



ANAMA ATCHWORK

JAMES S. GILBERT



J. Edgar Hoover

[DIED AUGUST, 1906]



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PANAMA PATCHWORK



J. C. Gilchrist

[DIED AUGUST, 1906]

PANAMA PATCHWORK

POEMS

BY

JAMES STANLEY GILBERT

EIGHTH THOUSAND

NEW YORK
THE TROW PRESS
1911

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THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA
BY TRACY ROBINSON

HAIL, PANAMA!

(Air, "America.")

**Daughter of Oceans Twain,
Pearl Isles and Golden Main,
Hail, Panama!**

**Glorious thy history
Shall thro' the ages be,
Offspring of Liberty,
Hail, Panama!**

**Queen of the Summer Land
By Nature's high command,
Hail, Panama!**

**Peaceful as was thy birth,
Thy sons shall make thy worth
Known over all the earth,
Hail, Panama!**

**Freedom is thine by Right,
In Honor lies thy Might,
Hail, Panama!
Justice and Verity,
Wisdom, Sincerity,
Bring thee prosperity,
Hail, Panama!**

INTRODUCTION

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN a foreword, written for an edition of Mr. Gilbert's poems, published in 1894, I said:

"Life on the Isthmus of Panama has some interesting and peculiar features. The geographical isolation being practically complete, except by sea, it follows that a narrow strip of country along the Panama Railroad is all that modern civilization can boast of having captured. Nor is there evidence that any astonishing advances have yet been made within even this limited zone. The jungle still holds sway and defies the schoolmaster.

"Among those who have from time to time held official positions in the different companies, or who have engaged in other business pursuits, there has now and then been one who has caught the spirit of the place and has had the surprising energy to write interestingly of his surroundings. That this has been the case with my friend, the writer of the following pages, is my own firm conviction, and it gives me pleasure to believe that the public will agree with me.

"These poems have been evolved from an inner consciousness, the visible and outward environment of which has been an active business life.

“ They have been penned while others slept or were engaged in some other engrossing tropical employment quite as intellectual. The somewhat limited local audience to which they were addressed has been greatly pleased, and it will give the numerous friends of their author much gratification to know that a wider public has endorsed their verdict.”

Little more need be said at the present time. There will be a larger audience, owing to a greatly increased Isthmian population, and a wider acquaintance with the poems which the former editions, now out of print, has given. The maturing gift of the author will be recognized in the additional poems, nearly twenty in number, in the present volume; and it is my steadfast faith that, for “ local color ” as well as poetic form and completeness, nothing better has been written.

TRACY ROBINSON.

COLON, October, 1905.

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FOREWORD

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE gratifying success of the second edition of "Patchwork," that was issued at the end of December and was out of print in February, has induced the author to consent to this third edition. And since, in a way, it has been my happy fortune to stand these many years with ever-increasing interest as a sort of godfather to Mr. Gilbert's Muse, the fact that bringing out this new and improved issue has also been entrusted to my care gives me pleasure. It affords an opportunity of adding to the brief "Introductory" of the second edition a few explanatory words which may be of use to other than Isthmian readers.

Although the poems are largely confined to local themes, it will be found, I think, that their general scope is far wider. The very first line of the first poem,

"Away down south in the Torrid Zone,"

brings before the mind a vision of the tropics that appeals at once to the Northern mind and suggests the "Land of the Cocoanut Tree." And the free,

off-hand, spontaneous manner in which the fascinating vista of tropical life afforded by the book is opened in this initial poem will be found to hold good all through. It sets the pace. It lends its "potent charm" from first to last. For if Mr. Gilbert is anything he is natural. Take the next poem, "In the Roar of the Ocean," and as you read it and place yourself on the coral reef beside

"Him whose daily lot from year to year
Has been its never-ceasing voice to hear,"

you will be thrilled through with its significance. And thus, with varying mood, influenced by the hour and theme, will be found the touch that Nature alone bestows upon her fondlings. Art is not absent, but spontaneity of Feeling is the poetic element always the more conspicuous. This is the gift of which we are constantly the most conscious in these poems. It is disguised if you please by a frequent cynicism, but it is there all the same. The bitterness of the instant is only a sudden impulse, a hot resentment and hatred of wrong, an outcry against meanness and sham. "The Isthmian Way," "The Busiest Man," "The Never-Failing Friend," and others are in the nature of protest and disclaimer.

The poems are nearly all objective. Of the considerable number in which "local color" is a prominent feature, perhaps "John Aspinwall," page 13, is as good as any. The brief note to this poem in the second edition does scant justice to its hero.

He certainly wandered about Colon, when it was Aspinwall, for many years, silent, inscrutable, demented rather than crazy. He took his name from the town, and like any great man might have been called John of Aspinwall. A speechless, harmless, picturesque old black man, clad in rags tied with strings to keep them from falling off; he walked the town as though on patrol, and slept, as the poem says, in a hut or den

“By the Dead-House gate.”

He was there (indeed he was)

“When Totten came,
And Baldwin and all the rest,
To build thro’ the swamps their pathway of fame,”

and by the irony of fate he remained after they had all passed away. (It may be said here for the information of new readers that Col. G. M. Totten was chief engineer, with W. H. Baldwin as his very able principal assistant in the construction of the Panama Railroad, 1850-1855.) Old John died as he had lived,

“A quaint old moke”:

and no one knew

—“if thoughts at all
Ever lurked in his woolly pate.”

Another local poem, page 18, celebrates the famous old Sea-grape Tree, that stood on the sea-beach-front of the town, and was regarded with affection by all, until it was wantonly laid low. The

"Epitaph" conveys the feeling of indignation that followed.

"Woodbine Sally" is another local reminiscence, also "Cinco Centavos," "Yellow Eyes," "He Has Gone," "La Cantinera," "Our Gurl Mary," and many more. "To Blame" was written as a protest against the censure directed towards the Captain of the steamship *Moselle* that was lost a few miles from Colon. "In Memoriam" was a tribute paid to a wonderful monkey that must have had human intelligence, while "Fides Achates" celebrates a pet dog.

Of the poems of what may be called a higher order, the reader will find many evidences of touching tenderness and appreciation. Read "To the Southern Cross," "The Trade-Wind," "A Tropic Nocturne," "When the Trade-Wind Blows Again," "The Visit," "New Year's Rainbow," "To Mnemosyne," "At Sunset Time," "I Think of Thee," "She Sends Her Love," "The Happiest Time," "Simple Aveu," "If Ye Weep," "The Wave," "Au Revoir," "A Ship of Mist," "The Sweet Old Story," and numerous others.

"In the Land of the Cacique" the strange San Blas Indians are described, a tribe that has never been subdued.

"Let them live in their seclusion,"

writes Mr. Gilbert; and all who know aught of this gentle, yet heroic, people will endorse his wish.

If a poet is to be judged by his best work, I think perhaps the poem called "B. C. 2000," at page 81, may be placed at high-water mark in the list. The theme is the fascinating one of reincarnation and is treated with great delicacy and haunting beauty. It shows the finer thread of fancy, a bit obscured at times in other pieces.

"In Victoria the Woman," noble tribute is paid, while "Our Uncle Sam," in a patriotic Fourth-of-July poem, receives the homage of a loyal heart.

At the end will be found the sad recital called "On the Brow of the Hill," in which sorrowful cemetery musings are gathered.

Now turn we to "Only a Weed," page 121. Colon is perhaps the most unpromising field on earth for a poet. Unless he shall have the genius to find beauty in most unexpected places, in a simple weed for example,

"In a rubbish barrel growing,"

and to modestly offer it in rhyme

"With never a word of preaching,"

he can hardly hope for inspiration from such environment. It is all the more wonderful, therefore, that in surroundings so hopeless, in a retirement so severe from all influences that may be described as intellectual and elevating, the contents of the present volume should ever have been written at all. The

weed in the rubbish barrel is typical of the entire situation. Read it, friends, and you will I think at once discover that this poet, hidden away within his shy soul, not for common use and display, has the gift of gifts. The wondrous Gift of Song, that lifts and lightens the burdens of life, and helps to satisfy the "Great Want" after which the brooding, wistful heart of the world hungers everlastingly.

T. R.

NEW YORK, June, 1906.

Obituary Note

JAMES STANLEY GILBERT

BORN AT MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT, U. S. A.,

JULY 20, 1855.

DIED AT COLON, ISTHMUS OF PANAMA,

AUGUST 15, 1906.

