

Honour to those whose words or deed  
Thus help us in our daily need,  
And by their overflow  
Raise us from what is low !

Thus thought I, as by night I read  
Of the great army of the dead,  
The trenches cold and damp,  
The starved and frozen camp,—

The wounded from the battle-plain,  
In dreary hospitals of pain,  
The cheerless corridors,  
The cold and stony floors.

To ! in that house of misery  
A lady with a lamp I see  
Pass through the glimmering gloom,  
And fit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,  
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss  
Her shadow, as it falls  
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be  
Opened and then closed suddenly,  
The vision came and went,  
The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long  
Hereafter of her speech and songs,  
That light its rays shall cast  
From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand  
In the great history of the land,  
A noble type of good,  
Heroic womanhood.

Nor even shall be wanting here  
The palm, the lily, and the spear,  
The symbols that of yore  
Saint Filomena bore.

#### THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

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 what'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 flaring 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 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 hand, rough hand he wipes  
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling—rejoicing—sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes ;  
Each morning sees some task begun,  
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 !

#### EXCELSIOR.

The shades of night were falling fast,  
As through an Alpine village passed  
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,  
A banner with the strange device,—  
Excelsior !

His brow was sad ; his eye beneath,  
Flashed like a falcon from its sheath ;  
And like a silver clarion rung,  
And like a silver clarion rung,  
The accents of that unknown tongue,  
Excelsior !

In happy homes he saw the light  
Of household fires gleam warm and bright ;  
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
Excelsior !

"Ty not the Pass !" the old man said ;  
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,  
The roaring torrent is deep and wide !" —  
And loud that clarion voice replied,  
Excelsior !

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest  
Thy weary head upon this breast !" —  
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
Excelsior !

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch !  
Beware the awful avalanche !" —  
This was the peasant's last Good-night.  
A voice replied, far up the height,  
Excelsior !

At break of day, as heavenward  
The fions monks of Saint Bernard  
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,  
A voice cried through the startled air,  
Excelsior !

A traveller, by the faithful hound,  
Half-buried in the snow was found,  
Still grasping in his hand of ice  
That banner with the strange device,  
Excelsior !

There in the twilight cold and gray,  
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,  
And from the sky, serene and far,  
A voice fell, like a falling star,  
Excelsior !

#### RAIN IN SUMMER.

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 neighbouring 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  
Engulfs 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 tillous and patient oxen stand ;  
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,  
With their dilated nostrils spread,  
They silently inhale  
The clover-scented gale,



And the vapours 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 beading 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 colours 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 for evermore  
In the rapid and rushing river of Time.

#### THE SINGERS.

GOD sent his singers upon earth  
With songs of sadness and of mirth,  
That they might touch the hearts of men,  
And bring them back to heaven again.

The first, a youth, with soul of fire,  
Held in his hand a golden lyre ;  
Through groves he wandered, and by  
streams,  
Playing the music of our dreams.

The second, with a bearded face,  
Stood singing in the market-place,  
And stirred with accents deep and loud  
The hearts of all the listening crowd.

A gray, old man, the third and last,  
Sang in cathedrals dim and vast,  
While the majestic organ rolled  
Conitron from its mouths of gold.

And those who heard the Singers three  
Disputed which the best might be ;  
For still their music seemed to start  
Discordant echoes in each heart.

But the great Master said, " I see  
No best in kind, but in degree ;  
I gave a various gift to each,  
To charm, to strengthen, and to teach.

" These are the three great chords of  
might,  
And he whose ear is tuned aright  
Will hear no discord in the three,  
But the most perfect harmony."

#### UNSEEN FRIENDS.

##### A DEDICATION.

As one who, walking in the twilight  
gloom,  
Hears round about him voices as if  
darkens,

And seeing not the forms from which they  
come,  
Pauses from time to time, and turns and  
hearkens ;

So walking here, in twilight, O my  
friends !  
I hear your voices, softened by the  
distance,  
And pause, and turn to listen, as each  
sends  
His words of friendship, comfort, and  
assistance.

If any thought of mine, or sung or told,  
Has ever given delight or consolation,  
Ye have repaid me back a thousandfold,  
By every friendly sign and salutation.

Thanks for the sympathies that ye have  
shown !  
Thanks for each kindly word, each  
silent token,  
That teaches me, when seeming most  
alone,  
Friends are around us, though no word  
be spoken.

