls;
The willow buds in silver
For little boys and girls.

The little birds fly over
And oh, how sweet they sing!
To tell the happy children
That once again 't is spring.

The gay green grass comes creeping
So soft beneath their feet;
The frogs begin to ripple
A music clear and sweet.
And buttercups are coming,
And scarlet columbine,
And in the sunny meadows
The dandelions shine.

And just as many daisies
As their soft hands can hold
The little ones may gather,
All fair in white and gold.

Here blows the warm red clover,
There peeps the violet blue;
O happy little children!
God made them all for you.
FOURTH YEAR

SEPTEMBER

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

The golden-rod is yellow;
The corn is turning brown;
The trees in apple orchards
With fruit are bending down.

The gentian’s bluest fringes
Are curling in the sun;
In dusty pods the milkweed
Its hidden silk has spun.

The sedges flaunt their harvest,
In every meadow nook;
And asters by the brook-side
Make asters in the brook.

From dewy lanes at morning
The grapes’ sweet odors rise;
At noon the roads all flutter
With yellow butterflies.

By all these lovely tokens
September days are here,
With summer’s best of weather,
And autumn’s best of cheer.
But none of all this beauty
Which floods the earth and air
Is unto me the secret
Which makes September fair.

'Tis a thing which I remember;
To name it thrills me yet;
One day of one September
I never can forget.

THE LEAP OF ROUSHAN BEG

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

MOUNTED on Kyrat strong and fleet,
His chestnut steed with four white feet,
   Roushan Beg, called Kurroglou,
Son of the road and bandit chief,
Seeking refuge and relief,
   Up the mountain pathway flew.

Such was Kyrat's wondrous speed,
Never yet could any steed
   Reach the dust-cloud in his course.
More than maiden, more than wife,
More than gold and next to life
   Roushan the Robber loved his horse.

In the land that lies beyond
Erzeroum and Trebizond,
   Garden-girt his fortress stood;
Plundered khan, or caravan
Journeying north from Koordistan,
   Gave him wealth and wine and food.
Seven hundred and fourscore
Men at arms his livery wore,
Did his bidding night and day;
Now, through regions all unknown,
He was wandering, lost, alone,
Seeking without guide his way.

Suddenly the pathway ends,
Sheer the precipice descends,
Loud the torrent roars unseen;
Thirty feet from side to side
Yawns the chasm; on air must ride
He who crosses this ravine.

Following close in his pursuit,
At the precipice's foot
Reyhan the Arab of Orfah
Halted with his hundred men,
Shouting upward from the glen,
"La Illáh illa Alláh!"

Gently Roushan Beg caressed
Kyrat's forehead, neck, and breast;
Kissed him upon both his eyes,
Sang to him in his wild way,
As upon the topmost spray
Sings a bird before it flies.

"O my Kyrat, O my steed,
Round and slender as a reed,
Carry me this peril through!
Satin housings shall be thine,
Shoes of gold, O Kyrat mine,
O thou soul of Kurroglo!"
"Soft thy skin as silken skein,
Soft as woman's hair thy mane,
   Tender are thine eyes and true;
All thy hoofs like ivory shine,
Polished bright; O life of mine,
   Leap, and rescue Kurroglou!"

Kyрат, then, the strong and fleet,
Drew together his four white feet,
   Paused a moment on the verge,
Measured with his eye the space,
And into the air's embrace
   Leaped as leaps the ocean surge.

As the ocean surge o'er sand
Bears a swimmer safe to land,
   Kyрат safe his rider bore;
Rattling down the deep abyss
Fragments of the precipice
   Rolled like pebbles on a shore.

Roushan's tasselled cap of red
Trembled not upon his head,
   Careless sat he and upright;
Neither hand nor bridle shook,
Nor his head he turned to look,
   As he galloped out of sight.

Flash of harness in the air,
Seen a moment like the glare
   Of a sword drawn from its sheath;
Thus the phantom horseman passed,
And the shadow that he cast
   Leaped the cataract underneath.
Reyhan the Arab held his breath
While this vision of life and death
Passed above him. "Allahu!"
Cried he. "In all Koordistan
Lives there not so brave a man
As this Robber Kurroglou!"

OCTOBER’S BRIGHT BLUE WEATHER

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

O suns and skies and clouds of June,
And flowers of June together,
Ye cannot rival for one hour
October’s bright blue weather,

When loud the bumble-bee makes haste,
Belated, thriftless, vagrant,
And Golden-Rod is dying fast,
And lanes with grapes are fragrant;

When Gentians roll their fringes tight
To save them for the morning,
And chestnuts fall from satin burrs
Without a sound of warning;

When on the ground red apples lie
In piles like jewels shining,
And redder still on old stone walls
Are leaves of woodbine twining;

When all the lovely wayside things
Their white-winged seeds are sowing,
And in the fields, still green and fair,
Late aftermaths are growing;
When springs run low, and on the brooks,
In idle golden freighting,
Bright leaves sink noiseless in the hush
Of woods, for winter waiting;

When comrades seek sweet country haunts,
By twos and twos together,
And count like misers hour by hour,
October’s bright blue weather.

O suns and skies and flowers of June,
Count all your boasts together,
Love loveth best of all the year
October’s bright blue weather.

THE PUMPKIN

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

O, greenly and fair in the lands of the sun,
The vines of the gourd and the rich melon run,
And the rock and the tree and the cottage enfold,
With broad leaves all greenness and blossoms all gold,
Like that which o’er Nineveh’s prophet once grew,
While he waited to know that his warning was true,
And longed for the storm-cloud, and listened in vain
For the rush of the whirlwind and red fire-rain.

On the banks of the Xenil the dark Spanish maiden
Comes up with the fruit of the tangled vine laden;
And the Creole of Cuba laughs out to behold
Through orange-leaves shining the broad spheres of gold;
Yet with dearer delight from his home in the North,
On the fields of his harvest the Yankee looks forth,
Where crook-necks are coiling and yellow fruit shines,
And the sun of September melts down on his vines.

Ah! on Thanksgiving day, when from East and from West,
From North and from South come the pilgrim and guest,
When the gray-haired New-Englander sees round his board
The old broken links of affection restored,
When the care-wearied man seeks his mother once more,
And the worn matron smiles where the girl smiled before,
What moistens the lip and what brightens the eye?
What calls back the past, like the rich Pumpkin pie?

O,—fruit loved of boyhood!—the old days recalling,
When wood-grapes were purpling and brown nuts were falling!
When wild, ugly faces we carved in its skin,
Glaring out through the dark with a candle within!
When we laughed round the corn-heap, with hearts all in tune,
Our chair a broad pumpkin,—our lantern the moon,
Telling tales of the fairy who travelled like steam,
In a pumpkin-shell coach, with two rats for her team!

Then thanks for thy present!—none sweeter or better
E'er smoked from an oven or circled a platter!
er hands never wrought at a pastry more fine, 35
gter eyes never watched o'er its baking, than thine!

l the prayer, which my mouth is too full to express,
l's my heart that thy shadow may never be less,
t the days of thy lot may be lengthened below,
l the fame of thy worth like a pumpkin-vine grow,
l thy life be as sweet, and its last sunset sky den-tinted and fair as thy own Pumpkin pie!

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A suggestion of the poem came from the smithy which the poet visited daily, and which stood beneath a horse-chestnut tree not far from his house in Cambridge. The tree, against the protests of Mr. Longfellow and others, was removed in 1876, on the ground that it rilled drivers of heavy loads who passed under it.

UNDER a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.
Week in, week out, from morn till night,
    You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
    With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
    When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
    Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
    And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
    Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
    And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
    He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
    And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
    Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
    How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
    A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
    Onward through life he goes;

23. After this poem had been printed for some time, Mr. Longfellow was disposed to change the word "catch" to "watch," but the original form had grown so familiar that he decided to leave it.
Each morning sees some task begin,
    Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
    Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
    For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
    Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
    Each burning deed and thought.

THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SQUIRREL
    (THE FABLE)

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The mountain and the squirrel
    Had a quarrel,
    And the former called the latter "Little prig;"
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big,
    But all sorts of things and weather
    Must be taken in together
To make up a year,
    And a sphere:
And I think it no disgrace
    To occupy my place.
    If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
    And not half so spry;
I'll not deny you make
    A very pretty squirrel track.
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;  
If I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you crack a nut.”

THE SPARROWS

CEILIA THAXTER

In the far-off land of Norway,  
Where the winter lingers late,  
And long for the singing-birds and flowers  
The little children wait;

When at last the summer ripens  
And the harvest is gathered in,  
And food for the bleak, drear days to come  
The toiling people win;

Through all the land the children  
In the golden fields remain  
Till their busy little hands have gleaned  
A generous sheaf of grain;

All the stalks by the reapers forgotten  
They glean to the very least,  
To save till the cold December,  
For the sparrows’ Christmas feast.

And then through the frost-locked country  
There happens a wonderful thing:  
The sparrows flock north, south, east, west,  
For the children’s offering.
Of a sudden, the day before Christmas,
    The twittering crowds arrive,
And the bitter, wintry air at once
    With their chirping is all alive.

They perch upon roof and gable,
    On porch and fence and tree,
They flutter about the windows
    And peer in curiously.

And meet the eyes of the children,
    Who eagerly look out
With cheeks that bloom like roses red,
    And greet them with welcoming shout.

On the joyous Christmas morning,
    In front of every door
A tall pole, crowned with clustering grain,
    Is set the birds before.

And which are the happiest, truly
    It would be hard to tell;
The sparrows who share in the Christmas cheer,
    Or the children who love them well!

How sweet that they should remember,
    With faith so full and sure,
That the children’s bounty awaited them
    The whole wide country o’er!

When this pretty story was told me
    By one who had helped to rear
The rustling grain for the merry birds
    In Norway, many a year,
I thought that our little children
Would like to know it too,
It seems to me so beautiful,
So blessed a thing to do,

To make God's innocent creatures see
In every child a friend,
And on our faithful kindness
So fearlessly depend.

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Mr. Longfellow imagined a party of friends met at a country in
and telling tales before the fire. The first of these Tales of a Wa
side Inn was by the landlord, and is this story of Paul Revere. Re
ewas an American patriot, a silversmith and engraver by trade, who
tea-pots and cream jugs and tankards may be found in old Bost
families. He was a spirited man, and in the secrets of the Bost
patriots.

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,"—

9. There has been some discussion as to the church tower fro
which the lanterns were hung, some claiming that the church w:
the old North Meeting-house in North Square, pulled do
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,

afterward for fuel, during the siege of Boston; but the evidence points more clearly to Christ Church, still standing, and often spoken of as the North Church. The poet has departed somewhat from the actual historic facts, since Revere did not watch for the lights, nor did he reach Concord. In 1894, when April 19 was made a holiday in Massachusetts, under the name of Patriots' Day, there was an attempt at acting out the famous story of the ride.
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel’s tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, “All is well!”
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the y,
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse’s side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth.
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry’s height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer’s dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.
It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
*To every* Middlesex village and farm,—
*A cry of defiance and not of fear,*
WHITTIER'S BIRTHPLACE IN WINTER
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

SELECTIONS FROM SNOW-BOUND

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

THE STORM

UNWARMED by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow:
And ere the early bedtime came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake and pellicle
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden-wall or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa’s leaning miracle.

THE KITCHEN SCENE

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,

35. The Leaning Tower of Pisa, in Italy, which inclines from the perpendicular a little more than six feet in eighty, is a cam-
panile, or bell-tower, built of white marble, very beautiful, but
so famous for its singular deflection from perpendicularity as
to be known almost wholly as a curiosity. Opinions differ as to
the leaning being the result of accident or design, but the better
judgment makes it an effect of the character of the soil on which
the town is built. The Cathedral to which it belongs has suffered
so much from a similar cause that there is not a vertical line in it.
We piled with care our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back,—
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,
The Turk's heads on the andirons glowed;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
Whispered the old rhyme: "Under the tree,
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the sombre green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
Against the whiteness of their back.
For such a world and such a night
Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed;
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood,
With nuts from brown October's wood.

THE EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Once the Emperor Charles of Spain,
With his swarthy, grave commanders,
I forget in what campaign,
Long besieged, in mud and rain,
Some old frontier town of Flanders.
THE KITCHEN IN WHITTIER'S HOME

From a photograph. The room on the right, opening from the kitchen, is the chamber in which the poet was born. The homestead is now owned by a Whittier Memorial Association, and, being open to the public, is visited by thousands of persons annually.
Up and down the dreary camp,
   In great boots of Spanish leather,
Striding with a measured tramp,
These Hidalgos, dull and damp,
   Cursed the Frenchmen, cursed the weather. 10

Thus as to and fro they went,
   Over upland and through hollow,
Giving their impatience vent,
Perched upon the Emperor's tent,
   In her nest, they spied a swallow. 15

Yes, it was a swallow's nest,
   Built of clay and hair of horses,
Mane, or tail, or dragoon's crest,
Found on hedge-rows east and west,
   After skirmish of the forces. 20

Then an old Hidalgo said,
   As he twirled his gray mustachio,
"Sure this swallow overhead
Thinks the Emperor's tent a shed,
   And the Emperor but a Macho!" 25

Hearing his imperial name
   Coupled with those words of malice,
Half in anger, half in shame,
Forth the great campaigner came
   Slowly from his canvas palace. 30

“Let no hand the bird molest,”
    Said he solemnly, “nor hurt her!”
Adding then, by way of jest,
“Golondrina is my guest,
    ’Tis the wife of some deserter!”

Swift as bowstring speeds a shaft,
    Through the camp was spread the rumor,
And the soldiers, as they quaffed
Flemish beer at dinner, laughed
    At the Emperor’s pleasant humor.

So unharmed and unafraid
    Sat the swallow still and brooded,
Till the constant cannonade
Through the walls a breach had made,
    And the siege was thus concluded.

Then the army, elsewhere bent,
    Struck its tents as if disbanding,
Only not the Emperor’s tent,
For he ordered, ere he went,
    Very curtly, “Leave it standing!”

So it stood there all alone,
    Loosely flapping, torn and tattered,
Till the brood was fledged and flown
Singing o’er those walls of stone
    Which the cannon-shot had shattered.

34. Golondrina, the feminine form of golondrino, a swall
and also a jocose name for a deserter.
OUR HEROES

PHEBE CARY

Here's a hand to the boy who has courage
   To do what he knows to be right;
When he falls in the way of temptation
   He has a hard battle to fight.
Who strives against self and his comrades
   Will find a most powerful foe:
All honor to him if he conquers;
   A cheer for the boy who says "No"!

There's many a battle fought daily
   The world knows nothing about;
There's many a brave little soldier
   Whose strength puts a legion to rout.
And he who fights sin single-handed
   Is more of a hero, I say,
Than he who leads soldiers to battle,
   And conquers by arms in the fray.

Be steadfast, my boy, when you're tempted,
   And do what you know to be right;
Stand firm by the colors of manhood,
   And you will o'ercome in the fight.
"The right!" be your battle cry ever
   In waging the warfare of life;
And God, who knows who are the heroes,
   Will give you the strength for the strife.
WRITTEN IN MARCH
While resting on the bridge at the foot of Brother’s Water.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping — anon — anon:
There’s joy in the mountains;
There’s life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

SUN AND SHADOW

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

As I look from the isle, o’er its billows of green,
To the billows of foam-crested blue,
n bark, that afar in the distance is seen,
   Half dreaming, my eyes will pursue:
   w dark in the shadow, she scatters the spray
As the chaff in the stroke of the flail;
   w white as the sea-gull, she flies on her way,
   The sun gleaming bright on her sail.