The following is from a short address, read at his grave, by one who knew him well :

“Let his faults and mistakes die with the mortal life he has forsaken, and let his many virtues be for us who remain as guiding stars of excellence and fidelity on our brief journey towards the unknown world whither his bright, brave spirit has departed.

“Good-bye, dear Gilbert, good-bye ! Under the palms I watched the clustered Pleiades, fading with the dawn-star and waning moon in the east this morning, and wondered where you were ! Silent and sorrowful I asked the merciful gods of pity and forgiveness to guard you well ! We shall not forget, dear friend, that

“‘Our dead are ours and hold in faithful keeping,
Safe forever all they took away.’”

PANAMA PATCHWORK

THE LAND OF THE COCOANUT-TREE

AWAY down south in the Torrid Zone,
North latitude nearly nine,
Where the eight months' pour once past and o'er,
The sun four months doth shine;
Where 'tis eighty-six the year around,
And people rarely agree;
Where the plaintain grows and the hot wind blows,
Lies the Land of the Cocoanut-Tree.

'Tis the land where all the insects breed
That live by bite and sting;
Where the birds are quite winged rainbows bright,
Tho' seldom one doth sing!
Here radiant flowers and orchids thrive
And bloom perennially—
All beauteous, yes—but odorless!
In the Land of the Cocoanut-Tree.

'Tis a land profusely rich, 'tis said,
In mines of yellow gold,
That, of claims bereft, the Spaniards left
In the cruel days of old!
And many a man hath lost his life
That treasure-trove to see,
Or doth agonize with streaming eyes
In the Land of the Cocoanut-Tree!

'Tis a land that still with potent charm
And wondrous, lasting spell
With mighty thrall enchaineth all
Who long within it dwell;
'Tis a land where the Pale Destroyer waits
And watches eagerly;
'Tis, in truth, but a breath from life to death,
In the Land of the Cocoanut-Tree.

Then, go away if you have to go,
Then, go away if you will!
To again return you will always yearn
While the lamp is burning still!
You've drank the Chagres water,
And the mango eaten free,
And, strange tho' it seems, 'twill haunt your
dreams—
This Land of the Cocoanut-Tree!

IN THE ROAR OF THE OCEAN

COME closer, stranger, closer to the shore,
And listen, listen, *listen* to that roar!
Do you know what that means to us, my man?
Ah, no! not you—not anybody can,
Unless he's lived for years upon this beach,
And learned the lessons that old sea doth teach.

To him whose daily lot from year to year
Has been its never-ceasing voice to hear;
To him whose keen-trained ear at once detects
Each modulation that its pitch affects;
To him who hears when others cannot hear
The far, faint plash so like a falling tear,
That tells of hours of torrid heat and calm,
When fever lingers underneath the palm—
It means that Mistress Reef, the Malapert,
For three grand months shall hide her draggled
skirt

Beneath a gown of foam-laced, gleaming green,
Beside which pales the wardrobe of a queen!
It means that yonder sibilant lagoon
Its pools of stagnant slime shall banish soon!
That suns, the brightest that were ever known,
That stars, the clearest that have ever shone,
Shall guide the day, direct the smiling night
Thro' tropic paths of unalloyed delight!

It means that for these months a breeze shall blow
That hath its source in caves of Arctic snow!
That beareth on its ozone-laden breath
The Balm of Life: the Antidote of Death!

It means all this! Aye, infinitely more!
So closer, stranger, closer to the shore,
And listen, listen, *listen* to that roar!

S U N S E T

I SIT on my lofty piazza,
O'erlooking the restless sea;
(A spider glides over my forehead,
A cockroach runs over my knee!)

The god of the day is preparing
His bed for another night;
(A swarm of pestiferous sand-flies
Is obscuring the glorious sight!)

He's piling his cloud-blankets round him,
Of crimson embroidered with gold;
(That ant crawling under my collar,
Down my spine sends a shiver of cold!)

He's nodding—but with eye still half open
Tips a distant sail with his fire;
(*Dios mio!* another mosquito
Is twanging his dissonant lyre!)

He's sleeping—the night-lamps are twinkling
All around his limitless bed;
(A bat, darting hither and thither,
Has just missed hitting my head!)

Farewell till to-morrow, old fellow!
Thou warmest, most tropical friend!
(A centipede's slowly approaching—
'Tis time for my reverie to end!)

BEYOND THE CHAGRES

BEYOND the Chagres River
Are paths that lead to death—
To the fever's deadly breezes,
To malaria's poisonous breath!
Beyond the tropic foliage,
Where the alligator waits,
Are the mansions of the Devil—
His original estates!

Beyond the Chagres River
Are paths fore'er unknown,
With a spider 'neath each pebble,
A scorpion 'neath each stone.
'Tis here the boa-constrictor
His fatal banquet holds,
And to his slimy bosom
His hapless guest enfolds!

Beyond the Chagres River
Lurks the cougar in his lair,
And ten hundred thousand dangers
Hide in the noxious air.
Behind the trembling leaflets,
Beneath the fallen reeds,
Are ever-present perils
Of a million different breeds!

Beyond the Chagres River
 'Tis said—the story's old—
Are paths that lead to mountains
 Of purest virgin gold;
But 'tis my firm conviction,
 Whatever tales they tell,
That beyond the Chagres River
 All paths lead straight to hell!

THE ISTHMIAN WAY

To bow and scrape and shake your hand,
To greet you with a smile so bland
That you will think no other friend
Can toward you half the good intend;
But still to cherish in one's heart
Enough rank hate to fill a cart—

 This is the Isthmian way.

To buy for gold and silver pay;
To answer yea while thinking nay,
To borrow some one's little wealth,
And leave the country for one's health;
To plot and scheme and slyly seek
To make some decent man a sneak—

 This is the Isthmian way.

To kiss the man who wins success,
And kick the man whose luck is less;
To make of vice beatitude,
And virtue of ingratitude!
Accept all favors, but omit
To e'er return the benefit—

 This is the Isthmian way.

To curry favor with the great,
And pander to one's meanest trait;
To smash the Decalogue to bits,
But give your neighbor's weakness fits!

Oppress the weak, uphold the strong—
In short, do everything that's wrong—
 This is the Isthmian way.

To wage a miasmatic strife,
And suffer all the ills of life;
To eat and drink one's self to death,
And curse God with one's latest breath;
And then a "heavenly mansion" fill
Prepared for one on Monkey Hill *—
 This is the Isthmian way.

God grant that haply some of us
Escape the general animus,
And travel, though but falteringly,
The nobler path of charity:
Tho' stumbling often, still to find
More cleanly records left behind
 Than by the Isthmian way.

* The cemetery.

THE FUNERAL TRAIN

THRUST her in the dead-car box!
Jump aboard—let's have a ride!
Ring the merry engine bell:
Death has claimed another bride!
Pass the gin to every one,
Pull the throttle open wide—
Pobre de solemnidad!

Now we start—we round the curve—
Down the busy street we go!
There is Gardner's circus-tent,
And to-night we'll see the show!
Through the window stick your head—
Wave your hat to all you know—
Pobre de solemnidad!

Here Fox River is at last—
See those men and women fight!
Sal, old gal, give me a smoke—
Bless my skin, that sun is bright!
Here we are at Monkey Hill;
Lend a hand—the corpse is light:
Pobre de solemnidad!

Up the weedy slope we climb:
Billy Black, you're drunk, I swear!
And so are you! and you! and you!
And so am I, I do declare!

Now you've dropped her! Pick her up!
Leave the lid—we're almost there!

Pobre de solemnidad!

Dump her in the common grave!
Aren't those lilies mighty sweet?
In she goes! Now heap the earth—
Never mind to be so neat!
There's no need to make it deep—
No frost here to nip her feet:

Pobre de solemnidad!

A FRIJOLES WASHER-GIRL

A DREAM in living bronze is she,
A dusky goddess full revealed;
Clad but in Nature's modesty—
Her wondrous beauty unconcealed.

Half to her knee, the rushing stream
An instant pauses on its way;
The ripples in the sunshine gleam,
And tiny rainbows round her play.

Lithe as the bamboo growing near
Within the tangled, tropic glade;
As graceful as the startled deer
Half hidden in the distant shade.

The limbs, the hips, the swelling bust
Of famed Olympus' fairest queen,
Ne'er modelled yet on lines more just
Was ever sculptured marble seen!