Kind messages, that pass from hand to  
hand ;  
Kind letters, that betray the heart's  
deep history,  
In which we feel the pressure of a  
hand,—  
One touch of fire,—and all the rest is  
mystery !

The pleasant books, that silently among  
Our household treasures take familiar  
places,  
And are to us as if a living tongue  
Spoke from the printed leaves or pic-  
tured faces !

Perhaps on earth I never shall behold,  
With eye of sense, your outward form  
and semblance ;  
Therefore to me ye never will grow old,  
But live for ever young in my remem-  
brance.

Never grow old, nor change, nor pass  
away !  
Your gentle voices will flow on for  
ever,  
When life grows bare and tarnished with  
decay,  
As through a leafless landscape flows a  
river.

Not chance of birth or place has made us  
friends,  
Being oftentimes of different tongues  
and nations,  
But the endeavour for the selfsame ends,  
With the same hopes, and fears, and  
aspirations.

Therefore I hope to join your seaside  
walk,  
Saddened, and mostly silent, with  
emotion ;  
Not interrupting with intrusive talk  
The grand, majestic symphonies of  
ocean.

Therefore I hope, as no unwelcome guest,  
At your warm fireside, when the lamps  
are lighted,  
To have my place reserved among the rest,  
Nor stand as one unsought and un-  
invited !

#### THE PRIMEVAL FOREST.

##### Evangeline.

This is the forest primeval. The mur-  
muring pines and the hemlocks,  
Bearded with moss, and in garments green,  
Indistinct in the twilight,  
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad  
and prophetic,  
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that  
rest on their bosoms,  
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-  
voiced neighbouring ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate an-  
swers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval ; but where  
is the hearts that beneath it  
leaped like the roe, when he hears in the  
woodland the voice of the huntsman ?



Where is the thatch-roofed village, the  
home of Acadian farmers,—  
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that  
watered the woodlands,  
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflect-  
ing an image of heaven?  
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the  
farmers for ever departed!  
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the  
mighty blasts of October  
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and  
sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.  
Nought but tradition remains of the beau-  
tiful village of Grand-Pré.

#### THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

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 afterward, 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 OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

SOMEWHAT back from the village street  
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat;  
Across its antique portico  
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw,  
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 horologe of Eternity  
Sayeth this incessantly,—  
"Forever—never! Never—forever!"

#### THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

It was the schooner Hesperus,  
That sailed the wintry sea;  
And the skipper had taken his little  
daughter,  
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,  
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,  
And her bosom white as the hawthorn  
buds  
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,  
His pipe was in his mouth,  
And he watched how the veering flaw did  
blow  
The smoke now west, now south.

Then up and spake an old sailòr,  
Had sailed the Spanish Main,  
"I pray thee put into yonder port,  
For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring,  
And to-night no moon we see!"  
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his  
pipe,  
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,  
A gale from the north-east;  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain  
The vessel in its strength;  
She shattered and paused, like a frightened  
steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little  
daughter,  
And do not tremble so;  
For I can weather the roughest gale  
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's  
coat  
Against the stinging blast;  
He cut a rope from a broken spar,  
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,  
O say what may it be?"  
"Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"  
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,  
O say what may it be?"  
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live  
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,  
O say what may it be?"  
But the father answered never a word,—  
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,  
With his face turned to the skies,  
The lantern gleamed through the gleam-  
ing snow  
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and  
prayed  
That saved she might be;  
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the  
wave  
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and  
drear,  
Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept  
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between  
A sound came from the land;  
It was the sound of the trampling surf,  
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.



The breakers were right beneath her bows,  
She drifted a dreary wreck,  
And a whooping billow swept the crew  
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves

Looked soft as carded wool,  
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side  
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
With the masts went by the board;  
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,  
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,  
A fisherman stood aghast,  
To see the form of a maiden fair,  
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,  
The salt tears in her eyes;  
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,  
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,  
In the midnight and the snow!  
Christ save us all from a death like this,  
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

### THE SHIP OF STATE.

*The Building of the Ship.*

THOU, too, sail on, O Ship of State!  
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years,  
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!  
We know what Master laid thy keel,  
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,  
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,  
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
In what a forge and what a heat  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!  
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,  
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;  
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,  
And not a rent made by the gale!  
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,  
In spite of false lights on the shore,  
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!  
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee;  
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,  
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!

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