Yet her pilot is thinking of dangers to shun,—
   Of breakers that whiten and roar;
   ow little he cares, if in shadow or sun
   They see him who gaze from the shore!
   looks to the beacon that looms from the reef,
   To the rock that is under his lee,
   he drifts on the blast, like a wind-wafted leaf,
   O'er the gulfs of the desolate sea.

Hence drifting afar to the dim-vaulted caves
   Where life and its ventures are laid,
the dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves
   May see us in sunshine or shade;
   ut true to our course, though the shadows grow dark,
   We'll trim our broad sail as before,
and stand by the rudder that governs the bark,
   Nor ask how we look from the shore!

THE SANDPIPER

CELIA THAXTER

ACROSS the lonely beach we flit,
   One little sandpiper and I,
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
   The scattered driftwood, bleached and dry.
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud, black and swift, across the sky;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along,
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry;
He starts not at my fitful song,
Nor flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong,
He scans me with a fearless eye;
Stanch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night,
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky;
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?
THE BLUEBIRD

Eben Eugene Rexford

Listen a moment, I pray you; what was that sound that I heard?
Wind in the budding branches, the ripple of brooks, or a bird?
Hear it again, above us! and see a flutter of wings!
The bluebird knows it is April, and soars toward the sun and sings.
Never the song of the robin could make my heart so glad;
When I hear the bluebird singing in spring, I forget to be sad.

Hear it! a ripple of music! sunshine changed into song!
It sets me thinking of summer when the days and their dreams are long.
Winged lute that we call a bluebird, you blend in a silver strain
The sound of the laughing water, the patter of spring's sweet rain.
The voice of the winds, the sunshine, and fragrance of blossoming things,
Ah! you are an April poem, that God has dowered with wings!
SONG — THE OWL

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

I

When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

II

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.
FIFTH YEAR

BARBARA FRIETCHIE

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

"This poem," says Mr. Whittier, "was written in strict conformity to the account of the incident as I had it from respectable and trustworthy sources. It has since been the subject of a good deal of conflicting testimony, and the story was probably incorrect in some of its details. It is admitted by all that Barbara Frietchie was no myth, but a worthy and highly esteemed gentlewoman, intensely loyal and a hater of the Slavery Rebellion, holding her Union flag sacred and keeping it with her Bible; that when the Confederates halted before her house, and entered her dooryard, she denounced them in vigorous language, shook her cane in their faces, and drove them out; and when General Burnside's troops followed close upon Jackson's, she waved her flag and cheered them. It is stated that May Quantrell, a brave and loyal lady in another part of the city, did wave her flag in sight of the Confederates. It is possible that there has been a blending of the two incidents."

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

*Fair as the garden of the Lord*
*To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,*
On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!" — the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!" — out blazed the rifle-blast.

*It shivered the window, pane and sash;*
*It rent the banner with seam and gash.*
Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.
Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

AN ORDER FOR A PICTURE

ALICE CARY

Oh, good painter, tell me true,
Has your hand the cunning to draw
Shapes of things that you never saw?
Aye? Well, here is an order for you.

Woods and corn fields, a little brown,—
The picture must not be over-bright,—
Yet all in the golden and gracious light
Of a cloud, when the summer sun is down.

Alway and alway, night and morn,
Woods upon woods, with fields of corn
Lying between them, not quite sere,
And not in the full, thick, leafy bloom,
When the wind can hardly find breathing-room
Under their tassels,—cattle near,
Biting shorter the short green grass,
And a hedge of sumach and sassafras,
With bluebirds twittering all around, —
(Ah, good painter, you can’t paint sound!) —
These, and the house where I was born,
Low and little, and black and old,
With children, many as it can hold,
All at the windows, open wide, —
Heads and shoulders clear outside,
And fair young faces all ablush:
Perhaps you may have seen, some day,
Roses crowding the self-same way,
Out of a wilding, wayside bush.

Listen closer. When you have done
With woods and corn fields and grazing herds,
A lady, the loveliest ever the sun
Looked down upon you must paint for me:
Oh, if I only could make you see
The clear blue eyes, the tender smile,
The sovereign sweetness, the gentle grace,
The woman’s soul, and the angel’s face
That are beaming on me all the while,
I need not speak these foolish words:
Yet one word tells you all I would say,—
She is my mother: you will agree
That all the rest may be thrown away.

Two little urchins at her knee
You must paint, sir: one like me,—
The other with a clearer brow,
And the light of his adventurous eyes
Flashing with boldest enterprise:
At ten years’ old he went to sea,—
*God knoweth* if he be living now,—
He sailed in the good ship *Commodore,*
Nobody ever crossed her track
To bring us news, and she never came back.  
Ah, it is twenty long years and more
Since that old ship went out of the bay
With my great-hearted brother on her deck:
I watched him till he shrank to a speck,
And his face was toward me all the way.
Bright his hair was, a golden brown,
The time we stood at our mother's knee:
That beauteous head, if it did go down,
Carried sunshine into the sea!

Out in the fields one summer night
We were together, half afraid
Of the corn-leaves' rustling, and of the shade
Of the high hills, stretching so still and far,—
Loitering till after the low little light
Of the candle shone through the open door,
And over the hay-stack's pointed top,
All of a tremble and ready to drop,
The first half-hour, the great yellow star,
That we, with staring, ignorant eyes,
Had often and often watched to see
Propped and held in its place in the skies
By the fork of a tall red mulberry-tree,
Which close in the edge of our flax-field grew,—
Dead at the top, — just one branch full
Of leaves, notched round, and lined with wool,
From which it tenderly shook the dew
Over our heads, when we came to play
*In its* hand-breadth of shadow, day after day.
Afraid to go home, sir; for one of us boro
A nest full of speckled and thin-shelled eggs,—
The other, a bird, held fast by the legs,
Not so big as a straw of wheat:
The berries we gave her she would n’t eat,
But cried and cried, till we held her bill,
So slim and shining, to keep her still.

At last we stood at our mother’s knee.
Do you think, sir, if you try,
You can paint the look of a lie?
If you can, pray have the grace
To put it solely in the face
Of the urchin that is likest me:
I think ’t was solely mine, indeed:
But that ’s no matter, — paint it so;
The eyes of our mother — (take good heed) —
Looking not on the nestful of eggs,
Nor the fluttering bird, held so fast by the legs,
But straight through our faces down to our lies,
And, oh, with such injured, reproachful surprise!
I felt my heart bleed where that glance went, as though
A sharp blade struck through it.

That you on the canvas are to repeat
Things that are fairest, things most sweet,—
Woods and corn fields and mulberry-tree,—
The mother,— the lads, with their bird, at her knee:
But, oh, that look of reproachful woe!
High as the heavens your name I ’ll shout,
If you paint me the picture, and leave that out.
THE FOUNTAIN

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Into the sunshine,
   Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
   From morn till night;

Into the moonlight,
   Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like
   When the winds blow;

Into the starlight
   Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
   Happy by day;

Ever in motion,
   Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
   Never aweary;

Glad of all weathers,
   Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
   Motion thy rest;

Full of a nature
   Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
   Ever the same;
Ceaseless aspiring,
  Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
  Thy element;

Glorious fountain,
  Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
  Upward, like thee!

SHERIDAN’S RIDE

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ

Up from the South at break of day,
Bringing from Winchester fresh dismay,
  The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain’s door,
  The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon’s bar;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold,
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good broad highway leading down;
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight,
As if he knew the terrible need;
He stretched away with the utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell; but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering South
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth;
Or the tail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape flowed away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind,
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eye full of fire.
But lo! he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the General saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops,
What was done? what to do? a glance told him both
Then striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line, 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there
because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.  
With foam and with dust, the black charger was gray;  
By the flash of his eye, and the red nostril's play,  
He seemed to the whole great army to say,  
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way  
From Winchester, down to save the day!"

Hurrah! hurrah for Sheridan!  
Hurrah! hurrah for horse and man!  
And when their statues are placed on high,  
Under the dome of the Union sky,  
The American soldiers' Temple of Fame,  
There with the glorious General's name,  
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright,  
"Here is the steed that saved the day,  
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,  
From Winchester, twenty miles away!"

THELANDINGOFTHEPILGRIMFATHERS  
INNEWENGLAND

Felicia D. Hemans

The breaking waves dashed high  
On a stern and rockbound coast,  
And the woods against a stormy sky  
Their giant branches tossed.

And the heavy night hung dark  
The hills and water o' er,  
When a band of exiles moored their bark  
On the wild New England shore.
70 POEMS FOR THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

Not as the conqueror comes,
   They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
   And the trumpet that sings of fame.

Not as the flying come,
   In silence and in fear; —
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
   With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
   And the stars heard, and the sea:
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
   To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soared
   From his nest by the white wave’s foam:
And the rocking pines of the forest roared,—
   This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
   Amidst that pilgrim band: —
Why had they come to wither there,
   Away from their childhood’s land?

There was woman’s fearless eye,
   Lit by her deep love’s truth;
There was manhood’s brow serenely high,
   And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
   Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
   They sought a faith’s pure shrine!
Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod:
They have left unstained what there they found,—
    Freedom to worship God.

THE HUNDREDTH PSALM

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good: his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

CHRISTMAS BELLS

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
   A voice, a chime,
   A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
   And with the sound
   The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
   And made forlorn
   The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
   "For hate is strong,
   And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"
LITTLE GOTTLIEB
A CHRISTMAS STORY

PHEBE CARY

Across the German Ocean,
   In a country far from our own,
Once, a poor little boy, named Gottlieb,
   Lived with his mother alone.

They dwelt in the part of a village
   Where the houses were poor and small,
But the home of little Gottlieb
   Was the poorest one of all.

He was not large enough to work,
   And his mother could do no more
(Though she scarcely laid her knitting down)
   Than keep the wolf from the door.

She had to take their threadbare clothes,
   And turn, and patch, and darn;
For never any women yet
   Grew rich by knitting yarn.

And oft at night, beside her chair,
   Would Gottlieb sit, and plan
The wonderful things he would do for her,
   When he grew to be a man.
One night she sat and knitted,
    And Gottlieb sat and dreamed,
When a happy fancy all at once
    Upon his vision beamed.

'Twas only a week till Christmas,
    And Gottlieb knew that then
The Christ-child, who was born that day,
    Sent down good gifts to men.

But he said, "He will never find us,
    Our home is so mean and small,
And we, who have most need of them,
    Will get no gifts at all."

When all at once a happy light
    Came into his eyes so blue,
And lighted up his face with smiles,
    As he thought what he could do.

Next day when the postman's letters
    Came from all over the land;
Came one for the Christ-child, written
    In a child's poor trembling hand.

You may think he was sorely puzzled
    What in the world to do;
So he went to the Burgomaster,
    As the wisest man he knew.

And when they opened the letter,
    They stood almost dismayed
That such a little child should dare
    To ask the Lord for aid.
Then the Burgomaster stammered,
   And scarce knew what to speak,
And hastily he brushed aside
   A drop, like a tear, from his cheek.

Then up he spoke right gruffly,
   And he turned himself about:
"This must be a very foolish boy,
   And a small one, too, no doubt."

But when six rosy children
   That night about him pressed,
Poor, trusting little Gottlieb
   Stood near him, with the rest.

And he heard his simple, touching prayer,
   Through all their noisy play;
Though he tried his very best to put
   The thought of him away.

A wise and learned man was he,
   Men called him good and just;
But his wisdom seemed like foolishness,
   By that weak child’s simple trust.

Now when the morn of Christmas came,
   And the long, long week was done,
Poor Gottlieb, who scarce could sleep,
   Rose up before the sun,

And hastened to his mother,
   But he scarce might speak for fear,
When he saw her wondering look, and saw
   The Burgomaster near.
He was n't afraid of the Holy Babe,
Nor his mother, meek and mild;
But he felt as if so great a man
Had never been a child.

Amazed the poor child looked, to find
The hearth was piled with wood,
And the table, never full before,
Was heaped with dainty food.

Then half to hide from himself the truth
The Burgomaster said,
While the mother blessed him on her knees,
And Gottlieb shook for dread;

"Nay, give no thanks, my good dame,
To such as me for aid,
Be grateful to your little son,
And the Lord to whom he prayed!"

Then turning round to Gottlieb,
"Your written prayer, you see,
Came not to whom it was addressed,
It only came to me!

"'T was but a foolish thing you did,
As you must understand;
For though the gifts are yours, you know,
You have them from my hand."

Then Gottlieb answered fearlessly,
Where he humbly stood apart,
"But the Christ-child sent them all the same,
He put the thought in your heart!"
THE HERITAGE

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick and stone, and gold,
And he inherits soft white hands,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares;
The bank may break, the factory burn,
A breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands could hardly earn
A living that would serve his turn;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits wants,
His stomach craves for dainty fare;
With sated heart, he hears the pants
Of toiling hinds with brown arms bare,
And wearies in his easy-chair;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit;
King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man’s son inherit?
Wishes o’erjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-won merit,
Content that from employment springs,
A heart that in his labor sings;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man’s son inherit?
A patience learned of being poor,
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it,
A fellow-feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

O rich man’s son! there is a toil
That with all others level stands;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whiten, soft white hands;
This is the best crop from thy lands,
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O poor man’s son! scorn not thy state;
There is worse weariness than thine,
In merely being rich and great;
Toil only gives the soul to shine,
And makes rest fragrant and benign;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being poor to hold in fee.
Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
Are equal in the earth at last;
Both, children of the same dear God,
Prove title to your heirship vast
By record of a well-filled past;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Written by request, when the funeral procession of the martyrred
Aident passed through the streets of New York.

Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just!
Who, in the fear of God, didst bear
The sword of power, a nation’s trust!

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.

Thy task is done; the bond are free:
We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.

Pure was thy life; its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
Among the noble host of those
Who perished in the cause of Right.
THE ARROW AND THE SONG

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"October 16, 1845. Before church, wrote The Arrow and the which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire glanced on to the paper with arrow's speed. Literally an impro tion." — Diary of H. W. Longfellow.

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterwards, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

THE BUILDERS

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.
Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.
Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

PLANT A TREE

LUCY LARCOM

He who plants a tree,
Plants a hope.
Rootlets up through fibres blindly grope;
Leaves unfold into horizons free.
So man’s life must climb
From the clods of time
Unto heavens sublime.
Canst thou prophesy, thou little tree,
What the glory of thy boughs shall be?

He who plants a tree,
Plants a joy;
Plants a comfort that will never cloy;
Every day a fresh reality,
Beautiful and strong,
To whose shelter throng
Creatures blithe with song.
If thou couldst but know, thou happy tree,
Of the bliss that shall inhabit thee!

He who plants a tree,—
He plants peace.
Under its green curtains jargons cease.
Leaf and zephyr murmur soothingly;
Shadows soft with sleep
Down tired eyelids creep,
Balm of slumber deep.

Never hast thou dreamed, thou blessed tree,
Of the benediction thou shalt be.

He who plants a tree,—

He plants youth;

Vigor won for centuries in sooth;
Life of time, that hints eternity!
Boughs their strength uprear;
New shoots, every year,
On old growths appear:

Thou shalt teach the ages, sturdy tree,
Youth of soul is immortality.

He who plants a tree,—

He plants love;

Tents of coolness spreading out above
Wayfarers, he may not live to see.

Gifts that grow are best;
Hands that bless are blest;
Plant! life does the rest!

Heaven and earth help him who plants a tree,
And his work its own reward shall be.

SPRING

(Translated from the French of Charles D'Orleans)

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

GENTLE Spring! in sunshine clad,
Well dost thou thy power display!