Her curl-fringed eyes, now black, now brown,
Are depths of passion unexplored;
Her teeth, a glistening, pearly crown
A Rajah would delight to hoard.

A dream, a dream in bronze is she,
A dusky goddess full revealed!
Clad but in Nature's modesty—
Her wondrous beauty unconcealed!

JOHN ASPINWALL

A QUAIN old moke is John Aspinwall,
Who lives by the Dead-House gate,
And quaint are his thoughts, if thoughts at all
Ever lurk in his woolly pate.
For he's old as the hills, is this old black man—
Thrice doubled with age is he;
And the days when his wanderings first began
Are shrouded in mystery.

Perhaps he was living when Morgan's crew
Came lusting for Spanish gold,
And drenched the Isthmus with bloody dew
In the brave, bold days of old.
Perhaps he was here when the pioneers
Of the days almost forgot
Made a trail o'er the land with their bitter tears
And the bones they left to rot.

Perhaps he was here when Totten came
And Baldwin and all the rest,
To build thro' the swamps their pathway to fame
From Chagres to Ancon's crest.
And many a night he has lain, no doubt,
By the side of some comrade ill,
Whose corpse, in the morn, he has carried out
To its rest on Monkey Hill.

For years upon years he has seen the tide
Of adventurers ebb and flow—
Success and improvidence, side by side,
Seen ceaselessly come and go.
He has seen the gamut of passion run,
Oh, thousands and thousands of times!
And witnessed the brightest, purest sun
Uncover the darkest of crimes.

Yet never a word will he answer me
Whenever he passes by,
Though often a curious light I see
In his fathomless, coal-black eye.
Oh, a quaint old moke is John Aspinwall,
Who lives by the Dead-House gate;
And quaint are his thoughts, if thoughts at all
Ever lurk in his woolly pate!

“CINCO CENTAVOS?”

I WONDER 'neath what ban
His worthless life began,
And where he learned to say,
As I hear him every day:
“*Cinco centavos?*”

No one has ever heard
Him say another word;
He may know more, 'tis true,
But he'll only answer you:
“*Cinco centavos?*”

He's such a queer old boy,
With his pants of corduroy
And his faded velvet coat,
While he says, as if by rote:
“*Cinco centavos?*”

His shirt is ancient, too.
He wears one boot, one shoe,
And he twirls a shabby cane
As he chants the old refrain:
“*Cinco centavos?*”

His hair has not been cut
Since he washed his face of smut
Years ago, when he was neat
And knew not to repeat:
“*Cinco centavos?*”

Each day he tramps the town,
Tho' the rain is pouring down,
With the mud up to his knees,
Greeting every one he sees:

“ *Cinco centavos?* ”

He sleeps beneath the pier—
If you listen, you can hear
The echoes grumbling deep
As he murmurs in his sleep:

“ *Cinco centavos?* ”

The fate in store for him
Must be a synonym
Of the woful wretchedness
His only words express:

“ *Cinco centavos?* ”

TO THE SOUTHERN CROSS

WHEN evening drapes her filmy robe
O'er distant hill and drooping palm,
And, save soft echoes, naught disturbs
The purple twilight's drowsy calm—

Soft echoes from the coral reef;
The waves' low greeting to the stars,
That, answering across the sea,
Send fellowship on shining bars—

'Tis then, while earth is slumbering,
Its woes forgot in restful dreams,
That thou, Christ's love-test symboling,
Shed'st o'er the blue thy sacred beams.

'Tis then by him who, listening, waits,
The still, small voice is heard again
In song—the sweetest ever sung—
“ *Upon earth peace: good-will to men!* ”

THE SEA - GRAPE TREE

LONG, long ago, in the faded past,
A breeze from the Indigo Hills—
Where every morn the sun is born
'Mid fair Santa Rita's rills—

On its fragrant breath a seedling bore
Across the arm of the sea,
And on the shore where the breakers roar
It planted the sea-grape tree.

And old Mother Carib nursed it long,
And chanted it lullabies;
And over each leaf from out on the reef
She watched with vigilant eyes.

And the rain and the mist and the gentle dew
Brought strength to its lengthening roots;
And the sun with his light and the moon with her
light,
Both nourished its tender shoots.

And so the tree grew to a wondrous size,
And in wondrous shape as well;
Yet weird tho' its look, there never was book
That could weirder stories tell!

For within the memory of man 'tis known
That, under its spreading shade,
Full many a one, his travail done,
His bed of death hath made.

And below its branches men have sat
And plotted a nation's wrong;
While lovers have met, as they sit there yet,
To murmur the world-sweet song.

And many a fateful duel there
Have lifelong comrades fought;
And near to its seat have children's feet
For the branching coral sought.

Around its trunk the mummers have danced
To the clicking castinet,
And beneath its boughs the gay carouse
And funeral train have met!

Yet all undisturbed by Nature's hand,
On the shores of the changeful sea,
Oblivious still to the good or the ill,
Standeth the sea-grape tree!

EPITAPH

Thou can'st not censure more than we,
The vandal hand that laid thee low:—
But any fool can fell a tree—
Tho' it takes a God to make one grow!

WOODBINE SALLY

(A MEMORY OF EIGHTY-SIX)

IN a low and rambling shanty
Outside the stable gate,
Where woolly-headed "aunty"
With wash-bills used to wait,
All the boys were wont to rally
For cocktails every night;
And 'twas there I first saw Sally,
Poor Sally—almost white!

By day or night she took delight
In greeting every guest
That came her way, and made him pay
For the glass she'd quaff with zest!
But she left us one dry season
To glut her appetite
With a mixture called Ambrosia—
Poor Sally—almost white!

Her hair was like dried seaweed,
Her eyes were faded blue;
Her limbs, they say, were knock-kneed,
Her skin was saffron hue!
Her features were not classic,
But her teeth were snowy bright,
And her speech was somewhat drastic—
Poor Sally—almost white!

Much drink she'd try to sell you
With manner frank and free,
And any one will tell you
She was quick at repartee!
For her own or for the bar's sake
She never shirked a fight!
She was handy with a car-stake—
Poor Sally—almost white!

But, oh, one hot December,
Things snapped inside her head!
Some old folks may remember
How she looked when she was dead!
And they've torn the "woodbine" roots up
Till there's not a sprig in sight,
Yet sometimes a memory shoots up
Of Sally—almost white!

ISTHMIAN HYMN

COME, all ye children of the soil,
Ye offspring of the sun!
Aid me to praise these later days
Of glory just begun!
Aid me to praise in fitting phrase
Your land of liberty—
By Heaven's grace the sacred place
Of your nativity!

O land of palm and mountain peak,
Of never-fading green!
Of oceans twain and storied main,
The undisputed queen!
O land whose fond enchantments bind
The stranger's heart to thee;
Here be it known, we frankly own
Thy gracious sovereignty!

Thy broad savanna vies in wealth
With golden-pebbled stream!
Thy tableland and pearly strand
With untold riches teem!
Thy precious forests spread their arms
O'er fruitage lush and wild:
In all and part, thou surely art
Fair Nature's darling child!

Forever shall thy pathway trend
Toward glory's gleaming goal!
Eternally shall loyalty
Inspire each Isthmian soul!
Forever shall thy sons maintain
Their noble sires' renown;
For aye, through them, thy fame shall gem
Colombia's priceless crown!

THE TRADE-WIND

BLOW, thou brave old trade-wind, blow!
Send the mighty billows flashing
In the radiant sunlight dashing,
O'er the reef like thunder crashing!
Blow, thou brave old trade-wind, blow!

Blow, thou grand old trade-wind, blow!
Oh, for caves in which to store thee!
See the palm-trees bow before thee—
Yea, like them, we do adore thee.
Blow, thou grand old trade-wind, blow!

Blow, thou kind old trade-wind, blow!
Blow, oh, blow with fierce endeavor!
Blow the fever far, forever!
Let the mists return, oh, never!
Blow, thou kind old trade-wind, blow!

Blow, thou good old trade-wind, blow!
Blow away our tropic madness!
Blow away our untold sadness!
Blow us lasting peace and gladness!
Blow, thou good old trade-wind, blow!

A SONG OF DRY WEATHER

WHEN the rains at last cease falling,
And the bracing trade-wind blows;
When the reef no stagnant waters
Or festering seaweed knows;
'Tis a crime to mope within doors
In an atmosphere impure—
Come out, and drink deep, eager draughts
Of God's sure fever cure!

Every breath is full of gladness,
Each inspiration joy!
Every sparkle of the sunshine
A gem without alloy!
Every tumble of the billows
Maketh music far more sweet
Than ever great composer wrought
A world's applause to greet!

Not a cloud bedims the heavens,
That are smiling with delight;
Not a memory of sorrow
Approaching blurs the sight!
Of all pleasures that life giveth,
None ever can compare
With the bliss dry weather bringeth
In its pure, health-giving air!

YELLOW EYES

You are going to have the fever,
Yellow eyes!

In about ten days from now
Iron bands will clamp your brow ;
Your tongue resemble curdled cream,
A rusty streak the centre seam ;
Your mouth will taste of untold things,
With claws and horns and fins and wings ;
Your head will weigh a ton or more,
And forty gales within it roar !

In about ten days from now
You will feebly wonder how
All your bones can break in twain
And so quickly knit again !
You will feel a score of Jaels
In your temples driving nails !
You will wonder if you're shot
Through the liver-case, or what !
You will wonder if such heat
Isn't Hades—and repeat !
Then you'll sweat until, at length,
You—won't—have—a—kitten's—strength !

In about ten days from now
Make to health a parting bow ;
For you're going to have the fever,
Yellow eyes!

HE HAS GONE

CLOSE the door—across the river

He has gone!

With an abscess on his liver

He has gone!

Many years of rainy seasons,

And malaria's countless treasons,

Are among the many reasons

Why he's gone!

Bind the wasted jaw up lightly—

He has gone!

Close the sunken eyelids tightly—

He has gone!

Chinese gin from Bottle Alley

Could not give him strength to rally—

Lone to wander in Death Valley

He has gone!

In his best clothes we've arrayed him—

He has gone!

In a wooden box we've laid him—

He has gone!

Bogus Hennessey and sherry

With his system both made merry—

Very hard he fought them—very!

Yet he's gone!

Down the hill we tramp once more, friends,
 He has gone!
Once again we've seen all o'er, friends,
 He has gone!
Let us hope we may endure, or,
At least, our taste be surer—
Let us pray the liquor's purer
 Where he's gone!

THE PARADISE OF FOOLS

NINETEEN hundred miles from home
We have crossed the ocean's foam;
Left our kin and comrades dear,
Shed the customary tear;
Left whatever life is worth
For the rummest place on earth—
For the Paradise of Fools.

All good things to eat and drink,
Left for what? You'd never think!
Tough old bull-beef, mud-fed swine,
Store-made liquors, logwood wine!
Every blessed day the same:
Change is nothing but a name
In the Paradise of Fools.

Recreation? There is none;
If there were, 'twould weary one!
Innocence and sportiveness?
Bitter foes and nothing less!
Cards and cocktails, yes; galore!
Only these, and nothing more
In the Paradise of Fools.

Hold! There's one thing I forget:
Scandal peddling's left us yet!
God knows, there's enough of that
To make a shrunken mummy fat!

Be the subject low or high,
We must gossip—or we *die*
In the Paradise of Fools.

Yet we're happy, blithe, and gay ;
Else we'd go away and *stay* !
How we kick and squirm and shout
O'er attempts to drive us out !
We are all content to dwell
In this suburb of—ah, well !
In the Paradise of Fools.

THE BUSIEST MAN

OH, don't disturb the gentleman,
He's as busy as can be!
You might attract his notice from
Something that he should see.
Just touch your hat, and quickly say,
Good-morning or, Ta-ta,
For he's got to run the universe—
Colon and Panama!

*

Pray, think of what he's got to do,
This very busy man!
He's got the biggest kind of job,
Just match it if you can.
He's got to note the time when we
Arise to start the day,
And he's got to listen carefully
To every word we say.

He's got to watch us labor, and
He's got to watch us play;
He's got to know what debts we owe,
And why we cannot pay;
He's got to know what cost the clothes
In which we look so neat—
The necktie and the hat we wear,
And the shoes upon our feet.

He's got to see us at our meals,
 Know what we eat and drink;
He's got to know what books we read,
 As well as what we think.
If we sit down awhile to chat
 With friends of many years,
He's got to join the party with
 His all-absorbing ears.

If we to town go for a walk
 When sunset ends our work,
He's got to sneak round corners bleak,
 Or in dark alleys lurk,
To see what we are doing here,
 Or what we're doing there,
And run the risk of fever in
 The evening's heavy air.

He's got to know the "female" that
 "Does up" our weekly shirt;
(She may wear diamonds in her ears,
 Or lace upon her skirt!)
Or, if one has that wondrous thing
 (That doubtful joy of life),
He's got to know each time that one
 Has a squabble with his wife.

He's got to listen to the tale
 Of every injured soul;
Of every row between two friends,
 He's got to know the whole.

Of what most folks talk sparingly,
He's got to glibly shout,
And run like lightning up and down
To spread it all about.

He's got to watch the Government,
Each corporation, too;
And every private enterprise
He's got to carry through.
He's got to keep a-moving, and
Must never blink his eye,
For he's got to have his finger in
Each individual pie!

So don't disturb the gentleman—
I'm sure, you plainly see
That, as Mister Gossip is his name,
He's as busy as can be.
Just nod your head, and quickly say,
Good-morning or, Ta-ta,
For he's got to run the universe—
Colon and Panama!

WHILE WE'RE STILL LIVING ON

THERE'S a gospel that I fain would preach as to the
manner born,
To all ye sons of wretchedness from temperate
regions torn;
As upon the torrid isthmus, heat-oppressed and
fever-worn,
We still are living on!

'Tis an oft-repeated message, will ye never give it
heed?
Ninety times and nine tho' it hath failed, the hun-
dredth may succeed;
So let's print and post and blazon it, that he who
runs may read,
While we're still living on!

Speak lightly not of any man, and guard your
neighbor's fame;
For others prize as you may prize a fair, unsullied
name;
And while criticising others' gaits, you may your-
self be lame!
While we're still living on!

An honest man's an honest man until he's proved
a thief;
Never yet was lasting happiness built on another's
grief;

Let us bear in mind of Graces three that Charity is
chief,

While we're still living on!

Thus, in our brief existence in this land of sudden
death,

We may breathe, perchance, when day is done, a
self-contented breath;

And more calmly view the angel when toward us
he wandereth!

While we're still living on!

THE NAKED BROWN BABIES OF BOLIVAR STREET

Tho' Destiny holds in her shadowy hands
Adventure and incident for us to meet,
We'll never forget, tho' we may not regret,
The naked brown babies of Bolivar Street.

The crash of the breakers, the lash of the gale,
The thrash of the rain and the sun's awful heat,
May pass from us all, but we'll ever recall
The naked brown babies of Bolivar Street.

The idiom local—that shuffle of speech
We learn ere our isthmus instruction's complete—
We'll lose it—we ought—yet we'll cling to the
thought
Of the naked brown babies of Bolivar Street.

The pleasures and pains of the present and past
Our sojourn here making so sad or so sweet;
Tho' all fade away, thro' the memory will stray
The naked brown babies of Bolivar Street.

They wade in the puddles, they roll in the dust,
No weather can ever their pleasure defeat;
All days are the same! Life is only a game
To the naked brown babies of Bolivar Street.

DE PROFUNDIS

ALMIGHTY Dispenser of good things and ill,
Purveyor of foods that delight or annoy;
Thou that doth every man's little cup fill
With draughts to be drained of sorrow or joy:
Disgusted we come to the Presence to-day,
Sans flattering speeches of moment and pith,
But simply and briefly and bluntly to say
That we firmly believe that Job was a myth.

We are weary of patience and all of that cant
About love that can chasten love gasping for
breath.

We are minus the faith that can cheerfully rant
Of the blessings of life in the presence of death.
We do not believe in the silver that lines
The horse-blanket clouds spread above us for
weeks,

For we know all the silver is safe in the mines
That is not in the pockets of somebody's breeks.

We are weary of funerals, weary of tears,
We are weary of pushing unpushable walls;
We are weary of leveling mountains of fears—
Of building a Hope that instantly falls.
We have given to Misery more than her half,
We have rendered to Gloom more years than
are his,

We have moped long enough! Great God let us laugh
Before we forget what a laugh really is!

THE WAIL OF THE FORGOTTEN

(1901)

O WE are the people whom God forgot
In eighteen eighty-nine,
When Disaster dropped a mighty blot
On the Frenchman's grand design.