For Winter maketh the light heart sad,
And thou, thou makest the sad heart gay.
He sees thee, and calls to his gloomy train,
The sleet, and the snow, and the wind, and the rain,
And they shrink away, and they flee in fear,
When thy merry step draws near.

Winter giveth the fields and the trees, so old,
Their beards of icicles and snow;
And the rain, it raineth so fast and cold,
We must cower over the embers low;
And, snugly housed from the wind and weather,
Mope like birds that are changing feather.
But the storm retires, and the sky grows clear,
When thy merry step draws near.

Winter maketh the sun in the gloomy sky
Wrap him round with a mantle of cloud;
But, Heaven be praised, thy step is nigh;
Thou tearest away the mournful shroud,
And the earth looks bright, and Winter surly,
Who has toiled for naught both late and early,
Is banished afar by the new-born year,
When thy merry step draws near.

THE DAFFODILS

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed,—and gazed,—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

JUNE

(From "The Vision of Sir Launfal")

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

AND what is so rare as a day in June?  
Then, if ever, come perfect days;  
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,  
And over it softly her warm ear lays:  
Whether we look, or whether we listen,  
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;  
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings.
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing.
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
   We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
   Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
   Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—
   'Tis the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
   In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
   The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,
   And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
   Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?
SIXTH YEAR

THE GRAY SWAN

Alice Cary

"Oh! tell me, sailor, tell me true,
Is my little lad, my Elihu,
A-sailing with your ship?"
The sailor's eyes were dim with dew,
"Your little lad, your Elihu?"
He said with trembling lip,—
"What little lad? What ship?"

"What little lad? as if there could be
Another such a one as he!
What little lad, do you say?
Why, Elihu, that took to the sea
The moment I put him off my knee!
It was just the other day
The Gray Swan sailed away!"

"The other day?" The sailor's eyes
Stood open with a great surprise:—
"The other day?—the Swan?"
His heart began in his throat to rise.
"Ay, ay, sir! here in the cupboard lies
The jacket he had on!"—
"And so your lad is gone?"
"Gone with the Swan." "And did she stand
With her anchor clutching hold of the sand,
   For a month, and never stir?"
"Why, to be sure! I've seen from the land,
Like a lover kissing his lady's hand,
The wild sea kissing her,—
   A sight to remember, sir!"

"But, my good mother, do you know
All this was twenty years ago?
   I stood on the Gray Swan's deck,
And to that lad I saw you throw,
Taking it off, as it might be, so!
The kerchief from your neck."—
   "Ay, and he'll bring it back!"

"And did the little lawless lad,
   That has made you sick and made you sad,
   Sail with the Gray Swan's crew?"
"Lawless! The man is going mad!
The best boy ever mother had:—
   Be sure he sailed with the crew!
   What would you have him do?"

"And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word, nor made you sign,
   To say he was alive?"
"Hold! if 't was wrong, the wrong is mine;
Besides, he may be in the brine;
   And could he write from the grave?
   Tut, man! What would you have?"

"Gone, twenty years,—a long, long cruise,
Twas wicked thus your love to abuse!"
But if the lad still live,
And come back home, think you, you can
Forgive him?" — "Miserable man!
You're mad as the sea,—you rave—
What have I to forgive?"

The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,
And from within his bosom drew
The kerchief. She was wild.
"O God, my Father! is it true?
My little lad, my Elihu!
My blessed boy, my child!
My dead, my living child!"

RAIN IN SUMMER

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

How beautiful is the rain!
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain!

How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs!
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout!

Across the window-pane
It pours and pours;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain!

The sick man from his chamber looks
At the twisted brooks;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool;
His fevered brain
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.

From the neighboring school
Come the boys,
With more than their wonted noise
And commotion;
And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Ingulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean.

In the country, on every side,
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard’s tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain!

In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand;
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,
With their dilated nostrils spread,
They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,
And the vapors that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil.
For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees
His pastures, and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain.
He counts it as no sin
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

These, and far more than these,
The Poet sees!
He can behold
Aquarius old
Walking the fenceless fields of air;
And from each ample fold
Of the clouds about him rolled
Scattering everywhere
The showery rain,
As the farmer scatters his grain.

He can behold
Things manifold
That have not yet been wholly told,—
Have not been wholly sung nor said.
For his thought, that never stops,
Follows the water-drops
down to the graves of the dead,
down through chasms and gulfs profound,
To the dreary fountain-head
Of lakes and rivers under ground;
And sees them, when the rain is done,
on the bridge of colors seven
Climbing up once more to heaven,
Opposite the setting sun.

Thus the Seer,
With vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear,
In the perpetual round of strange,
Mysterious change
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth;
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things, unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel
Turning forevermore
In the rapid and rushing river of Time.

THE HARVEST MOON

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

It is the Harvest Moon! On gilded vanes
And roofs of villages, on woodland crests
And their aerial neighborhoods of nests
Deserted, on the curtained window-panes
Of rooms where children sleep, on country lanes
And harvest-fields, its mystic splendor rests!
Gone are the birds that were our summer guests;
With the last sheaves return the laboring wains!
All things are symbols: the external shows
Of Nature have their image in the mind,
As flowers and fruits and falling of the leaves;
The song-birds leave us at the summer’s close,
Only the empty nests are left behind,
And pipings of the quail among the sheaves

MAIZE, THE NATION’S EMBLEM

CELIA THAXTER

Upon a hundred thousand plains
Its banners rustle in the breeze,
O’er all the nation’s wide domains
From coast to coast betwixt the seas.

It storms the hills and fills the vales,
It marches like an army grand,
The continent its presence hails,
Its beauty brightens all the land.

Far back through history’s shadowy page
It shines, a power of boundless good,
The people’s prop from age to age,
The one unfailing wealth of food.
God's gift to the New World's great need
   That helped to build the nation's strength,
Up through beginnings rude to lead
   A higher race of men at length.

How straight and tall and stately stand
   Its serried stalks upright and strong!
How nobly are its outlines planned,
   What grace and charm to it belong!

What splendor in its rustling leaves!
   What richness in its close-set gold!
What largess in its clustered sheaves,
   New every year, though ages old!

America, from thy broad breast
   It sprang, beneficent and bright,
Of all thy gifts from heaven the best,
   For the world's succor and delight.

Then do it honor, give it praise!
   A noble emblem should be ours; —
Upon thy fair shield set thy Maize,
   More glorious than a myriad flowers.

And let thy States their garland bring,
   Each its own lovely blossom-sign,
But leading all let Maize be king,
   Holding its place by right divine.
THE LEAK IN THE DIKE

A STORY OF HOLLAND

PHOEBE CARY

The good dame looked from her cottage
At the close of the pleasant day,
And cheerily called to her little son
Outside the door at play:
"Come, Peter, come! I want you to go,
While there is light to see,
To the hut of the blind old man who lives
Across the dike, for me;
And take these cakes I made for him —
They are hot and smoking yet;
You have time enough to go and come
Before the sun is set."

Then the good-wife turned to her labor
Humming a simple song,
And thought of her husband, working hard
At the sluices all day long;
And set the turf a-blazing,
And brought the coarse black bread;
That he might find a fire at night,
And find the table spread.

And Peter left the brother,
With whom all day he had played,
And the sister who had watched their sports
In the willow's tender shade;
And told them they'd see him back before
They saw a star in sight,
Though he would n't be afraid to go
   In the very darkest night!
For he was a brave, bright fellow,
   With eye and conscience clear;
He could do whatever a boy might do,
   And he had not learned to fear.
Why, he would n't have robbed a bird's nest,
   Nor brought a stork to harm,
Though never a law in Holland
   Had stood to stay his arm!

And now, with his face all glowing,
   And eyes as bright as the day
With the thoughts of his pleasant errand,
   He trudged along the way;
And soon his joyous prattle
   Made glad a lonesome place—
Alas! if only the blind old man
   Could have seen that happy face!
Yet he somehow caught the brightness
   Which his voice and presence lent;
And he felt the sunshine come and go
   As Peter came and went.

And now, as the day was sinking,
   And the winds began to rise,
The mother looked from her door again,
   Shading her anxious eyes;
And saw the shadows deepen
   And birds to their homes come back,
But never a sign of Peter
   Along the level track.
But she said: "He will come at morning,
    So I need not fret or grieve —
Though it is n't like my boy at all
    To stay without my leave."

But where was the child delaying?
    On the homeward way was he,
And across the dike while the sun was up
    An hour above the sea.
He was stopping now to gather flowers,
    Now listening to the sound,
As the angry waters dashed themselves
    Against their narrow bound.

"Ah! well for us," said Peter,
    "That the gates are good and strong,
And my father tends them carefully,
    Or they would not hold you long!
You're a wicked sea," said Peter;
    "I know why you fret and chafe;
You would like to spoil our lands and homes;
    But our sluices keep you safe!"

But hark! Through the noise of waters
    Comes a low, clear, trickling sound;
And the child's face pales with terror,
    And his blossoms drop to the ground.
He is up the bank in a moment,
    And, stealing through the sand,
He sees a stream not yet so large
    As his slender, childish hand.
'Tis a leak in the dike! He is but a boy,
    Unused to fearful scenes;
But, young as he is, he has learned to know,
The dreadful thing that means.

A leak in the dike! The stoutest heart
Grows faint that cry to hear,
And the bravest man in all the land
Turns white with mortal fear.

For he knows the smallest leak may grow
To a flood in a single night;
And he knows the strength of the cruel sea
When loosed in its angry might.

And the boy! He has seen the danger,
And, shouting a wild alarm,
He forces back the weight of the sea
With the strength of his single arm!

He listens for the joyful sound
Of a footstep passing nigh;
And lays his ear to the ground, to catch
The answer to his cry.

And he hears the rough winds blowing,
And the waters rise and fall,
But never an answer comes to him,
Save the echo of his call.

He sees no hope, no succor,
His feeble voice is lost;
Yet what shall he do but watch and wait,
Though he perish at his post!

So, faintly calling and crying
Till the sun is under the sea;
Crying and moaning till the stars
Come out for company;
He thinks of his brother and sister,
Asleep in their safe warm bed.
He thinks of his father and mother,  
Of himself as dying — and dead;  
And of how, when the night is over,  
They must come and find him at last:  
But he never thinks he can leave the place  
Where duty holds him fast.

The good dame in the cottage  
Is up and astir with the light,  
For the thought of her little Peter  
Has been with her all night.  
And now she watches the pathway,  
As yester eve she had done;  
But what does she see so strange and black  
Against the rising sun?  
Her neighbors are bearing between them  
Something straight to her door;  
Her child is coming home, but not  
As he ever came before!

"He is dead!" she cries; "my darling!"  
And the startled father hears,  
And comes and looks the way she looks,  
And fears the thing she fears:  
Till a glad shout from the bearers  
Thrills the stricken man and wife—  
"Give thanks, for your son has saved our land,  
And God has saved his life!"

So, there in the morning sunshine  
They knelt about the boy;  
And every head was bared and bent  
In tearful, reverent joy.
'T is many a year since then; but still,
    When the sea roars like a flood,
Their boys are taught what a boy can do
    Who is brave and true and good.
For every man in that country
    Takes his son by the hand,
And tells him of little Peter,
    Whose courage saved the land.

They have many a valiant hero,
    Remembered through the years:
But never one whose name so oft
    Is named with loving tears.
And his deed shall be sung by the cradle,
    And told to the child on the knee,
So long as the dikes of Holland
    Divide the land from the sea!

THE FROST SPIRIT

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes!
    You may trace his footsteps now
On the naked woods and the blasted fields and the
    brown hill's withered brow.
He has smitten the leaves of the gray old trees where
    their pleasant green came forth,
And the winds, which follow wherever he goes, have
    shaken them down to earth.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes!
    from the frozen Labrador,
From the icy bridge of the Northern seas, which the
white bear wanders o’er,
Where the fisherman’s sail is stiff with ice, and the
luckless forms below
In the sunless cold of the lingering night into marble
statues grow!

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes!
on the rushing Northern blast,
And the dark Norwegian pines have bowed as his
fearful breath went past.
With an unscorched wing he has hurried on, where
the fires of Hecla glow
On the darkly beautiful sky above and the ancient ice
below.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes!
and the quiet lake shall feel
The torpid touch of his glazing breath, and ring to
the skater’s heel;
And the streams which danced on the broken rocks,
or sang to the leaning grass,
Shall bow again to their winter chain, and in mournful
silence pass.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes!
Let us meet him as we may,
And turn with the light of the parlor-fire his evil
power away;
And gather closer the circle round, when that fire-
light dances high,
And laugh at the shriek of the baffled Friend as his
sounding wing goes by!
CHRISTMAS EVERYWHERE

Phillips Brooks

EVERYWHERE, everywhere, Christmas to-night!
Christmas in lands of the fir-tree and pine,
Christmas in lands of the palm-tree and vine,
Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white,
Christmas where cornfields lie sunny and bright.  5

Christmas where children are hopeful and gay,
Christmas where old men are patient and gray,
Christmas where peace, like a dove in his flight,
Broods o’er brave men in the thick of the fight;
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night!  10

For the Christ-child who comes is the Master of all;
No palace too great, and no cottage too small.

CHRISTMAS TIDE

Richard Burton

Christmas time is a time of cold,
Of weathers bleak and of winds a-blow;
Never a flower — fold on fold
Of grace and beauty — tops the snow
Or breaks the black and bitter mold.  5

And yet ’t is warm — for the chill and gloom
Glow with love and with childhood’s glee;
And yet ’t is sweet — with the rich perfume
Of sacrifice and of charity.
Where are flowers more fair to see?
From the icy bridge of the Northern seas, which the
white bear wanders o’er,
Where the fisherman’s sail is stiff with ice, and the
luckless forms below
In the sunless cold of the lingering night into marble
statues grow!

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RICHARD BURTON

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Of weathers bleak and of winds a-blow;
Never a flower — fold on fold
Of grace and beauty — tops the snow
Or breaks the black and bitter mold.

And yet 'tis warm — for the chill and gloom
Glow with love and with childhood's glee;
And yet 'tis sweet — with the rich perfume
Of sacrifice and of charity.

Where are flowers more fair to see?
Christmas tide, it is warm and sweet;  
A whole world's heart at a Baby's feet!

CHRISTMAS

IN MEMORIAM — CVI

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhyme  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.
Ring out false pride in place and blood,
    The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
    Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
    The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

KING SOLOMON AND THE ANTS

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Out from Jerusalem
    The king rode with his great
War' chiefs and lords of state,
And Sheba's queen with them;

Comely, but black withal,
    To whom, per chance, belongs
That wondrous Song of songs,
Sensuous and mystical,

Whereto devout souls turn
    In fond, ecstatic dream,
And through its earth-born theme
The Love of loves discern.
Proud in the Syrian sun,
   In gold and purple sheen,
   The dusky Ethiop queen
Smiled on King Solomon.

Wisest of men, he knew
   The languages of all
   The creatures great or small
That trod the earth or flew.

   Across an ant-hill led
       The king's path, and he heard
       Its small folk, and their word
He thus interpreted:

"Here comes the king men greet
   As wise and good and just,
   To crush us in the dust
Under his heedless feet."

The great king bowed his head,
   And saw the wide surprise
   Of the Queen of Sheba's eyes
As he told her what they said.

"O king!" she whispered sweet,
   "Too happy fate have they
   Who perish in thy way
Beneath thy gracious feet!

"Thou of the God-lent crown,
   Shall these vile creatures dare
   Murmur against thee where
The knees of kings kneel down?"
“Nay,” Solomon replied,
   “The wise and strong should seek
   The welfare of the weak,”
And turned his horse aside.