Then Fire and Fever and Famine came,
A triple Incubus,
And dealing the cards of a cut-throat game,
Sat down and played with us.

They've won in the past, they're winning still,
And we put up the stakes!
Yet play we must and play we will
Until the last heart breaks.

And the leaden bowl we call the sky,
Doth back the echoes throw
Of our exceeding bitter cry:—
“God give us another show!”

LA CANTINERA

(A MEMORY OF JUNE, 1902)

As she scrambled down from the transport's deck,
Her figure parodied grace;
Eighteen at the most and a physical wreck,
Yet she had an angel's face!
From head to foot
Clung dirt like soot—
There was dirt on her angel's face.
—Yes, dirt on her angel's face!

Her hair in inky loops hung low,
O'er a soldier's canvas coat,
And a tattered shift yawned wide to show
A short and sunburned throat!
No lingerie—
We all could see
Her short and sunburned throat!
—Yes, more than her sunburned throat!

Her dress—her what? She had no dress;
Call it skirt for lack of a name—
('Tis a guess, the wildest kind of a guess)
Put shamelessness to shame!
So scanty and torn,
And carelessly worn,
It put shamelessness to shame!
—Yes, shamelessness to shame!

She gathered her kit and passed us by,
Foul bedding and pots and bags;
A babe on her hip—another one nigh—
Nakedness, filth and rags!
On the endless tramp
From camp to camp,
In nakedness, filth and rags!
—Yes, nakedness, filth and rags!

A drab and a drudge—a regiment's Thing
To abuse, debauch, debase;
And yet—as tho' guarded by Beauty's wing—
Her face was an angel's face!
Tho' sadly bedimmed,
'Twas Beauty who limned
The lines of her angel's face!
—Yes, modelled her angel's face!

What of it, you ask? Oh, nothing but this;—
I think it not often the case
That one clearly beholds in ignorance, bliss,
And 'tis proved by an angel's face!
For ignorance
Of innocence,
Shone from her angel's face!
—Yes, gave her an angel's face!

TO THE "CRAB" *

COUGH and splutter, clang and shriek,
Day and night, week after week!
Choke with smoke the passers by,
Fill with slack the public eye!
Turn your squatty drivers round
Fifty times each foot of ground!
Siss and sizzle, gasp and jerk—
Fools will think you're hard at work!

" Pull them box-cars up the track!
Wot yer doin'! Push 'em back!"

Don't go easy! Let 'em slam!
Now then! *You* don't care a—clam!
Do this ten score times a day,
Then all night—the other way!
Over frogs and switches leap,
Don't let *anybody* sleep!
When there's nothing else in sight
Down to Christophe take a flight!
Throw her over! Let her fly!
You'll catch victims by and by!
What is horse or coach to you!
Hit a man—now hit one! Do!

That's it! *Smash* him! Grind him fine!
Spread his blood along the line!
Spread it even, spread it thick!
Sand may slip but blood will stick!

* Local name for switch engine.

OUR GURL MARY

SHE's the "chupidest" gurl we ever knew,
Is our gurl Mary;
She always does what she oughtn't to,
Does our gurl Mary;
She's lazier far than Lethe's stream—
She meanders 'round in one long dream—
'Twould take a Titan's death-bed scream
To wake up Mary!

In the morning at our coffee time—
"Mary, OH, Mary!"
Our hearts sink deep in damning crime—
"Mary! Oh, M-A-R-Y!"
What *is* the matter, Mary . . . Dear!
Been looking for you far and near!
'Most eight o'clock—no coffee here!
John Rogers, Mary!

Just look at the lid of that coffee pot
Now *will* you, Mary?
Why on *earth* can't you get it *hot*!
Why *can't* you, Mary!
This stuff's cold as a puppy's nose,
Or a lonely, shivering, early rose
That blooms in the snow as the March wind blows!
Understand, Mary?

Now then, Mary! It is twelve o'clock!
The breakfast, Mary!
Where *did* you get that smudgy frock—
Good Gracious, Mary!
Oh, NO!! The steak comes *after* fish!
And, Say! We've one more darling wish:—
Don't serve the cheese in the butter-dish!
Now *don't!* *Don't*, Mary!

Tea-time, Mary! You've been told before,
Haven't you, Mary?
The hour is *Four*—not half-*past* Four!
Fiddlesticks! Mary!
“No biscuit?” Of course! Same old way!
Do you think we're *here* to hear you say:—
“De biskit finish yisterday?”
Great Heavens! MARY!

[Dinner-time, every day:—]

No salt! No spoons! Ice if you please!
Mustard, Mary!
You've spilled the gravy on my knees!
N-E-V-E-R M-I-N-D, Mary!
Oh, let's shut down the blooming mess!
We'll starve, perhaps, but nevertheless
Be quit of the fathomless cussedness
Of our gurl Mary!

THAT EXCELLENT HEART

How often we hear some kind critic inveigh
Against some one—not present, you know!
How he'd have done this thing a far different way,
And that thing have done so and so.
He will analyze closely each venial sin,
Each motive or speech tear apart;
Then, suddenly conscious, will deftly slip in
The cant of the excellent heart!

The absent one's clothes he will oft criticise—
They are either too coarse or too fine;
Profoundly he'll gabble and look very wise
O'er some fellow's fondness for wine.
Like a Guayaquil parrot, he'll chatter all day,
Down Ruin's road every one start;
Then, rememb'ring himself, have something to say
Of the undoubtedly excellent heart!

The absent one thinks that the critic's his friend,
For he's eaten his bread and his salt,
And will lend him his money if he has it to lend—
For he's generous, is he, to a fault.
But the critic is blind to all virtues, be sure,
Save when they add gall to his dart;
But one balm does he offer his back-wounds to cure;
Oh, I am *sick* of that excellent heart!

THE MAN WHO IS ALWAYS RIGHT

'Tis oh, for the might of a master mind
And the grace of a gifted pen!
That Apollo's lyre and Sappho's fire
Might be awaked again,
To suggest the choicest thoughts and words,
To assist, direct, indite,
And to make the song remembered long
Of the man who is always right!

Oh, beloved of all the gods is he,
The most fortunate of men!
And many of us are envious,
In spite of Commandment Ten,
As we see him glance serenely down
From his moral, mental height,
And note the smile, so free from guile,
Of the man who is always right!

His virtue, like Saint Anthony's,
Is ninety above proof!
From cards and drinks he wisely shrinks,
And holds himself aloof!
He has no venial weaknesses,
His soul is spotless, white;
Vice leaves no trace on the tranquil face
Of the man who is always right!

There is nothing that he does not know
All, everything about!
O'er questions vexed he is ne'er perplexed,
Nor troubled with a doubt!
His *ipse dicta* clouds dispel
As the day o'ercomes the night;
Oh, the happiest man since the world began
Is the man who is always right!

There is hope of a tree if it be cut down,
There is hope for the withered grass!
There is hope on the deck of a storm-toss'd
wreck,
But no hope for us, alas!
We are doomed to be always in the wrong,
And to linger 'neath the blight
Of the chilly air and frosty glare
Of the man who is always right!

A PANAMA LULLABY

LULLABY, lullaby, child of the morning,

List to the matin bells hailing the day ;

See the sun blithely the cloudlets adorning,

Ere beginning his journey from far down the bay.

Lovingly, tenderly, each cloud caressing

With glances of love-light and fingers of gold,

For each one doth hold for my darling a blessing,

That each hour of the day shall gently unfold.

Lullaby, lullaby, child of the even,

List to the vesper bells closing the day ;

See the moon marshal the star-hosts of heaven

Ere beginning her journey from far down the bay.

Lovingly, tenderly, each star caressing

With glances of love-light and fingers of gold ;

For each one doth hold for my darling a blessing,

That each hour of the night shall gently unfold.

Oh, child of the dawning, child of the gloaming,

Light of my spirit and pride of my heart !

Down into dreamland go fearlessly roaming :

Thy heart from my bosom shall ne'er be apart.

By day and by night I will guard thee securely—

Thy life is my life, my glorious boy—

In my arms slumbering—guilelessly, purely,

Thou'rt God's choicest gift and man's greatest joy !

A TROPIC NOCTURNE

Now the waves are softly murmuring their evening
hymn of praise,
And the fleecy clouds are listening in the stars' prismatic rays;
All the palms are gently nodding in the moon's
argental light,
And the tireless loom of Time fast weaves the royal
robe of Night.

Out upon the sheeny waters rides a snowy-sailed
canoe,
And the boatman chants an Ave, bidding vanished
day adieu;
Crooning cradle-songs of Ocean weary souls to rest
invite,
And the drowsy Evening falls asleep upon the breast
of Night.

Deep and deeper grows the purple of the distant
mountain range;
Stars and waters, palms and moonbeams loving
benisons exchange;
In the hush of drooping silence, with resistless,
tender might,
Reigns, serene in her omnipotence, the goddess-
empress Night.

SAN LORENZO

CLOUD-CRESTED San Lorenzo guards
The Chagres' entrance still,
Tho' o'er each stone dense moss hath grown,
And earth his moat doth fill.
His bastions, feeble with decay,
Steadfastly view the sea,
And sternly wait the certain fate
The ages shall decree.

His reservoir is filled with slime,
Where noxious insects breed;
Corroding rust its greedy lust
On shot and gun doth feed;
The moaning wind sobs dismally
Thro' crumbling port and hold;
The staring owl and reptile foul
Thrive on his donjon's mold.

Left there, a sentry lone to strive
Against some Morgan's crew—
To guard our wives' and children's lives
Should the past itself renew;
To breast and buffet every storm,
To falter not nor fail;
His charge to keep; nor toil nor sleep
Against him to prevail.

Still standeth San Lorenzo there,
Aye faithful at his post,
Tho' scoffing trees in every breeze
Their prime and vigor boast.
His garrison is but the shades
Of soldiers of the past,
But it pleaseth him, alone and grim,
To watch until the last!

OUR LITTLE LANDSCAPE

ACROSS the little landscape of our lives
The shadows of the whole world seem to flit ;
Ere one departs another one arrives,
So limited, so very small is it.

The passions of the universe crowd here—
Here gather Love and Joy and Hate and Pain :
The first fall ill, soon leave us with a tear ;
The last, at once acclimatized, remain.

From East to West 'tis scarce a tenth degree,
This parallelogram whereon we dwell ;
'Tis only fifty miles from sea to sea,
But far from heaven, far too close to hell !

THE WANING MOON

HERE's a health to the waning moon, my boys,
To the waning tropical moon!
She smiles us her blessing, tho' faint, 'tis sincere,
'Twill be nearer and clearer soon!
So gather around me, your glasses fill high!
Anger and worry! Come, let them go by!
Here's hoping you never, no, never may die!
And a health to the waning moon!

She leaves us a time, but returns soon again
In fresh and more gorgeous array!
And so will our sorrows, in far different guise,
As joys gladden some coming day!
Then stand to me steady, and smile thro' your tears!
Pluck up your courage, and banish your fears!
Here's hoping all happiness thousands of years,
And a health to the waning moon!

THE NEVER-FAILING FRIEND

You have days, yes, weeks of loneliness that never
 seem to end,
When you're sure the world's against you, and you
 haven't got a friend;
You are weary and discouraged, and you wish the
 fight was o'er,
For your heart is almost bursting, and your soul is
 sick and sore.

There's no music in the billows, there's no balm
 upon the breeze;
There's no gladness in the sunlight—only sadness in
 the trees!
Life has grown to be a burden that you can no
 longer bear,
Or an ever-changing puzzle that you give up in
 despair.

Then it is some fellow tells you that he's always been
 your friend;
Swears you know it—that he's proved it on occa-
 sions without end!
That once more he's going to do so—if you'll never
 breathe a word—
Then repeats some nasty gossip that about you he
 has heard!

Lord preserve us, or we perish! We can't stand it
very long!
We are growing weak and weaker, and the pressure's
growing strong!
Order up thy mightiest cannons, and the trembling
walls defend,
For they're tottering 'neath the onslaughts of the
never-failing friend.

KING FEVER

He's ruler of rulers o'er all the earth,

King Fever is his name!

From the monarch grown gray to the prince at his
birth,

King Fever is his name!

Before him, emperor, sultan, and czar,

President, pontiff, mikado, and shah,

Caliph and mandarin powerless are,

King Fever is his name!

All, all must approach him with sceptreless hands,

King Fever is his name!

For his are their subjects, their crowns and their
lands,

King Fever is his name!

His are their diadems, jewels and wealth;

Naught can they hide from him, sly tho' their
stealth;

Heirs or inheritance, beauty or health,

King Fever is his name!

Then hail! All hail, to the Great Socialist!

King Fever is his name!

Whose levelling power none can resist,

King Fever is his name!

Whose might can demolish the whole Chinese Wall,

And round our poor craniums rebuild it all—

Whose flames burn alike the great and the small—

King Fever is his name!

THE SONG OF THE MOSQUITO

IN Hades' blackest corner
A murky river flows;
No imp knows whence it cometh,
No devil where it goes.
'Twas in its noisome vapor
That Satan watched my birth,
And just through simple kindness
I winged my way to earth:

I'm a very small mosquito,
In Aspinwall I dwell;
By days I'm inoffensive,
But nights I'm merry—well,
I tune my tiny fiddle,
I sound my tiny gong,
And make folks' lives a burden
With the burden of my song!

My touch is light and downy—
They know not I am there
Till *sin!* what howls and curses!
'Tis laughable, I swear!
I draw my little dagger,
I cock my little eye,
And make the meekest Christian
Hate God, and wish to die!

“NO ICE”

(A LITANY OF THIRST)

FROM a lowly latitude,
Seeking Thy beatitude;
From a long-forgotten spot,
From creation's darkest blot,
Comes a sound of rushing tears.
Doth no other reach Thine ears?

Listen, Lord!

Turn Thy head! Look West—look South!
Canst Thou see the Chagres' mouth?
Yes! Look there—below it—there!
Thro' the mist that fouls the air,
Thro' malaria's noisome veil,
Hear'st Thou not the frenzied wail?

Listen, Lord!

There, beneath the starry cross—
Emblem of Thy self-planned loss!
There, where in his burning hand,
Satan clutches sea and land,
Pilgrims, fainting with despair,
Hoarsely iterate one prayer:

Listen, Lord!

Cringing, shrinking, kneeling there,
Thro' scorching night and midday glare;

Craving only that Thy grace
May assign their plea a place;
Of Thy largess asking naught
Save the boon that Dives sought:
Listen, Lord!

THE SAND-FLY

OH, Lord! Oh, Nature! Oh, whatever be
The power properly addressed,
I pray thee humbly—pray on bended knee—
Grant this one plea, deny the rest!

'Tis little that I ask from out the store
Of blessings in thy right to give;
And surely thou dost daily waste much more
On folks less fit than I to live!

I crave but this: That from the different kinds
Of insects cursing night and day—
(The entomologist claims that he finds
Five hundred thousand, so they say)—

Thou wilt at once destroy, annihilate,
Permit no longer to exist—
Efface, cut off, rub out, obliterate
The pesky sand-fly from the list!

THE SONG OF THE PRICKLY HEAT

With face drawn into a scowl,
With teeth well into his tongue,
Perspiring, like any old leaky pump,
Squirmed a man no longer young.
Scratch, scratch, scratch,
From forehead down to feet!
And still tho' his voice with anger rang,
'Mid grunts and curses he hoarsely sang
This song of the prickly heat!

Itch, itch, itch,
Till night drives the day away!
Itch, itch, itch,
Till day drives the night away!
Arms and stomach and legs,
Neck and ankles and back,
Digging them all till they scorch and bleed,
From one to the other with lightning speed,
Like a demented jumping-jack!

Oh, 'tis off with your coat and vest!
'Tis off with your shoes and pants!
Till, naked and bare, your skin you tear
In a wild Saint Vitus dance!
Scratch, scratch, scratch,
With ever-waxing ire!
While into each pore a needle darts,
And the cuticle burns and shrivels and smarts,
Like blisters of hell's own fire!

Itch, itch, itch,
While the months a-whirling go!
Itch, itch, itch,
As the years to decades grow!
Oh, God, for a moment's rest!
Or, if I can't be granted that,
In one spot quench the teasing flame,
Or blot that spot from my tortured frame—
The spot that I can't get at.

With face drawn into a scowl,
With teeth well into his tongue,
Perspiring, like any old leaky pump,
Squirmed a man no longer young.
Scratch, scratch, scratch,
From forehead down to feet!
And still tho' his voice with anger rang
(I wonder himself he doesn't hang!)
'Mid grunts and curses he hoarsely sang
This song of the prickly heat!