His train, with quick alarm,
   Curved with their leader round
   The ant-hill’s peopled mound,
And left it free from harm.

The jewelled head bent low;
   “O king!” she said, “henceforth
   The secret of thy worth
And wisdom well I know.

“Happy must be the State
   Whose ruler heedeth more
   The murmurs of the poor
Than flatteries of the great.”

SELECTIONS FROM SNOW-BOUND

John Greenleaf Whittier

THE MOTHER

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cocheco town,
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.

Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
So rich and picturesque and free,
(The common unrhymed poetry
Of simple life and country ways,)
The story of her early days,—
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
We stole with her a frightened look
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country-side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
The loon's weird laughter far away;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.

THE SISTER

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed in the unfading green
And holy peace of Paradise.
Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
    Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago: —
The chill weight of the winter snow
    For months upon her grave has lain;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
    And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak,
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
    Am I not richer than of old?

THE SCHOOLMASTER

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school

This schoolmaster was George Haskell, a native of Har-
Held at the fire his favored place;
Its warm glow lit a laughing face
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
The uncertain prophecy of beard.
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
Played cross-pins on my uncle’s hat,
Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth’s college halls.
Born the wild Northern hills among,
From whence his yeoman father wrung
By patient toil subsistence scant,
Not competence and yet not want,
He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way;
Could doff at ease his scholar’s gown
To peddle wares from town to town;
Or through the long vacation’s reach
In lonely lowland districts teach,
Where all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round,
The moonlit skater’s keen delight,
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
The rustic party, with its rough
Accompaniment of blind-man’s-buff,
And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,
His winter task a pastime made.
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame’s winding-yarn,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
’Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Arachthus took
The guise of any grist-mill brook,
And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.

CONDUCTOR BRADLEY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

CONDUCTOR BRADLEY, (always may his name
be said with reverence!) as the swift doom came,
sitten to death, a crushed and mangled frame,

Nk, with the brake he grasped just where he stood
Do the utmost that a brave man could,
And die, if needful, as a true man should.

En stooped above him; women dropped their tears
That poor wreck beyond all hopes or fears,
At in the strength and glory of his years.

39. Pindus is the mountain chain which, running from north
south, nearly bisects Greece. Five rivers take their rise from
a central peak, the Aös, the Arachthus, the Haliacmon, the
néus, and the Achetös.
1. A railway conductor who lost his life in an accident on a
unsectient railway, May 9, 1873.
What heard they?  Lo! the ghastly lips of pain,
Dead to all thought save duty's, moved again:
"Put out the signals for the other train!"

No nobler utterance since the world began
From lips of saint or martyr ever ran,
Electric, through the sympathies of man.

Ah me! how poor and noteless seem to this
The sick-bed dramas of self-consciousness,
Our sensual fears of pain and hopes of bliss!

Oh, grand, supreme endeavor!  Not in vain
That last brave act of failing tongue and brain!
Freighted with life the downward rushing train,

Following the wrecked one, as wave follows wave,
Obeyed the warning which the dead lips gave.
Others he saved, himself he could not save.

Nay, the lost life was saved.  He is not dead
Who in his record still the earth shall tread
With God's clear aureole shining round his head.

We bow as in the dust, with all our pride
Of virtue dwarfed the noble deed beside.
God give us grace to live as Bradley died!
CONCORD HYMN

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE MONUMENT,

APRIL 19, 1836

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April’s breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On the green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

3. Does this shaft mark the spot where the farmers stood, or where the British fell? Read Emerson’s brief Address at the Hundredth Anniversary of the Concord Fight, April 19, 1875, the last piece written out with his own hand. (Cooke, 182.)
THE FLOWER OF LIBERTY

Oliver Wendell Holmes

What flower is this that greets the morn,
Its hues from Heaven so freshly born?
With burning star and flaming band
It kindles all the sunset land:
Oh tell us what its name may be,—
Is this the Flower of Liberty?
It is the banner of the free,
The starry Flower of Liberty!

In savage Nature's far abode
Its tender seed our fathers sowed;
The storm-winds rocked its swelling bud,
Its opening leaves were streaked with blood,
Till lo! earth's tyrants shook to see
The full-blown Flower of Liberty!
Then hail the banner of the free,
The starry Flower of Liberty!

Behold its streaming rays unite,
One mingling flood of braided light,—
The red that fires the Southern rose,
With spotless white from Northern snows,
And, spangled o'er its azure, see
The sister Stars of Liberty!
Then hail the banner of the free,
The starry Flower of Liberty!

The blades of heroes fence it round,
Where'er it springs is holy ground:
From tower and dome its glories spread;
It waves where lonely sentries tread;
It makes the land as ocean free,
And plants an empire on the sea!

Then hail the banner of the free,
The starry Flower of Liberty!

Thy sacred leaves, fair Freedom's flower,
Shall ever float on dome and tower,
To all their heavenly colors true,
In blackening frost or crimson dew,—
And God love us as we love thee,
Thrice holy Flower of Liberty!

Then hail the banner of the free,
The starry Flower of Liberty!

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SONG OF MARION'S MEN

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Our band is few but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress-tree;
We know the forest round us,
As seamen know the sea.
We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,

The exploits of General Francis Marion, the famous par-
warrior of South Carolina, form an intensely inter-
er in the annals of the American Revolution.
Its safe and silent islands
   Within the dark morass.

   Woe to the English soldiery
   That little dread us near!
On them shall light at midnight
   A strange and sudden fear:
When, waking to their tents on fire,
   They grasp their arms in vain,
And they who stand to face us
   Are beat to earth again;
And they who fly in terror deem
   A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
   Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release
   From danger and from toil:
We talk the battle over,
   And share the battle’s spoil.
The woodland rings with laugh and she
   As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
   To crown the soldier’s cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
   That in the pine-top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly
   On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
   The band that Marion leads—
The glitter of their rifles,
   The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb
   Across the moonlight plain;
'Tis life to feel the night-wind
   That lifts the tossing mane.
A moment in the British camp—
   A moment — and away
Back to the pathless forest,
   Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
   Grave men with hoary hairs;
Their hearts are all with Marion,
   For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band
   With kindliest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
   And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
   And lay them down no more
Till we have driven the Briton,
   Forever, from our shore.

THE VOICE OF SPRING

FELICIA D. HEMANS

I come, I come! ye have called me long—
I come o'er the mountains with light and song!
Ye may trace my step o'er the wakening earth
By the winds which tell of the violet's birth,
By the primrose stars in the shadowy grass,
By the green leaves opening as I pass.
I have breathed on the South, and the chestnut flowers
By thousands have burst from the forest bowers,
And the ancient graves and the fallen fanes
Are veiled with wreaths on Italian plains; —
But it is not for me, in my hour of bloom,
To speak of the ruin or the tomb!

I have looked on the hills of the stormy North,
And the larch has hung all his tassels forth,
The fisher is out on the sunny sea,
And the reindeer bounds o’er the pastures free,
And the pine has a fringe of softer green,
And the moss looks bright where my foot hath been.

I have sent through the wood-paths a glowing sigh,
And called out each voice of the deep-blue sky;
From the night-bird’s lay through the starry time,
In the groves of the soft Hesperian clime,
To the swan’s wild note by the Iceland lakes,
When the dark fir branch into verdure breaks.

From the streams and founts I have loosed the chain;
They are sweeping on to the silvery main,
They are flashing down from the mountain brows,
They are flinging spray o’er the forest boughs,
They are bursting fresh from their sparry caves,
And the earth resounds with the joy of waves!

Come forth, O ye children of gladness! come!
Where the violets lie may be now your home.
Ye of the rose lip and dew-bright eye,
And the bounding footstep, to meet me fly!
With the lyre, and the wreath, and the joyous lay,
Come forth to the sunshine — I may not stay.
Away from the dwellings of careworn men,
The waters are sparkling in grove and glen!
Away from the chamber and sullen hearth,
The young leaves are dancing in breezy mirth!
Their light stems thrill to the wildwood strains,
And youth is abroad in my green domains.

But ye! — ye are changed since ye met me last!
There is something bright from your features passed!
There is that come over your brow and eye
Which speaks of a world where the flowers must die!
— Ye smile! but your smile hath a dimness yet;
O, what have you looked on since last we met?

Ye are changed, ye are changed! — and I see not here
All whom I saw in the vanished year!
There were graceful heads, with their ringlets bright,
Which tossed in the breeze with a play of light;
There were eyes in whose glistening laughter lay
No faint remembrance of dull decay!

There were steps that flew o'er the cowslip's head,
As if for a banquet all earth were spread;
There were voices that rang through the sapphire sky,
And had not a sound of mortality!
Are they gone? is their mirth from the mountains passed?
Ye have looked on death since ye met me last!

I know whence the shadow comes o'er you now,—
Ye have strewn the dust on the sunny brow!
Ye have given the lovely to Earth's embrace,—
She hath taken the fairest of Beauty's race,
With their laughing eyes and their festal crown:
They are gone from amongst you in silence down!

They are gone from amongst you, the young a fair,
Ye have lost the gleam of their shining hair!
But I know of a land where there falls no blight,—
I shall find them there, with their eyes of light!—
Where Death midst the blooms of the morn dwell,
I tarry no longer, — farewell, farewell!

The summer is coming, on soft wings borne,—
Ye may press the grape, ye may bind the corn!
For me, I depart to a brighter shore,—
Ye are marked by care, ye are mine no more;
I go where the loved who have left you dwell,
And the flowers are not Death’s. Fare ye well, farewell!

A LEGEND OF THE NORTHLAND

Phoebe Cary

Away, away in the Northland,
Where the hours of the day are few,
And the nights are so long in winter,
They cannot sleep them through;

Where they harness the swift reindeer
To the sledges, when it snows;
And the children look like bear’s cubs
In their funny, furry clothes:
They tell them a curious story —  
I don’t believe ’t is true;  
And yet you may learn a lesson  
If I tell the tale to you.

Once, when the good Saint Peter  
Lived in the world below,  
And walked about it, preaching,  
Just as he did, you know;

He came to the door of a cottage,  
In travelling round the earth,  
Where a little woman was making cakes,  
And baking them on the hearth;

And being faint with fasting,  
For the day was almost done,  
He asked her, from her store of cakes,  
To give him a single one.

So she made a very little cake,  
But as it baking lay,  
She looked at it, and thought it seemed  
Too large to give away.

Therefore she kneaded another,  
And still a smaller one;  
But it looked, when she turned it over,  
As large as the first had done.

Then she took a tiny scrap of dough,  
And rolled and rolled it flat;  
And baked it thin as a wafer —  
But she could n’t part with that.
For she said, "My cakes that seem too small
    When I eat of them myself,
Are yet too large to give away."
    So she put them on the shelf.

Then good Saint Peter grew angry,
    For he was hungry and faint;
And surely such a woman
    Was enough to provoke a saint.

And he said, "You are far too selfish
    To dwell in a human form,
To have both food and shelter,
    And fire to keep you warm.

"Now, you shall build as the birds do,
    And shall get your scanty food
By boring, and boring, and boring,
    All day in the hard dry wood."

Then up she went through the chimney,
    Never speaking a word,
And out of the top flew a woodpecker,
    For she was changed to a bird.

She had a scarlet cap on her head,
    And that was left the same,
But all the rest of her clothes were burned
    Black as a coal in the flame.

And every country school-boy
    Has seen her in the wood;
Where she lives in the trees till this very day,
    Boring and boring for food."
And this is the lesson she teaches:
   Live not for yourself alone,
Lest the needs you will not pity
   Shall one day be your own.

Give plenty of what is given to you,
   Listen to pity's call;
Don't think the little you give is great,
   And the much you get is small.

Now, my little boy, remember that,
   And try to be kind and good,
When you see the woodpecker's sooty dress,
   And see her scarlet hood.

You may n't be changed to a bird, though you live
   As selfishly as you can;
But you will be changed to a smaller thing —
   A mean and selfish man.

THE LEGEND OF THE CROSSBILL

(From the German of Julius Mosen)

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

On the cross the dying Saviour
   Heavenward lifts his eyelids calm,
Feels, but scarcely feels, a trembling
   In his pierced and bleeding palm.
And by all the world forsaken,
Sees He how with zealous care
At the ruthless nail of iron
A little bird is striving there.

Stained with blood and never tiring,
With its beak it doth not cease,
From the cross 't would free the Saviour
Its Creator's Son release.

And the Saviour speaks in mildness:
"Blest be thou of all the good!
Bear, as token of this moment,
Marks of blood and holy rood!"

And that bird is called the crossbill;
Covered all with blood so clear,
In the groves of pine it singeth
Songs, like legends, strange to hear.

TO A WATERFOWL

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

This poem was one of eight, namely: The Ages, To a Waterfowl,
Version of a Fragment from Simonides, Inscription for the Entrance
to a Wood, The Yellow Violet, Song, Green River, Thanatopsis, which
formed a little collection of his poems put forth by Bryant in 1821,
when he was in his twenty-seventh year. It marks the beginning
of the classical period of American poetry. It was eighteen years
later that Longfellow's Voices of the Night was published. Shelley's
poem, To a Skylark, was written in 1820.

WHITHER, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue,
Thy solitary way?
Vainly the Fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or margin of river wide,
Or where the rolling billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

7. Bryant had written: —

"As darkly painted on the crimson sky,"

but before publishing had changed the line to its present form. He was at the time in frequent correspondence with Richard Henry Dana, father of the author of Two Years before the Mast, and himself a poet, and fastidious critic. Dana wrote: —

"In that delicatetest of delicate little poems, the Waterfowl, I am told that you have substituted some commonplace word — I forget it now — for 'painted.' Why! it adorns the whole picture, makes complete to the mind (the poetical, susceptible mind, I mean) the crimson background and the darkly floating bird, and envelopes him in an atmosphere all aglow, and rounds the several objects with a harmonizing whole." To this, Bryant replied in defence of his change: —

"I was never satisfied with the word 'painted,' because the next line is: —

'Thy figure floats along.'

Now, from a very early period — I am not sure that it was not from the very time that I wrote the poem — there seemed to me an incongruity between the idea of a figure painted on the sky and a figure moving, 'floating' across its face. If the figure were painted, then it would be fixed. The incongruity distressed me, and I could not be easy until I had made the change. I preferred a plain prosaic expression to a picturesque one which seemed to me false. 'Painted' expresses well the depth and strength of color which fixed my attention when I saw the bird, — for the scene was founded on a real incident, — but it contradicted the motion of the winds and the progress of the bird through the air. So you have my defence."
There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast —
The desert and illimitable air —
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend
Soon, o’er thy sheltered nest.

Thou’rt gone, the abyss of heaven-
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

THE RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET

Henry van Dyke

I

Where’s your kingdom, little king?
Where’s the land you call your own,
Where’s your palace, and your throne?
Fluttering lightly on the wing
Through the blossom-world of May,
Whither lies your royal way?
Where's the realm that owns your sway,
Little king?

Far to northward lies a land,
Where the trees together stand
Closer than the blades of wheat,
When the summer is complete.
Like a robe the forests hide
Lonely vale and mountain side:
Balsam, hemlock, spruce, and pine,—
All those mighty trees are mine.
There's a river flowing free;
All its waves belong to me.
There's a lake so clear and bright
Stars shine out of it all night,
And the rowan-berries red
Round it like a girdle spread.
Feasting plentiful and fine,
Air that cheers the heart like wine,
Royal pleasures by the score,
Wait for me in Labrador.
There I'll build my dainty nest;
There I'll fix my court and rest;
There from dawn to dark I'll sing:
Happy kingdom! Lucky king!