SONG OF THE MISANTHROPE

OH, I'm a sullen misanthrope,
A hater of my kind ;
Man's faults, as thro' a microscope,
Wax large within my mind.
Each sin that others trifling think
To me is great, indeed ;
And crimes from which most people shrink
My taste for misery feed.

In every eye I plainly see
The evil lurking there ;
Beneath each gentle voice to me
Appears a guileful snare.
In hand-clasps smooth hypocrisy
I always can detect,
And e'en a hat doffed courteously
But envy doth reflect.

All tenderness is selfishness,
That veils some low desire ;
And purity to me is less
Than vileness in the mire.
And lofty thoughts, he, he, ho, ho,
What sport they give to me !
Their sire is Vanity, I know !
Still lives the Pharisee !

Each weakness human nature shows
Is meat and drink for me,
And o'er man's many wrongs and woes
I laugh in hearty glee!
'Twas Malice who wrote Friendship's laws,
With Spite, her sister elf!
I hate my fellow-man because
I'm hateful to myself!

A M A R V E L

“The body of a man weighing one hundred and fifty-four pounds contains forty-six quarts of water.”—*Curious Facts*.

WHAT? Forty-six quarts of water
To eleven stone of man?
You're wrong in your figures, Mister,
If you talk of an Isthmian!
Come down and live in the tropics,
And perspire a year or two;
Then alter your calculations
Till they're somewhat nearer true!

Instead of quarts say gallons—
And even then you'll be
Full many a cask found lacking
Of the proper quantity!
Why, bless your soul and body,
When the sun shines after a show'r,
Most men will sweat a hogshead
Of water in an hour!

And therein lies the marvel,
If one stops to think awhile;
'Tis a puzzle where it comes from
In such a liquid pile!
Is't the dampness of the climate,
Or something far more queer?
One thing is mighty certain:
Folks don't *drink* water here!

GEOGRAPHICAL

WHERE the longitude's mean and the latitude's low,
Where the hot winds of summer perennially blow,
Where the mercury chokes the thermometer's throat,
And the dust is as thick as the hair on a goat,
Where one's mouth is as dry as a mummy accurst—
There lieth the Land of Perpetual Thirst.

EPIGRAM

To be clever 's a very fine thing no doubt
And goodness is something to sigh for ;
To be clever and good—that lets us out,
So decency 's all we can try for !

HE'LL NEVER DIE

ON gloomy Styx's banks I stand
Great crowds are passing over ;
And patiently I watch and wait
One party to discover.

The ferry daily busier grows—
Old Charon shakes with laughter—
Yet vainly do I seek the face
Of the man whose luck I'm after !

WHEN THE TRADE-WIND BLOWS AGAIN

MANY suns will lag and loiter from the Blue Hills to
the sea,
Dragging lengthening days behind them to the
. vague eternity;
Many moons will arch their crescents over forest,
field, and fen
Ere the storm-clouds cease to lower and the trade-
wind blows again.

But he's coming, oh, he's coming, tho' he's long
upon the way!
We'll forget the weary waiting when he bounds
across the bay!
He's been trafficking with Boreas within his chilly
den,
And we'll profit by his bargains when the trade-
wind blows again.

He is roaming thro' the piney woods, and storing
up the scent!
He is bottling for us perfumes that no chemist can
invent!
He's exploring vale and mountain, liliated lake and
mossy glen
For the presents he will bring us when the trade-
wind blows again.

He is scouring round for ozone—simply cramming
all his trunks
With the precious stuff to heave at us in large and
luscious chunks!
Talk about the gifts of Sheba to the luckiest of men,
Why, they won't be in it, brother, when the trade-
wind blows again!

“TO BLAME?”

HE was to blame, you say, sir?
Now, just look here, my friend,
Don't you think your criticisms
The ears of Christ offend?
'Twas He who once said, Judge not!
And He alone can tell
Whose “negligence” occasioned
The loss of the *Moselle*.

“Neglect?” Oh, yes, 'tis easy
For lubbers just like you
To spin out yarns in fathoms,
And for fools to think 'em true!
Who taught *you* navigation?
How long have *you* been to sea?
You don't know port from starboard,
Or weather side from lee!

The facts are *these*: Our captain
Was new upon this coast,
But a better man nor braver
The whole line couldn't boast!
He knew his business, too, sir,
As well as it could be known,
But he couldn't run the currents
Or storms of the Torrid Zone!

The course he set 's been sailed on
For more than a hundred trips
By a hundred different captains,
Who haven't lost their ships!
Who sent the gale that swept us
With lightning speed ahead?
Who sent the sea like mountains
And the darkness of the dead?

I'll bet my next month's wages
You've lost *your* way on shore!
At sea, and in a tempest,
Is a damned sight different score!
How's man to sight his headlands
When God obscures the view?
I'd like to have an answer—
Who'll tell me, sir—can *you*?

He's dead!—a hero, too, sir,
If ever there was one!
He died to do his duty—
What more could he have done?
“To blame?” He paid the forfeit!
And Jesus always lets
The punishment fall lightly
On a man who pays his debts!

ON RONCADOR

No more the boatswain's pipe shall call
 To quarters on her deck!
On Roncador, on Roncador
 She lies—a lonely wreck!
No more shall bugler colors sound,
 Nor tuneful taps shall play!
On Roncador, on Roncador,
 In silence ends the day!

No more shall curious visitor
 Be shown her famous gun!
On Roncador, on Roncador,
 Her guerdon she hath won!
Haul down the flag left flying there—
 No record let there be
Of how we lost on Roncador
 Our veteran of the sea!

'Tis better thus to lay away
 A memory of the past,
Whose strife hath ended in a peace
 Forevermore to last!
Rest on, thou brave old *Kearsarge*, rest!
 The waves that round thee surge
Shall on the shore of Roncador
 For ages chant thy dirge!

THE VISIT

WHILE the planets sang together
At this old world's birth,
Beauty loosed her golden fetters—
Winged her way to earth.
Hither, thither, free she rambled
Over sea and land;
Aimlessly she gaily wandered
To far Carib's strand.

On the laughing trade-wind's bosom
Came she to entrance
Into brightness all things gloomy
Simply by her glance.
She draped the palm, festooned the lily,
Gave the sky its hue—
Santa Rita looming distant,
Robed in wondrous blue.

Kissed the pear, smiled on the mango,
Decked the pine with fringe,
Dyed the orange and banana
With the sunlight's tinge.
Flitted thro' the tangled forest,
Strewing fragrance rare,
And where'er she paused a moment,
Placed an orchid there.

Graced the slender, swaying bamboo,
Crowned the cottonwood ;
Ferns and crotons sprang around her
As she smiling stood.
Birds and blossoms dressed in prisms
Her handiwork caressed—
Then sped on her journey, leaving
Man alone unblessed !

A NEW YEAR'S RAINBOW

It rose this morning out of the sea,
Just as the sun was peeping,
With glances bright at the distant night
That still in the West was sleeping.
The rain that in the sombre dawn
Like tears from the clouds was falling
Had passed away while the god of day
The darkness was enthralling.

And it said, "Faint heart, take cheer! Take cheer,
And behold the sign and token
I bring to thee from over the sea,
Of the promise never broken!
The grief I follow shall ne'er return:
Oh, list to my joyous message!
Dost thou not know that my gleaming bow
Of a glad New Year is presage?"

THE COMRADES OF THE PLEASANT PAST

THE comrades of the pleasant past,
The cronies of our halcyon days,
Aside frail friendship's ties have cast,
And journeyed their appointed ways.

Some in the land that gave them birth
Our very names have long forgot;
Some, wanderers upon the earth,
'Mid other scenes recall us not.

Out yonder on the fateful hill,
Where erst we laid them down to rest,
Some, unremembered, slumber still,
In earth's embrace more surely blest.

And some, although they linger here,
Have sought and found environment,
Where, to our hearts tho' ever near,
Far from our homes they woo content.

The welcome bond, the willing chain,
We fondly forged in passion's glow,
Their fancied strength could not maintain;
We thought them steel: we find them tow!

Thus ever ends the pretty play
We act on life's capricious stage;
Once learned, we fling old parts away,
And con new rôles from fresher page.

All love, like filmiest gossamer,
Is transient as the clouds above:
Soon lost among the things that were,
Save love of self and mother-love!