II

Back again, my little king!
Is your happy kingdom lost
To that rebel knave, Jack Frost?
Have you felt the snow-flakes' sting?
   Autumn is a rude disrober;
Houseless, homeless in October,
Whither now? Your plight is sober,
   Exiled king!

Far to southward lie the regions
Where my loyal flower-legions
Hold possession of the year,
Filling every mouth with cheer.
Christmas wakes the winter rose;
New Year daffodils unclose;
Yellow jasmine through the woods
Runs in March with golden floods,
Dropping from the tallest trees
Shining streams that never freeze.
Thither I must find my way,
Fly by night and feed by day, —
Till I see the southern moon
Glistening on the broad lagoon,
Where the cypress' vivid green,
And the dark magnolia's sheen,
Weave a shelter round my home.
There the snow-storms never come:
There the bannered mosses gray
In the breezes gently sway,
Hanging low on every side
Round the covert where I hide.
There I hold my winter court,
Full of merriment and sport:
There I take my ease and sing:
Happy kingdom! Lucky king!
III

Little boaster, vagrant king!
Neither north nor south is yours:
You've no kingdom that endures.
Wandering every fall and spring,
With your painted crown so slender,
And your talk of royal splendor,
Must I call you a Pretender,
Landless king?

Never king by right divine
Ruled a richer realm than mine!
What are lands and golden crowns,
Armies, fortresses, and towns,
Jewels, sceptres, robes, and rings,—
What are these to song and wings?
 Everywhere that I can fly,
There I own the earth and sky;
 Everywhere that I can sing,
There I'm happy as a king.
SEVENTH YEAR

YUSSOUF

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

A stranger came one night to Yussouf's tent, Saying, "Behold one outcast and in dread, Against whose life the bow of power is bent, Who flies, and hath not where to lay his head; I come to thee for shelter and for food, To Yussouf, called through all our tribes 'The Good.'"

"This tent is mine," said Yussouf, "but no more Than it is God's; come in, and be at peace; Freely shalt thou partake of all my store As I of His who buildeth over these Our tents his glorious roof of night and day, And at whose door none ever yet heard Nay."

So Yussouf entertained his guest that night, And, waking him ere day, said: "Here is gold; My swiftest horse is saddled for thy flight; Depart before the prying day grow bold." As one lamp lights another, nor grows less, So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.

That inward light the stranger's face made grand, Which shines from all self-conquest; kneeling low,
He bowed his forehead upon Yussouf's hand, sobbing: "O Sheik, I cannot leave thee so; I will repay thee; all this thou hast done Unto that Ibrahim who slew thy son!"

Take thrice the gold," said Yussouf, "for with thee
Into the desert, never to return,
My one black thought shall ride away from me;
First-born, for whom by day and night I yearn,
Balanced and just are all of God's decrees;
Thou art avenged, my first-born, sleep in peace!"

THE SHEPHERD OF KING ADMETUS

James Russell Lowell

There came a youth upon the earth,
Some thousand years ago,
Whose slender hands were nothing worth,
Whether to plough, or reap, or sow.

Upon an empty tortoise-shell
He stretched some chords, and drew
Music that made men's bosoms swell
Fearless, or brimmed their eyes with dew.

Then King Admetus, one who had
Pure taste by right divine,
Decreed his singing not too bad
To hear between the cups of wine:
And so, well pleased with being soothed
    Into a sweet half-sleep,
Three times his kingly beard he smoothed,
And made him viceroy o'er his sheep.

His words were simple words enough,
    And yet he used them so,
That what in other mouths was rough
In his seemed musical and low.

Men called him but a shiftless youth,
    In whom no good they saw;
And yet, unwittingly, in truth,
They made his careless words their law.

They knew not how he learned at all,
    For idly, hour by hour,
He sat and watched the dead leaves fall,
Or mused upon a common flower.

It seemed the loveliness of things
    Did teach him all their use,
For in mere weeds, and stones, and springs,
He found a healing power profuse.

Men granted that his speech was wise,
    But, when a glance they caught
Of his slim grace and woman's eyes,
They laughed, and called him good-for-naught.

Yet after he was dead and gone,
    And e'en his memory dim,
Earth seemed more sweet to live upon,
More full of love, because of him.
And day by day more holy grew
   Each spot where he had trod,
Till after-poets only knew
Their first-born brother as a god.

THE HUSKERS

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

It was late in mild October, and the long autumnal rain
Had left the summer harvest-fields all green with grass again;
The first sharp frosts had fallen, leaving all the woodlands gay
With the hues of summer’s rainbow, or the meadow-flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the sun rose broad and red,
At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened as he sped;
Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened and subdued,
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly pictured wood.

And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to the night,
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with yellow light;
Slanting through the painted beeches, he glorified the hill;
   And beneath it, pond and meadow lay bright
And shouting boys in woodland haunts caught glimpses of that sky,
Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and laughed, they knew not why;
And school-girls, gay with aster-flowers, beside the meadow brooks,
Mingled the glow of autumn with the sunshine of sweet looks.

From spire and barn looked westerly the patient weathercocks;
But even the birches on the hill stood motionless as rocks.
No sound was in the woodlands, save the squirrel's dropping shell,
And the yellow leaves among the boughs, low rustling as they fell.

The summer grains were harvested; the stubble-fields lay dry,
Where June winds rolled, in light and shade, the pale green waves of rye;
But still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys fringed with wood,
Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn crop stood.

Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks that, dry and sere,
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone out the yellow ear;
neath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a verdant fold,  
d glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin’s sphere of gold.

ere wrought the busy harvesters; and many a creaking wain  
ere slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk and grain;  
l broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down, at last,  
d like a merry guest’s farewell, the day in brightness passed.

d lo! as through the western pines, on meadow, stream, and pond,  
emed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire beyond,  
ly o’er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder glory shone,  
d the sunset and the moonrise were mingled into one!

thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed away,  
d deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil shadows lay;  
many a brown old farm-house, and hamlet without name,  
ir milking and their home-tasks done, the merry huskers came.

ung o’er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks in the mow,  
one dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant scene below;
And so, well pleased with being soothed
   Into a sweet half-sleep,
Three times his kingly beard he smoothed,  15
And made him viceroy o'er his sheep.

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   And yet he used them so,
That what in other mouths was rough
In his seemed musical and low.  20

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   For idly, hour by hour,
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   Did teach him all their use,
For in mere weeds, and stones, and springs,
He found a healing power profuse.

Men granted that his speech was wise,
   But, when a glance they caught
Of his slim grace and woman's eyes,  35
They laughed, and called him good-for-naught.

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Till after-poets only knew
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Wrought the busy harvesters; and many a creaking wain
slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk and grain;
broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down, at last,
like a merry guest's farewell, the day in brightness passed.

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ed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire beyond,
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Into the quiet night the twilight lapsed away,
deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil shadows lay;
many a brown old farm-house, and hamlet without name,
milking and their home-tasks done, the merry huskers came.

O'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks in the mow,
dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant scene below;
136 POEMS FOR THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ea before,
And laughing eyes and busy hands and brow cheeks glimmering o'er.

Half hidden, in a quiet nook, serene of look an heart,
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart
While up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling in its shade,
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happy children played.

Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden young and fair,
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of soft brown hair,
The master of the village school, sleek of hair and smooth of tongue,
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a husking-ballad sung.

THE GIFT OF TRITEMIUS

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

TRITEMIUS of Herbipolis, one day,
While kneeling at the altar's foot to pray,
Alone with God, as was his pious choice,
Heard from without a miserable voice,
A sound which seemed of all sad things to tell,
As of a lost soul crying out of hell.
Thereat the Abbot paused; the chain whereby
His thoughts went upward broken by that cry;
And, looking from the casement, saw below
A wretched woman, with gray hair a-flow,
And withered hands held up to him, who cried
For alms as one who might not be denied.

She cried, “For the dear love of Him who gave
His life for ours, my child from bondage save,—
My beautiful, brave first-born, chained with slaves
In the Moor’s galley, where the sun-smit waves
Lap the white walls of Tunis!” — “What I can
I give,” Tritemius said, “my prayers.” — “O man
Of God!” she cried, for grief had made her bold,
“Mock me not thus; I ask not prayers, but gold.
Words will not serve me, alms alone suffice;
Even while I speak, perchance my first-born dies.”

“Woman,” Tritemius answered, “from our door
None go unfed, hence are we always poor;
A single soldo is our only store.
Thou hast our prayers; what can we give thee more?”

“Give me,” she said, “the silver candlesticks
On either side of the great crucifix.
God well may spare them on His errands sped,
Or He can give you golden ones instead.”

Then spake Tritemius: “Even as thy word,
Woman, so be it! (Our most gracious Lord,
Who loveth mercy more than sacrifice,
Pardon me if a human soul I prize
Above the gifts upon his altar piled!
Take what thou askest, and redeem thy child.

But his hand trembled as the holy alms
He placed within the beggar’s eager palms;
And as she vanished down the linden shade,
He bowed his head and for forgiveness prayed.

So the day passed, and when the twilight came
He woke to find the chapel all aflame,
And, dumb with grateful wonder, to behold
Upon the altar candelsticks of gold!

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

[On the 21st of July, 1865, Harvard University welcomed by those of its students and graduates who had fought in the war for Union. By exercises in the church and at the festival which followed the services of the dead and the living were commemorated. It was on this occasion that Mr. Lowell recited the following ode.]

I

Weak-winged is song,
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
We seem to do them wrong,
Bringing our robin’s-leaf to deck their hearse,
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
Our trivial song to honor those who come
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:
Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,
A gracious memory to buoy up and save
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave
Of the unventurous throng.

II

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,
And offered their fresh lives to make it good.

No lore of Greece or Rome,
No science peddling with the names of things,
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
Can lift our life with wings
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,
And lengthen out our dates
With that clear fame whose memory sings
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:

Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
Not such the trumpet-call
Of thy diviner mood,
That could thy sons entice

From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,
Into War's tumult rude;
But rather far that stern device

The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood
In the dim, unventured wood,
The Veritas that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath,

37. An early emblem of Harvard College was a shield with Veritas (truth) upon three open books. This device is still used.
Life of whate’er makes life worth living,
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the givin’

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life’s best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her;
But these, our brothers, fought for her,
At life’s dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:
Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of, dare to do;
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger’s sweetness round her.
Where faith made whole with deed
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed,
They saw her plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
Into the silent hollow of the past;
What is there that abides
To make the next age better for the last?
Is earth too poor to give us
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?
Some more substantial boon
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle
moon?
The little that we see
From doubt is never free;
The little that we do
Is but half-nobly true;
With our laborious hiving
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
Only secure in every one's conniving,
A long account of nothings paid with loss,
Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,
After our little hour of strut and rave,
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,
Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.
Ah, there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,
Something that gives our feeble light
A high immunity from Night,
Something that leaps life's narrow bars
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven;
A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than the Day; 100
A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence;
A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,
Still glimmering from the heights of undegenerate years.

V

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery meads,
To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds;
But up the steep, amid the wrath
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and stay
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword 120
Dreams in its easeful sheath;
But some day the live coal behind the thought,
Whether from Baal's stone obscene,
Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men:
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my praise,
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth;
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"
Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate;
But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God’s plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,
Who stands self-poised on manhood’s solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind’s unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again
thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o’er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human-kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest sta
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature’s equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch’s men talked with us face
face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innate weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.

✓ Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;
Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal name it masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap,
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
*set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks.*
Shall win man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we enwreathe
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine them, seal
What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our year,
Save that our brothers found this better way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 't was they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.

We welcome back our bravest and our best;—
Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear:
I sweep them for a paean, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge, and die away in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead.

"Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, wisdom."
Who went, and who return not. — Say not so!
'T is not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave; 255
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack: 260
I see them muster in a gleaming row,
With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow, 265
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays 270
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

IX

But is there hope to save
Even this ethereal essence from the grave?
What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong
Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song? 275

Before my musing eye
The mighty ones of old sweep by,
Disvoiced now and insubstantial things,

253. See the Book of Numbers, chapter xiii.
255. Compare Gray's line in Elegy in a Country Churchyard,
    "The paths of glory lead but to the grave."
As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,
Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,
And many races, nameless long ago,
To darkness driven by that imperious gust
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:
O visionary world, condition strange,
Where naught abiding is but only Change,
Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still shift
and range!
Shall we to more continuance make pretence?
Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;
And, bit by bit,
The cunning years steal all from us but woe:
Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest sow.

But, when we vanish hence,
Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,
Save to make green their little length of sods,
Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?
Was dying all they had the skill to do?
That were not fruitless: but the Soul resents
Such short-lived service, as if blind events
Ruled without her, or earth could so endure;
She claims a more divine investiture
Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;
Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;
Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,
Gives eyes to mountains blind,
Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,
And her clear trump sings succor everywhere
By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;
For soul inherits all that soul could dare:
Yea, Manhood hath a wider span
And larger privilege of life than man.
The single deed, the private sacrifice,
So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears,
Is covered up ere long from mortal eyes
With thoughtless drift of the deciduous years;
But that high privilege that makes all men peers,
That leap of heart whereby a people rise
Up to a noble anger's height,
And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink, but grow
more bright,
That swift validity in noble veins,
Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,
Of being set on flame
By the pure fire that flies all contact base,
But wraps its chosen with angelic might,
These are imperishable gains,
Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
These hold great futures in their lusty reins
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

X
Who now shall sneer?
Who dare again to say we trace
Our lines to a plebeian race?
Roundhead and Cavalier!
Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
They flit across the ear:
That is best blood that hath most iron in 't,
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
For what makes manhood dear.
Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods crawl
That looked askance and hated; a light scor
Plays o'er her mouth, as round her mighty k
She calls her children back, and waits the m
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject s

XII
Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found rele
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His wa
And through thine enemies hath wrought thype
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised br
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!
CHILDREN

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

COME to me, O ye children!
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet’s flow,
But in mine is the wind of Autumn
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood,—

1 This poem of Longfellow’s and the four following — The Old Clock on the Stairs, The Herons of Elmwood, The Two Angels, and To the River Charles — refer to his Cambridge home. So, so, do The Children’s Hour, page 14, and The Village Black-ash, page 37.
That to the world are children;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children!
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIR

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw;

2. The house thus described was that now known as
kett mansion in Pittsfield, once the home of Mrs. Loi
maternal grandfather. In the poet's own house in C
there also stood a tall old clock on the stairs.
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all, —
“Forever — never!
Never — forever!”

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass, —
“Forever — never!
Never — forever!”

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep’s fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber-door, —
“Forever — never!
Never — forever!”

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe, —
“Forever — never!
Never — forever!”

*In that mansion used to be*
*Free-hearted Hospitality;*
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—
"Forever — never!
Never — forever!"

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—
"Forever — never!
Never — forever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night;
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—
"Forever — never!
Never — forever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah! when shall they all meet again?"
As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply,—
"Forever — never!
Never — forever!"
Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear, —
Forever there, but never here!
The horloge of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly, —

"Forever — never!
Never — forever!"

THE HERONS OF ELMWOOD

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Warm and still is the summer night,
As here by the river’s brink I wander;
White overhead are the stars, and white
The glimmering lamps on the hillside yonder.

Silent are all the sounds of day;
Nothing I hear but the chirp of crickets,
And the cry of the herons winging their way
O’er the poet’s house in the Elmwood thickets.

Call to him, herons, as slowly you pass
To your roosts in the haunts of the exiled thrushes,
Sing him the song of the green morass,
And the tides that water the reeds and rushes.

Sing him the mystical Song of the Hern,
And the secret that baffles our utmost seeking;
For only a sound of lament we discern,
And cannot interpret the words you are speaking.

8. Elmwood, a short distance from Longfellow’s house, was
the home of his brother poet and friend, James Russell Lowell.
Sing of the air, and the wild delight
   Of wings that uplift and winds that uphold you;
The joy of freedom, the rapture of flight
   Through the drift of the floating mists that in you;

Of the landscape lying so far below,
   With its towns and rivers and desert places;
And the splendor of light above, and the glow
   Of the limitless, blue, ethereal spaces.

Ask him if songs of the Troubadours,
   Or of Minnesingers in old black-letter,
Sound in his ears more sweet than yours;
   And if yours are not sweeter and wilder and be

Sing to him, say to him, here at his gate,
   Where the boughs of the stately elms are meet;
Some one hath lingered to meditate,
   And send him unseen this friendly greeting;

That many another hath done the same,
   Though not by a sound was the silence broken;
The surest pledge of a deathless name
   Is the silent homage of thoughts unspoken.

THE TWO ANGELS

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
   Passed o'er our village as the morning broke
The dawn was on their faces, and beneath,
   The sombre houses hearsed with plumes of we
Their attitude and aspect were the same,
Alike their features and their robes of white;
But one was crowned with amaranth, as with flame,
And one with asphodels, like flakes of light.

I saw them pause on their celestial way;
Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed,
"Beat not so loud, my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest!"

And he who wore the crown of asphodels,
Descending, at my door began to knock,
And my soul sank within me, as in wells
The waters sink before an earthquake's shock.

I recognized the nameless agony,
The terror and the tremor and the pain,
That oft before had filled or haunted me,
And now returned with threefold strength again.

The door I opened to my heavenly guest,
And listened, for I thought I heard God's voice;
And, knowing whatsoever he sent was best,
Dared neither to lament nor to rejoice.

Then with a smile that filled the house with light,
"My errand is not Death, but Life," he said;
And ere I answered, passing out of sight,
On his celestial embassy he sped.

'Twas at thy door, O friend! and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath,
Pausing, descended, and with voice divine
Whispered a word that had a sound like Death.
Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
    A shadow on those features fair and thin;
And softly, from that hushed and darkened roon
    Two angels issued, where but one went in.

All is of God! If he but wave his hand,
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud,
Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,
    Lo! he looks back from the departing cloud.

Angels of Life and Death alike are his;
Without his leave they pass no threshold o’er
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,
Against his messengers to shut the door?

TO THE RIVER CHARLES

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

River! that in silence windest
    Through the meadows, bright and free,
Till at length thy rest thou findest
    In the bosom of the sea!

Four long years of mingled feeling,
    Half in rest, and half in strife,
I have seen thy waters stealing
    Onward, like the stream of life.

1. The river Charles flows in view of the mansion in Cambrié, which Mr. Longfellow began to occupy in the summer of 183
Thou hast taught me, Silent River!
    Many a lesson, deep and long;
Thou hast been a generous giver;
    I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illmess,
    I have watched thy current glide,
Till the beauty of its stillness
    Overflowed me, like a tide.

And in better hours and brighter,
    When I saw thy waters gleam,
I have felt my heart beat lighter,
    And leap onward with thy stream.

Not for this alone I love thee,
    Nor because thy waves of blue
From celestial seas above thee
    Take their own celestial hue.

Where yon shadowy woodlands hide thee,
    And thy waters disappear,
Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
    And have made thy margin dear.

More than this; — thy name reminds me
    Of three friends, all true and tried;
And that name, like magic, binds me
    Closer, closer to thy side.

The three friends hinted at were Charles Sumner, Charles
  sum, and Charles Amory.
Friends my soul with joy remembers!
How like quivering flames they start,
When I fan the living embers
On the hearthstone of my heart!

'Tis for this, thou Silent River!
That my spirit leans to thee;
Thou hast been a generous giver,
Take this idle song from me.

RHÆCUS

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

GOD sends his teachers unto every age,
To every clime, and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race:
Therefore each form of worship that hath sway
The life of man, and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge, reverence,
Infolds some germs of goodness and of right;
Else never had the eager soul, which loathes
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

There is an instinct in the human heart
Which makes that all the fables it hath coined
To justify the reign of its belief
And strengthen it by beauty's right divine,
Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,
Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful hands,
Points surely to the hidden springs of truth.
For, as in nature naught is made in vain,
But all things have within their hull of use
A wisdom and a meaning which may speak
Of spiritual secrets to the ear
Of spirit; so, in whatsoever the heart
Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,
To make its inspirations suit its creed,
And from the niggard hands of falsehood wring
Its needful food of truth, there ever is
A sympathy with Nature, which reveals,
Not less than her own works, pure gleams of light
And earnest parables of inward lore.
Hear now this fairy legend of old Greece,
As full of gracious youth and beauty still
As the immortal freshness of that grace
Carved for all ages on some Attic frieze.

A youth named Rhœcus, wandering in the wood,
Saw an old oak just trembling to its fall,
And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,
He propped its gray trunk with admiring care,
And with a thoughtless footstep loitered on.
But, as he turned, he heard a voice behind
That murmured "Rhœcus!" 'Twas as if the leaves,
Stirred by a passing breath, had murmured it,
And, while he paused bewildered, yet again
It murmured "Rhœcus!" softer than a breeze.
He started and beheld with dizzy eyes
What seemed the substance of a happy dream.
But still the bee came back, and thrice again
Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath.
Then through the window flew the wounded bee,
And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,
Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly
Against the red disk of the setting sun,—
And instantly the blood sank from his heart,
As if its very walls had caved away.
Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,
Ran madly through the city and the gate,
And o’er the plain, which now the wood’s long shade,
By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim,
Darkened wellnigh unto the city’s wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree,
And, listening fearfully, he heard once more
The low voice murmur “Rhœcus!” close at hand:
Whereat he looked around him, but could see
Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the oak.
Then sighed the voice, “O Rhœcus! nevermore
Shalt thou behold me or by day or night,
Me, who would fain have blessed thee with a love
More ripe and bounteous than ever yet
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart:
But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
And sent’st him back to me with bruised wings.
We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
We ever ask an undivided love,
And he who scorns the least of Nature’s works
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.
Farewell! for thou canst never see me more.”
Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,
Men did not think that happy things were dreams
Because they overstepped the narrow bourn
Of likelihood, but reverently deemed
Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful
To be the guerdon of a daring heart.
So Rhœcusc made no doubt that he was blest,
And all along unto the city's gate
Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he walked,
The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its wont,
And he could scarce believe he had not wings,
Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his veins
Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange.

Young Rhœucus had a faithful heart enough,
But one that in the present dwelt too much,
And, taking with blithe welcome whatsoe'er
Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in that,
Like the contented peasant of a vale,
Deemed it the world, and never looked beyond.
So, haply meeting in the afternoon
Some comrades who were playing at the dice,
He joined them, and forgot all else beside.

The dice were rattling at the merriest,
And Rhœcusc, who had met but sorry luck,
Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,
When through the room there hummed a yellow bee
That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped legs
As if to light. And Rhœcusc laughed and said,
Feeling how red and flushed he was with loss,
By Venus! does he take me for a rose?

And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.
But still the bee came back, and thrice again 
Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath. 
Then through the window flew the wounded bee 
And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes, 
Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly 
Against the red disk of the setting sun,— 
And instantly the blood sank from his heart, 
As if its very walls had caved away. 
Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth, 
Ran madly through the city and the gate, 
And o'er the plain, which now the wood's long shade, 
By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim, 
Darkened wellnigh unto the city's wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree, 
And, listening fearfully, he heard once more 
The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at hand. 
Whereat he looked around him, but could see 
Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the α. 
Then sighed the voice, "O Rhœcus! nevermore 
Shalt thou behold me or by day or night, 
Me, who would fain have blessed thee with a love 
More ripe and bounteous than ever yet 
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart: 
But thou didst scorn my humble messenger, 
And sent'st him back to me with bruised wings. 
We spirits only show to gentle eyes, 
We ever ask an undivided love, 
And he who scorns the least of Nature's works 
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all. 
Farewell! for thou canst never see me more."
Then Rhœcus beat his breast, and groaned aloud,
And cried, "Be pitiful! forgive me yet
This once, and I shall never need it more!"
"Alas!" the voice returned, "'tis thou art blind,
Not I unmerciful; I can forgive,
But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes;
Only the soul hath power o'er itself."
With that again there murmured "Nevermore!"
And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,
Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,
Like the long surf upon a distant shore,
Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down.
The night had gathered round him: o'er the plain
The city sparkled with its thousand lights,
And sounds of revel fell upon his ear
Harshly and like a curse; above, the sky,
With all its bright sublimity of stars,
Deepened, and on his forehead smote the breeze:
Beauty was all around him and delight,
But from that eve he was alone on earth.

TO THE DANDELION

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth, thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease;
'Tis the Spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:
Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
Some woodland gap, and of a sky above,
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move,
My childhood’s earliest thoughts are linked with thee; the sight of thee calls back the robin’s song.

Who, from the dark old tree beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety, steded as if I heard an angel sing

With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
hen thou, for all thy gold, so common art!

Thou teachest me to deem
ore sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,

Did we but pay the love we owe, And with a child’s undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God’s book.
EIGHTH YEAR

ABRAHAM DAVENPORT

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

The famous Dark Day of New England, May 19, 1780, was a physical puzzle for many years to our ancestors, but its occurrence brought something more than philosophical speculation into the minds of those who passed through it. The incident of Colonel Abraham Davenport's sturdy protest is a matter of history.

In the old days (a custom laid aside
With breeches and cocked hats) the people sent
Their wisest men to make the public laws.
And so, from a brown homestead, where the Sound
Drinks the small tribute of the Mianas,
Waved over by the woods of Rippowams,
And hallowed by pure lives and tranquil deaths,
Stamford sent up to the councils of the State
Wisdom and grace in Abraham Davenport.

'Twas on a May-day of the far old year
Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell
Over the bloom and sweet life of the Spring,
Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,
A horror of great darkness, like the night
In day of which the Norland sagas tell,—
The Twilight of the Gods. The low-hung sky
Was black with ominous clouds, save where its rim
Was fringed with a dull glow, like that which climbs
The crater's sides from the red hell below.
Birds ceased to sing, and all the barn-yard fowls 20
Roosted; the cattle at the pasture bars
Lowed, and looked homeward; bats on leathern wings
Flitted abroad; the sounds of labor died;
Men prayed, and women wept; all ears grew sharp
To hear the doom-blast of the trumpet shatter.
25
The black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ
Might look from the rent clouds, not as he looked
A loving guest at Bethany, but stern
As Justice and inexorable Law.

Meanwhile in the old State House, dim as ghosts,
Sat the lawgivers of Connecticut,
Trembling beneath their legislative robes.

"It is the Lord's Great Day! Let us adjourn,"
Some said; and then, as if with one accord,
All eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport.

He rose, slow cleaving with his steady voice
The intolerable hush. "This well may be
The Day of Judgment which the world awaits;
But be it so or not, I only know
My present duty, and my Lord's command
To occupy till He come. So at the post
Where He hath set me in His providence,
I choose, for one, to meet Him face to face,—
No faithless servant frightened from my task,
But ready when the Lord of the harvest calls;
45
And therefore, with all reverence, I would say,
Let God do His work, we will see to ours,
Bring in the candles." And they brought them in.
Then by the flaring lights the Speaker read
Albeit with husky voice and shaking hands,
An act to amend an act to regulate
The shad and alewive fisheries. Whereupon
Wisely and well spake Abraham Davenport,
Straight to the question, with no figures of sp
Save the ten Arab signs, yet not without
The shrewd dry humor natural to the man:
His awestruck colleagues listening all the whi.
Between the pauses of his argument,
To hear the thunder of the wrath of God
Break from the hollow trumpet of the cloud.

And there he stands in memory to this day.
Erect, self-poised, a rugged face, half seen
Against the background of unnatural dark,
A witness to the ages as they pass,
That simple duty hath no place for fear.

FOR AN AUTUMN FESTIVAL

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

The Persian’s flowery gifts, the shrine
Of fruitful Ceres charm no more;
The woven wreaths of oak and pine
Are dust along the Isthmian shore.

But beauty hath its homage still,
And nature holds us still in debt;
And woman’s grace and household skill,
And manhood’s toil are honored yet.
And we, to-day, amidst our flowers
   And fruits, have come to own again
The blessings of the summer hours,
   The early and the latter rain;

To see our Father's hand once more
   Reverse for us the plenteous horn
Of autumn, filled and running o'er
   With fruit, and flower, and golden corn!

Once more the liberal year laughs out
   O'er richer stores than gems or gold;
Once more with harvest-song and shout
   Is Nature's bloodless triumph told.

Our common mother rests and sings,
   Like Ruth, among her garnered sheaves;
Her lap is full of goodly things,
   Her brow is bright with autumn leaves.

Oh, favors every year made new!
   Oh, gifts with rain and sunshine sent!
The bounty overruns our due,
   The fulness shames our discontent.

We shut our eyes, the flowers bloom on;
   We murmur, but the corn-ears fill,
We choose the shadow, but the sun
   That casts it shines behind us still.

God gives us with our rugged soil
   The power to make it Eden-fair,
And richer fruits to crown our toil
   Than summer-wedded islands bear.
Who murmurs at his lot to-day?
Who scorns his native fruit and bloom?
Or sighs for dainties far away,
Beside the bounteous board of home?

Thank Heaven, instead, that Freedom's arm
Can change a rocky soil to gold,—
That brave and generous lives can warm
A clime with northern ices cold.

And let these altars, wreathed with flowers
And piled with fruits, awake again
Thanksgivings for the golden hours,
The early and the latter rain!

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

Oliver Wendell Holmes

"We need not trouble ourselves about the distinction between this [the Pearly Nautilus] and the Paper Nautilus, the Argonauta of the ancients. The name applied to both shows that each has long been compared to a ship, as you may see more fully in Webster's Dictionary or the Encyclopedia, to which he refers. If you will look into Roget's Bridgewater Treatise, you will find a figure of one of these shells, and a section of it. The last will show, you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral." . . .

"I have now and then found a naturalist who still worried over the distinction between the Pearly Nautilus and the Paper Nautilus, or Argonauta. As the stories about both are mere fables, attaching to the Physalia, or Portuguese man-of-war, as well as to these two mollusks, it seems over-nice to quarrel with the poetical handling of a fiction sufficiently justified by the name commonly applied to the ship of pearl as well as the ship of paper." — The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice
that sings:—
Build thee more stately mansions, O my son
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vaulted up
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unrolling seas!

THE LEGEND BEAUTIFUL

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

"Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled!
That is what the Vision said.

In his chamber all alone,
Kneeling on the floor of stone,
Prayed the Monk in deep contrition
For his sins of indecision,
Prayed for greater self-denial
In temptation and in trial;
It was noonday by the dial,
And the Monk was all alone.

Suddenly, as if it lightened,
An unwonted splendor brightened
All within him and without him
In that narrow cell of stone;
And he saw the Blessed Vision
Of our Lord, with light Elysian
Like a vesture wrapped about him,
Like a garment round him thrown.
ILLINOIS COURSE — EIGHTH YEAR

Not as crucified and slain,
Not in agonies of pain,
Not with bleeding hands and feet
Did the Monk his Master see;
But as in the village street,
In the house or harvest-field,
Halt and lame and blind he healed,
When he walked in Galilee.

In an attitude imploring,
Hands upon his bosom crossed,
Wondering, worshipping, adoring,
Knelt the Monk in rapture lost.
Lord, he thought, in heaven that reignest,
Who am I, that thus thou deignest
To reveal thyself to me?
Who am I, that from the centre
Of thy glory thou shouldst enter
This poor cell, my guest to be?

Then amid his exaltation,
Loud the convent bell appalling,
From its belfry calling, calling,
Rang through court and corridor
With persistent iteration
He had never heard before.
It was now the appointed hour
When alike in shine or shower,
Winter's cold or summer's heat,
To the convent portals came
All the blind and halt and lame,
All the beggars of the street,
For their daily dole of food

For their daily dole of food
Dealt them by the brotherhood;
And their almoner was he
Who upon his bended knee,
Rapt in silent ecstasy
Of divinest self-surrender,
Saw the Vision and the Splendor.
Deep distress and hesitation
Mingled with his adoration;
Should he go or should he stay?
Should he leave the poor to wait
Hungry at the convent gate,
Till the Vision passed away?
Should he slight his radiant guest,
Slight this visitant celestial,
For a crowd of ragged, bestial
Beggars at the convent gate?
Would the Vision there remain?
Would the Vision come again?
Then a voice within his breast
Whispered, audible and clear
As if to the outward ear:

"Do thy duty; that is best;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest!"

Straightway to his feet he started,
And with longing look intent
On the Blessed Vision bent,
Slowly from his cell departed,
Slowly on his errand went.

At the gate the poor were waiting,
Looking through the iron grating,
With that terror in the eye
That is only seen in those
Who amid their wants and woes
Hear the sound of doors that close,
And of feet that pass them by;
Grown familiar with disfavor,
Grown familiar with the savor
Of the bread by which men die!
But to-day, they know not why,
Like the gate of Paradise
Seemed the convent gate to rise,
Like a sacrament divine
Seemed to them the bread and wine.
In his heart the Monk was praying,
Thinking of the homeless poor,
What they suffer and endure;
What we see not, what we see:
And the inward voice was saying:
"Whatsoever thing thou dost
To the least of mine and lowest,
That thou dost unto Me!"

Unto Me! but had the Vision
Come to him in beggar’s clothing,
Come a mendicant imploring,
Would he then have knelt adoring,
Or have listened with derision,
And have turned away with loathing?

Thus his conscience put the question,
Full of troublesome suggestion,
As at length, with hurried pace,
Towards his cell he turned his face,
And beheld the convent bright.
With a supernatural light,
Like a luminous cloud expanding
Over floor and wall and ceiling.

But he paused with awe-struck feeling
At the threshold of his door,
For the Vision still was standing
As he left it there before,
When the convent bell appalling,
From its belfry calling, calling,
 Summoned him to feed the poor.
Through the long hour intervening
It had waited his return,
And he felt his bosom burn,
Comprehending all the meaning,
When the Blessed Vision said,
"Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled!"

ICHABOD

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Revile him not,—the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath
Befit his fall!
Oh, dumb be passion’s stormy rage,
    When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
    Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
    A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
    From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
    Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
    Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
    From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
    In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
    Save power remains;
A fallen angel’s pride of thought,
    Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
    The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
    The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
    To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
    And hide the shame!
O MOTHER of a mighty race,
Yet lovely in thy youthful grace!
The elder dames, thy haughty peers,
Admire and hate thy blooming years.
With words of shame
And taunts of scorn they join thy name.

For on thy cheeks the glow is spread
That tints thy morning hills with red;
Thy step — the wild-deer’s rustling feet
Within thy woods are not more fleet:
Thy hopeful eye
Is bright as thine own sunny sky.

Ay, let them rail — those haughty ones,
While safe thou dwellest with thy sons.
They do not know how loved thou art,
How many a fond and fearless heart
Would rise to throw
Its life between thee and the foe.

They know not, in their hate and pride,
What virtues with thy children bide;
How true, how good, thy graceful maids
Make bright, like flowers, the valley-shade
What generous men
Spring like thine oaks, by hill and glen;—
What cordial welcomes greet the guest
By thy lone rivers of the West;
How faith is kept, and truth revered,
And man is loved, and God is feared,
In woodland homes,
And where the ocean border foams.

There's freedom at thy gates and rest
For Earth's down-trodden and oppressed,
A shelter for the hunted head,
For the starved laborer toil and bread.
Power at thy bounds,
Stops and calls back his baffled hounds.

O fair young mother! on thy brow
Shall sit a nobler grace than now.
Deep in the brightness of the skies
The thronging years in glory rise,
And, as they fleet,
Drop strength and riches at thy feet.

Thine eye, with every coming hour,
Shall brighten, and thy form shall tower;
And when thy sisters, elder born,
Would brand thy name with words of scorn,
Before thine eye,
Upon their lips the taunt shall die.
THE OAK

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

What gnarled stretch, what depth of shade, is his!
There needs no crown to mark the forest’s king;
How in his leaves outshines full summer’s bliss!
Sun, storm, rain, dew, to him their tribute bring,
Which he with such benignant royalty
Accepts, as overpayeth what is lent;
All nature seems his vassal proud to be,
And cunning only for his ornament.

How towers he, too, amid the billowed snows,
An unquelled exile from the summer’s throne,
Whose plain, uncinctured front more kingly shows,
Now that the obscuring courtier leaves are flown.
His boughs make music of the winter air,
Jewelled with sleet, like some cathedral front
Where clinging snow-flakes with quaint art repair
The dints and furrows of time’s envious brunt.

How doth his patient strength the rude March wind
Persuade to seem glad breaths of summer breeze,
And win the soil that fain would be unkind,
To swell his revenues with proud increase!
He is the gem; and all the landscape wide
(So doth his grandeur isolate the sense)
Seems but the setting, worthless all beside,
An empty socket, were he fallen thence.

So, from oft converse with life’s wintry gales,
Should man learn how to clasp with tougher roots
The inspiring earth; how otherwise avails
The leaf-creating sap that sunward shoots?
So every year that falls with noiseless flake
Should fill old scars up on the stormward side,
And make hoar age revered for age's sake,
Not for traditions of youth's leafy pride.

So, from the pinched soil of a churlish fate,
True hearts compel the sap of sturdier growth,
So between earth and heaven stand simply great,
That these shall seem but their attendants both;
For nature's forces with obedient zeal
Wait on the rooted faith and oaken will;
As quickly the pretender's cheat they feel,
And turn mad Pucks to flout and mock him still.

Lord! all Thy works are lessons; each contains
Some emblem of man's all-containing soul;
Shall he make fruitless all Thy glorious pains,
Delving within Thy grace an eyeless mole?
Make me the least of thy Dodona-grove,
Cause me some message of thy truth to bring,
Speak but a word through me, nor let thy love
Among my boughs disdain to perch and sing.

40. See Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
45. A grove of oaks at Dodona, in ancient Greece, was the seat of a famous oracle.
THE RETURN OF THE BIRDS

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

I hear, from many a little throat,
    A warble interrupted long;
I hear the robin's flute-like note,
    The bluebird's slenderer song.

Brown meadows and the russet hill,
    Not yet the haunt of grazing herds,
And thickets by the glimmering rill,
    Are all alive with birds.

O choir of spring, why come so soon?
    On leafless grove and herbless lawn
Warm lie the yellow beams of moon;
    Yet winter is not gone.

For frost shall sheet the pools again;
    Again the blustering East shall blow —
Whirl a white tempest through the glen,
    And load the pines with snow.

Yet, haply, from the region where,
    Waked by an earlier spring than here,
The blossomed wild-plum scents the air,
    Ye come in haste and fear.

For there is heard the bugle-blast,
    The booming gun, the jarring drum,
And on their chargers, spurring fast,
    Armed warriors go and come.
There mighty hosts have pitched the camp
  In valleys that were yours till then,
And Earth has shuddered to the tramp
  Of half a million men!

In groves where once ye used to sing,
  In orchards where ye had your birth,
A thousand glittering axes swing
  To smite the trees to earth.

Ye love the fields by ploughmen trod;
  But there, when sprouts the beechen spray,
The soldier only breaks the sod
  To hide the slain away.

Stay, then, beneath our ruder sky;
  Heed not the storm-clouds rising black,
Nor yelling winds that with them fly;
  Nor let them fright you back,—

Back to the stifling battle-cloud,
  To burning towns that blot the day,
And trains of mounting dust that shroud
  The armies on their way.

Stay, for a tint of green shall creep
  Soon o’er the orchard’s grassy floor,
And from its bed the crocus peep,
  Beside the housewife’s door.

Here build, and dread no harsher sound,
  To scare you from the sheltering tree,
Than winds that stir the branches round,
  And murmur of the bee.
And we will pray that, ere again
The flowers of autumn bloom and die,
Our generals and their strong-armed men
May lay their weapons by.

Then may ye warble, unafraid,
Where hands, that wear the fetter now.
Free as your wings shall ply the spade,
And guide the peaceful plough.

Then, as our conquering hosts return,
What shouts of jubilee shall break
From placid vale and mountain stern,
And shore of mighty lake!

And midland plain and ocean-strand
Shall thunder: "Glory to the brave,
Peace to the torn and bleeding land,
And freedom to the slave!"
Biographical Sketches

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A visitor to Cambridge, in Massachusetts, is very sure to make his first question, Where did Mr. Longfellow live? and any one whom he meets will be able to give the answer. The ample, dignified mansion, built in Colonial days, and famous as the headquarters of Washington during the first year of the War for Independence, is in the midst of broad fields, and looks across meadows to the winding Charles and the gentle hills beyond. Great elms, fragrant lilacs and syringa, stand by the path which leads to the door; and when the poet was living, the passer-by would often catch a glimpse of him as he paced up and down the shaded veranda which is screened by the shrubbery.

Here came, in the summer of 1837, a slight, studious-looking young man, who lifted the heavy brass knocker, which hung then as it does now upon the front door, and very likely thought of the great general as he let it fall with clang. He had called to see the owner of the house, Mrs. Andrew Craigie, widow of the apothecary-general of the Continental Army in the Revolution. The visitor asked if there was a room in her house which he could occupy. The tately old lady, looking all the more dignified for the turban which was wound about her head, answered, as she looked at the youthful figure:—

"I no longer lodge students."

"But I am not a student; I am a professor in the University."

"A professor?" She looked curiously at one so like most students in appearance.

"I am Professor Longfellow," he said.

"Ah! that is different. I will show you what there is."
She led him up the broad staircase, and, proud of her house, opened one spacious room after another, only to close the door of each, saying, "You cannot have that," until at length she led him into the southeast corner-room of the second story. "This was General Washington's chamber," she said. "You may have this;" and here he gladly set up his home. The house was a large one, and already Edward Everett and Jared Sparks had lived here. Mr. Sparks was engaged, singularly enough, upon the Life and Writings of Washington in the very house which Washington had occupied. Afterwards, when Mr. Longfellow was keeping house here, Mr. Joseph E. Worcester, the maker of the dictionary, shared it with him, for there was room for each family to keep a separate establishment, and even a third could have found independent quarters. When Mrs. Craigie died Mr. Longfellow bought the house, and there was his home until he died.

When he came to Cambridge to be Professor of Modern Languages and Literature in Harvard College, he was thirty years old. He was but eighteen when he graduated at Bowdoin College, in the class in which Nathaniel Hawthorne also belonged, and he had given such promise that he was almost immediately called to be professor at Bowdoin. He accepted the appointment on condition that he might have three years of travel and study in Europe. The immediate result of his life abroad was in some translations, chiefly from the Spanish, in some critical papers, and in Outre Mer [Over Seas], his first prose work. He continued at Bowdoin until 1835, when he was invited to Harvard. Again he went to Europe for further study and travel, and after his return spent seventeen years in his professorship.

Two years after he had begun to teach in Harvard College he published Hyperion, a Romance. Hyperion, in classic mythology, is the child of heaven and earth, and in this romance the story is told of a young man who had earthly sorrows and fortunes, but heavenly desires and hopes. It contains many delightful legends and fancies
which travel and student life in Europe had brought to the poet's knowledge, and which he had carried back to his countrymen in America. Once afterward, in 1849, he published a romance of New England, Kavanagh; but in the same year that saw Hyperion there appeared a thin volume of poems entitled Voices of the Night; and after that Mr. Longfellow continued to publish volumes of poetry, sometimes a book being devoted to a single poem, as Evangeline or The Courtship of Miles Standish or Hiawatha, more often containing a collection of shorter poems, and sometimes, as in the Tales of a Wayside Inn, a number of poems pleasantly woven into a story in verse.

The house in which Mr. Longfellow lived was full of suggestion of his work, and it remains much as he left it. "The study," as some one wrote of it during the poet's lifetime, "is a busy literary man's workshop: the table is piled with pamphlets and papers in orderly confusion; a high desk in one corner suggests a practice of standing while writing, and gives a hint of one secret of the poet's singularly erect form at an age when the body generally begins to stoop and the shoulders to grow round; an orangefruit stands in one window; near it a stuffed stork keeps watch; on the table is Coleridge's ink-stand; upon the walls are crayon likenesses of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Sumner." Here, too, is the chair made from the wood of the spreading chestnut-tree under which the village smithy stood, and given to the poet by the children of Cambridge; here is the pen presented by "beautiful Helen of Maine," the old Danish song-book and the antique pitcher; upon the staircase is the old clock, which

"Points and beckons with its hands;"

one looks out from the chamber windows across the meadows upon the gentle Charles,—

"Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear;"

following the river one sees the trees and chimneys of Elmwood, and perhaps a flight of
“herons winging their way
O'er the poet's house in the Elmwood thickets;”
while farther still one catches sight of the white tower
Mount Auburn and thinks of the graves there to which
many of the poet's friends were borne, and to which
himself was at last carried. It would be a pleasant task
read closely in Mr. Longfellow's poems and discover all
kind words which he has written of his friends. A mark
known by the company he keeps. How fine must have been
that nature which gathered into immortal verse the frie
ship of Agassiz, Hawthorne, Lowell, Sumner, Whitt
Tennyson, Irving; and chose for companionship among
dead such names as Chaucer, Dante, Keats, Milton, Shas
peare. All these names, and more, will be found strung
as beads upon the golden thread of Longfellow's verse.

After all, the old house where the poet lived was a
familiar place with his poems, because it was a home
Here his children grew, and out of its chambers issued th
undying poems which sing the deep life of the fireside.
The Golden Mile-Stone he sings: —

"Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-Stone;
Is the central point, from which he measures
Every distance
Through the gateways of the world around him;"

and the secret of Mr. Longfellow's power is in the per
art with which he brought all the treasures of the old wo
stories, and all the hopes of the new, to this central poi
his own fireside fed the flames of poetic genius, and k
them burning steadily and purety.

Mr. Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, Febru
27, 1807. He had two sons and three daughters, and th
three are celebrated in The Children's Hour. The poi
always welcomed children to his house, and he was m
very happy by their thought of him. His seventy-fifth bi
day was celebrated by school-children all over the count
A few days after, he was taken ill, and died March
1882.
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

The poet Whittier was born on his father's farm, near Haverhill, Mass., December 17, 1807, and lived the life of a farmer's boy until he was eighteen years old. In his poem of Snow-Bound one will get the best knowledge of Whittier's boyhood: how he worked in barn and field; listened to the stories which his elders told around the blazing hearth; caught knowledge from the district school and from the lively schoolmaster who boarded at his father's house; saw a newspaper once a week, and read in it of struggles for freedom in Greece and adventures in Central America; read over and over again the small stock of books in the farmhouse, the almanac with its pithy sayings and anecdotes, and the lives of Quakers, for the Whittiers were of the Quaker faith. The best that he got was in the beauty of his mother's life, the strong, wise character of his father, the affection of his sisters, and all the sweet, noble influences of an industrious, God-fearing home.

The family lived respectably and in tolerable comfort, but the farm was burdened with debt, and frugality and persistent industry were indispensable. The children, as well as their elders, had to work in doors and out. The young boy had only ten or twelve weeks of school in a year. He longed for learning, but the means of procuring it were lacking. Happily, the man who worked for his father on the farm in summer eked out his income by making women's shoes in the winter, and the boy learned enough of him to earn a small sum, sufficient to pay the expense of a summer term at an academy. At the close of the term he tried another way of earning money, and taught a small school in a neighboring town. The next year he worked on the farm, and in the spring of 1830 went to Hartford, Conn., and edited The New England Review for two years, when he was called home by the illness of his father, whose death, soon after, made it necessary for him to take the charge of the farm for several
years. In 1833 he published a pamphlet entitled *Justice and Expediency*, on the slavery question, and the same year he was a member of the convention which formed the American Anti-Slavery Society. He was a member of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1835. In 1838 he became editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, at Philadelphia, where his office was sacked and burned by a mob. His health failing at the end of two years he returned to Massachusetts, and took up his residence with his mother and sister at Amesbury. In 1845 he became associate editor of the *National Era* at Washington, D. C., in which paper *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published.

He commenced writing in his sixteenth year. His early verses indicated his scanty opportunities for reading and study. Some of them were printed in the local papers, and later some found a place in magazines. The first collection of them was made in 1847. Ten years later a more complete edition was published. He was a frequent contributor to *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine from its establishment. During the last part of his life he spent much of his time at Oak Knoll, Danvers, though still retaining his residence in Amesbury, eight miles from the old homestead, the scene of *Snow-Bound*. His health was never robust, and in his later years he wrote nothing without suffering.

Mr. Whittier was a member of the religious Society of Friends, and a regular attendant of its meetings; but he was broad in his sympathies, and kindly disposed toward all who, in different ways from his own, sought to serve God and benefit their fellow men. He took an active interest in all questions involving the honor and welfare of his country. He aided in forming one of the first temperance organizations in the State of Massachusetts. The relations of Labor and Capital, Public Charities, Woman Suffrage, Peace, and Religious Toleration received his earnest attention. He regarded it a matter of duty to take an active part in elections, but although he was twice a member of the Electoral College, as a rule he declined overtures for acceptance of public office.
His prose writings consist of *Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal*, *Old Portraits and Modern Sketches*, *Recreations and Miscellanies*, and various contributions to the anti-slavery discussions. His love for and interest in children have been manifested in his very popular books, *Child Life* and *Child Life in Prose*. He edited with careful introductory essays the *Journal of John Woolman*, *The Patience of Hope* by Dora Greenwell, and *Songs of Three Centuries*.

Mr. Whittier never married, and never travelled beyond his own country. He preferred a quiet, rural life. He loved the sea, the beaches and islands of the New England coast, and in summer was in the habit of visiting the mountains of New Hampshire, especially the Sandwich range, terminating in the sharp peak of Chocorua. One of these hills has been named Mt. Whittier by the people who live near it; and just as the beaches and country roads of Essex County have been touched with the light from Whittier's poems, so he wove into his verse the mountain glory and the ripple of the brook.

It was Whittier's delight to "plight the troth," or marry fact and fancy, and his poetry is full of the poetic side of every-day matters. He honored noble living wherever he saw it, but most of all he delighted to honor those heroes whom the world has made little of, men and women of humble life but generous self-sacrifice, who have toiled and suffered for others, and borne shame for righteousness' sake. He found subjects for his verse the world over, but he liked best to find them in obscure corners where other people had passed them by.

In his eighty-first year, he prepared for publication a definitive edition of his writings, which was published in seven volumes, four of poetry and three of prose. He furnished a number of interesting head-notes to his poems, and made a careful revision of the text. His death occurred at Hampton Falls, N. H., September 7, 1892, when he was nearly eighty-five years old.
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

It has often been said that the real test of the greatness of a country is the men it produces. One purpose of this book is to give to the young people of Illinois a sense of acquaintanceship with some of the best men that America has produced. One of them, Ralph Waldo Emerson, wrote of another, after reading some of his best poems: "We will not again disparage America now we have seen what men it will bear. What a certificate of good elements in the soil, climate, and institutions is Lowell, whose admirable verses I have just read."

James Russell Lowell was a man of wide interest and deep feeling; and so he got much out of life, he lived richly. Some of the poems that you have studied, The Dandelion, The Oak, The Vision of Sir Launfal, and Rhæcus, show his sense of fellowship with nature. To one of his friends he wrote, "How I do love the earth! I feel it thrill under my feet, I feel somehow as if it were conscious of my love, as if something passed into my dancing blood from it." In his poem, Under the Willows, he says,—

"But I in June am midway to believe
A tree among my far progenitors,
Such sympathy is mine with all the race,
Such mutual recognition vaguely sweet
There is between us. Surely there are times
When they consent to own me of their kin,
And condescend to me, and call me cousin."

And again in one of the Biglow Papers he writes,—

"Why, th' ain't a bird upon the tree
But half forgives my bein' human."

He gained not only joy but tranquillity and wisdom from a life close to nature. Like the shepherd of King Admetus, of whom he tells us,—
"It seemed the loveliness of things
Did teach him all their use,
For, in mere weeds, and stones, and springs,
He found a healing power profuse."

He loved men as well as nature. To a fellow poet he wrote, "Think of me after I am gone (for in the nature of things you will survive me) as one who had a really friendly feeling for everything human." The Vision of Sir Launfal tells us of his belief in the brotherhood of men; and Yussouf, of his faith in the possibilities of nobleness even in the outcast.

So true a democrat as these poems show him to be could not but enter with ardor into the anti-slavery movement. He was opposed to the Mexican War, not only because he shrank from the thought of war in general, but because he felt that the chief purpose in this one was to add to the slave-holding territory of the United States. In 1846 he began the first series of Biglow Papers. It included a number of satirical poems written in the Yankee dialect. Their keenness of wit, together with the feeling of indignation and scorn that they disclosed, made them most effective. The best known are the one beginning

"Thrash away, you 'll hev to rattle
On them kettle-drums o' yourn"

and the one with the refrain

"But John P.
Robinson he."

Read them when you study the Mexican War.

During the Civil War he wrote a second series of Biglow Papers. In these we see how his hatred of war gave way before his love for the Union, which stood to him for the principle of democracy. Three of his nephews were killed in the war. For a touching picture of his grief at their loss, a grief mingled with pride in their heroism, and of his longing for such a close of the war as should bring

"Fair wages for brave men,
A nation saved, a race delivered."
read the poem in this series beginning,

"Dear Sir,—Your letter come to han'
Requestin' me to please be funny."

This poem is marred only by Lowell's failure to recognize at this time the honesty of the Southern leaders.

Lowell, while at first chafing under the apparent indecision of Lincoln, came soon to recognize the real wisdom of the president's leadership. You have read the poet's noble tribute to the martyr in the *Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration* (sixth stanza). Read the last stanza of the ode, that you may have some sense of Lowell's devotion to his country.

Lowell loved nature, loved men, and loved his country; moreover, he had the power to inspire like feelings in others. It is natural that every American boy and girl should wish to know something of the life of such a countryman.

James Russell Lowell was born in Cambridge, Mass., February 22, 1819, and died there August 12, 1891. The house in which he was born and died, Elmwood, was about a mile from Harvard College, the oldest college in the United States. It was one of a group of houses built before the War for Independence by Boston merchants and crown officers, who in the war took the side of England. The houses were built on a broad road known as Tory Row, and each had a considerable estate attached to it. Elmwood was finally bought by Charles Lowell, minister of one of the Boston churches, and father of the poet. Another of the houses, Craigie House, became later the home of Longfellow; so the two poets were neighbors. Lowell's poems and prose essays contain hundreds of references to the trees, the birds, the brook, the fields, the river Charles, and the people that were a part of his Elmwood life. Not long before his death he described the house to an English friend as follows: "'Tis a pleasant old house, just about twice as old as I am, four miles from Boston, in what was once the country and is now a populous suburb.
But it still has some ten acres of open about it, and some fine old trees. When the worst comes to the worst (if I live so long), I shall still have four and a half acres left with the house, the rest belonging to my brothers and sisters or their heirs. It is a square house, with four rooms on a floor, like some houses of the Georgian era I have seen in English provincial towns, only they are of brick and this is of wood. But it is solid, with heavy oaken beams, the spaces between which in the four outer walls are filled in with brick, though you must n't fancy a brick-and-timber house, for outwardly it is sheathed with wood. Inside there is much wainscots (of deal) painted white in the fashion of the time when it was built. It is very sunny, the sun rising so as to shine (at an acute angle, to be sure) through the northern windows, and going round the other three sides in the course of the day. There is a pretty staircase with the quaint old twisted banisters, — which they call balusters now; but mine are banisters. My library occupies two rooms opening into each other by arches at the sides of the ample chimneys. The trees I look out on are the earliest things I remember. There you have me in my new-old quarters. But you must not fancy a large house — rooms sixteen feet square, and on the ground floor, nine high. It was large as things went here, when it was built, and has a certain air of amplitude about it as from some inward sense of dignity.”

Lowell entered Harvard College at fifteen years of age. Here he gave indifferent attention to many of the tasks set him, but spent much time in reading the best books. In 1838 he graduated. For a time he studied law, but his decided literary bent drew him away from that profession. In 1841, a small volume of his poems was published. Three years later he was married to Maria White, a young woman of refinement and delicacy of feeling and of deep moral convictions. Her devotion to anti-slavery principles was not without its influence upon her husband.

In the next few years he wrote many articles for anti-
slavery papers and the first series of the Biglow Papers. But he was a student and writer of literature for its own sake as well as a reformer; and in these years some of his finest poems were written, among them The Vision of Sir Launfal. He sometimes felt that his ardor for reform was a hindrance in his career as a man of letters. About this time he wrote his Fable for Critics, in which he dashed off his impressions of the chief literary people of America, among them Longfellow, Whittier, and Bryant. Of himself he wrote:

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
With a whole bale of isms tied together with rhyme,
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching."

In 1851 and 1852 he visited Europe with his family. He spent much of his time there in the study of the Italian language and literature.

Of the four children of Mr. and Mrs. Lowell three died very young, the only son being buried in Rome. The oldest child was a daughter, Blanche. The touching poem, The First Snow-Fall, shows how deeply her father felt her death. Mrs. Lowell had always been frail, and in 1853 she too died, leaving one little daughter, Mabel. The night that Mrs. Lowell died at Elmwood, a child was born to the Longfellows in Craigie House. Longfellow's poem, The Two Angels, commemorates the two events.

For many years Longfellow had been Smith Professor of the French and Spanish Languages and Professor of Belles Lettres in Harvard College. In 1855 he resigned, and Lowell was chosen to take the place. He spent two years in Europe in preparation for the work, and in 1857 took up his duties in Harvard College. In this year, too, he married Miss Frances Dunlap, who had had charge of the little Mabel since her mother's death.

During the twenty years of his active professorship he
wrote much. For some time he was editor of the Atlantic Monthly, and for ten years he was connected with the North American Review. Most of what he wrote appeared first in these magazines. He wrote many prose essays upon literature, history, and politics, and some more personal ones, such as Cambridge Twenty Years Ago and My Garden Acquaintance. The second series of Biglow Papers was written during the Civil War, and after its close Lowell wrote some of his noblest poems, among them the Commemoration Ode.

President Hayes in 1877 named Lowell to represent the United States in Spain. He served here for two years and was then transferred to England, where he remained for six years. Here he was very popular. Englishmen admired his generous culture, the ease and brilliancy with which he spoke on public and semi-public occasions, and his tact in the conduct of business. They admired, too, his loyalty to America and her institutions. As American minister, poet, and friend of Longfellow, he spoke at the unveiling of a bust of Longfellow in Westminster Abbey. During the years of his foreign residence he received honors from Spanish, English, and Scottish universities, as well as the highest honors that Harvard College could bestow.

After the close of his foreign service, he divided his time for several years between the homes of his sister and daughter in Massachusetts and the haunts that had become dear to him in England. Upon his final return from England in 1889, he went to Elmwood, where his daughter was again living. Here he revised and rearranged his writings, and here in 1891 he died.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

It is a little significant that Bryant's first published poem, The Embargo, 1809, should have been in effect a political pamphlet. The union of politics and poetry was in the
man, and that it should have appeared in literature may readily be explained by the fact that the writer was only thirteen years old at the time, having been born at Cummington, Mass., November 3, 1794. The two strands were twisted into the cord of his destiny; but though Bryant's patriotism flamed forth more than once in his verse, notably in Our Country's Call, he never after his first trial made his poetry a mere vehicle for political doctrines.

Bryant's father was a cultivated country doctor, who looked carefully after his son's reading and sent him to begin a college education at Williams. He spent a little less than a year at college, but his father's limited income forbade further collegiate study, and he was forced to take up the study of the law, which he had chosen for his profession, and was admitted to the bar in 1815.

In boyhood, during his studies, and after he had been admitted to practice, he was constantly allured by poetry, and some of his most famous poems, including Thanatopsis and To a Waterfowl, were published at this period. In 1821 he was invited to read a poem before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard College, and he read The Ages, a stately poem which bore witness to his lofty philosophic nature. Shortly after this he issued a small volume of poems, scarcely more than a pamphlet, and containing but eight pieces; yet every one is now a classic, and the little paper book stands chronologically at the head of American poetical literature.

When these poems appeared Bryant was married and living at Great Barrington, Mass., as a young lawyer; but he had a growing distaste for the profession, with a steadily increasing absorption in literary pursuits, as well as strong interest in public affairs. He spent much of his time in periodical work, and in 1825 finally went to New York to live, and undertook the management of a monthly journal, the New York Review. He earned a precarious livelihood by this and miscellaneous work, but the Review went.
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

way of similar ventures, and in 1826 he made a connec-
which in one form or other he retained the rest of his
He became, in that year, a member of the staff of
New York Evening Post, and in 1829 was chief editor
part proprietor. There can be little doubt, however,
the absorbing occupation of daily journalism reduced
sum of his contributions to pure literature. Much that
lid in prose after this time was in the way of relaxation,
the letters of travel written during his several journeys
collected as Letters from a Traveller, Letters from the
Letters from Spain and other Countries.
his poetic work was infrequent. In 1842 he published
Fountain and other Poems, and collections of later
ns were issued in 1844 and 1863. One expression of
poetic nature was in his strong love of the country and
try life. He resorted frequently to the old homestead
Cummington, which came into his possession, but he
ted special associations with Roslyn on Long Island, an
te which he bought in 1843 and always retained. It
there in 1865 that his wife died, and in his loneliness
Bryant began the translation of the Iliad of Homer as
occupation for his troubled mind. He finished this task
870, and followed it with a translation of the Odyssey.
le was frequently called upon to make addresses in con-
tion with literary anniversaries. A volume of Oration
Addresses contains much of his work of this kind;
his last appearance in public was on the occasion of
unveiling of a bust of Mazzini in Central Park. He
vered an oration, but the exposure brought on an illness
which he died a few days after, June 12, 1878. His
in-law, Parke Godwin, has written his life and edited
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<td>Village Blacksmith, The, 37.</td>
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<td>Voice of Spring, The, 117.</td>
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<td>Written in March, 54.</td>
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