TO MNEMOSYNE

*On the other side of Jordan,
In the green fields of Eden,
Where the Tree of Life is blooming,
There is rest for me.*

Draw aside thy magic curtain,
Memory!
Once again my native country
I would see—
Once again behold the village
Down beside the sweeping river
That was once the River Jordan
Unto me.

Draw thy veil till days of childhood
Are in sight!
Hold it . . . till mine eyes are 'customed
To the light—
To the light that once did show them
The meadow fields of clover
That were Green Fields of Eden,
Wonder-bright.

Let me walk again the forest,
Goddess kind!
And the mighty silver-maple
I shall find,

That, with branches spreading splendor,
As I gazed in awe and rapture,
Seemed the Tree of Life in blossom,
To my mind.

I would go again to meeting,
Memory!
Would my heart not burn within me,
Could it be!
From the high pew in the corner,
Hear the congregation singing,
“There is rest for the weary—
Rest for me!”

*There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for me!*

I KNEW thee then. Semiramis was Queen
 Who stripped the foliage from the lettuce leaf
 And asked Cambyses if he thought the green
 More handsome, or the stalk—the barren sheaf.
 Ah, those were cruel days! Men loved and killed
 Their loves; and women hired assassins fell
 To clear the path that, strong and stubborn-willed,
 They wished to follow, were it ill or well.
 Yet those were days of sweetness, too; I think
 As sweet as any I have known thro' all
 My many lives, since first upon the brink
 Of Chaos standing, Eros heard my call
 And led me trembling from the dread abyss,
 Through forests scarce attained to leafy growth,
 Nine days afar, to where the waters kiss
 The setting sun and plight their nightly troth.

Thy hair was then the raven tint that now
 Absorbs the light and gladdens with its glow
 The eyes that 'neath a smooth uplifting brow
 A deathless spirit, dauntless purpose show.
 —Blue eyes were then unknown: they of the cold
 And heartless North were bred, as toward the Pole
 The earth grew warmer and the years grew old.
 We were too soon for azure self-control!

Thy form the same: so slight, and yet not slight,
Save as the willow-branch the tempest bends
But cannot break, is slight. And, as her right,
The dwelling-place whence Grace her influence
sends—

Her chosen palace, undivided throne!
And all the charm of manner and of mind—
The nameless atmosphere, distinctive, lone,
That those long years ago I found, I find.

I would that I might call again on Thought
To map before mine inward eye the scene
Of those fair years when we for Knowledge
sought—

When I was still thy subject, thou the Queen!
Much would I thank the gods that know—
They of the Power—Ancient of the Days—
If once again the inky pool would show
The well-loved picture to my raptured gaze.

Yet still I am content—almost content—
To know, or even think I know, to thee
There strays a thought of those days fondly spent.
To know I knew Thee then—thou knewest Me!

OUR UNCLE SAM

ONE hundred and twenty-nine years ago,
This was a memorable day:
In the swaddling-cloth of starry flag,
Our Uncle Samuel lay!

The Lords of the North, the Kings of the East,
The royal rulers of earth,
All watched from afar with curious eyes,
The infant prodigy's birth.

They watched him fight for the right to live,
They saw him win pow'r and pelf,
And—to conquer his weakness and be a man—
They saw him fight with himself!

And yet again they watched him fight
In a neighbor's righteous cause,
And they see that neighbor free to-day,
Under her people's laws!

O great indeed is our Uncle Sam
And his greatness ne'er shall cease!
For greatest of all his conquests won,
Are his victories of peace!

A Nation given to the world,
A giant's task begun,
Show what our Uncle Sam can do
In an orbit of the sun.

Ten years from date he'll amputate
The Western Hemisphere,
And siamese the mighty seas
To bring the distant near!

'Tis said his nieces and nephews boast
Too much their relationship;
But who'll condemn us, this Day of Days,
If our good manners trip.

For from Plymouth Rock to the Golden Gate,
From Alaska's snowy clime,
From the sunny shores of the southern gulf,
There comes a song sublime!

From the Occident, and the far-away isles
That gem the Orient sea,
There swells to-day that song of songs:—
“MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE!”

And so, with loving, loyal hearts,
We drain the sparkling dram
To the glorious toast heard 'round the world:—
GOD BLESS OUR UNCLE SAM!

JULY 4, 1905.

CHIARINI AND HIS ELEPHANT

CHIARINI and his elephant have been here a week
or more,
Giving us an object-lesson every evening o'er and
o'er;
And he's left us now as ignorant as when he first
began
To illustrate to the public the most frequent fate
of man.

What a stupid crowd we must have been to watch
him every night,
Grinning grimly at the tragedy enacted in our sight!
Grinning grimly as the mighty beast obeyed his beck
and nod—
Scowling darkly as he used his goad or shining silver
prod!
I say, what fools we must have been when, the poor
brute's labor done,
We smiled to see its pleasure o'er the insufficient
bun,
To have never gazed upon the glass Chiarini held
on high,
And beheld the truth reflected—and turned away
to cry!
For there's many men and women we can quickly
call to mind
Who have left both home and country, left even
hope behind,

Who are acting out life's ghastly farce before us
every day,
Who are shambling thro' their petty parts as best
they can or may,
Who forget the goad of avarice in the pat upon the
head,
And forgive the prod of silver for the needful loaf
of bread!

All hail, then, Chiarini! Teach your lesson all
about!
You may, sometime, meet people who have sense to
find it out!

IN MEMORIAM

HE's dead! He's dead! Poor Jack is dead,
And gone to the monkey heaven;
He was very young when he was born,
And he died at the age of seven.

I state this age for the sake of rhyme.
Yet, wise ones, do not laugh,
For truth is oft thus sacrificed
To write an epitaph.

He lived a strictly moral life,
Though at heart a sybarite;
His mind a mine of wisdom was,
And nature his delight.

Though all the sciences he loved,
First came anatomy;
And that is how he came to be
An expert in phlebotomy.

He passed his life examining
All the insects he could get;
And all life's secrets were to him
An open book, you bet!

And, thoughtless stranger, if you knew
The things he must have known,
We'd have to move to another world,
For you'd claim this as your own.

So, dear old Jack, pray think of us
As you eat your pease and rice,
And swing contented by your tail
On the trees of Paradise!

THE EPITAPH

HERE lies—although he told the truth,
Or so to do did always try—
A hybrid—neither man nor youth.
I pray thee, stranger, let him lie!

His failings, his and his alone,
Tho' possibly inherited,
He only wished upon the stone
Above his bones, to have it said:

He sought with zeal the narrow way
Of virtue and sobriety;
He found it—but the selfsame day
Grew tired of the society!

So chose he then, in pride bedecked,
To build a pathway of his own;
He failed—he was no architect!
His sins were his—let him atone!

SAINTS' REST

ONE day quite recently a knock
At heaven's brazen gates
Ascended to the lofty post
Where the warder, listening, waits;
Who, summoning his shining host,
Came down his private stair
To question, as his custom is,
The suppliant waiting there.
He touched the mystic spring that throws
The mighty bolts aside,
And with a twist of his saintly wrist
The portals opened wide.

Before him stood a ghastly wreck
Of manhood's promise fair,
Who bore the gaze of all the throng
With a damn-if-I-care air.
He was, in truth, a broken man—
Malaria's cankering hand
Had stamped wan face and drooping form
With her enduring brand.
His joints were swollen, shoulders bent,
And as his shrivelled bones
Contorted 'neath his shrunken skin,
He gasped between his groans:

“ Oh, I’m the greatest sinner that
Has e’er been here before,
For each commandment of the law
I’ve broken o’er and o’er!
I’ve taken God’s great name in vain
A million times, I think;
And caused the good, with horror struck,
From my foul words to shrink!
I’ve worshipped idols countless times—
In fact, these later days
I’ve broken that express command
A thousand different ways!

“ Since childhood’s long-gone, happy hours
The Sabbath I’ve ignored;
If ever I have gone to church,
I’ve been supremely bored;
And I’ve dishonored parents dear,
Oh, time and time again!
I killed while running on the road
I’m sure full fifty men!
I’ve coveted each separate thing
My neighbors have possessed,
And to adultery’s kindly crime
I’ve frequently confessed!

“ False witness I have freely borne—
I’ve lied my whole life long;
And taken, doubtless, many things
That did not to me belong!

In short, there's not a single vice
That I've not wallowed in :
I am a very monument
Of reeking, hideous sin !
But—" Here that dreadful, loathsome thing
Approached Saint Peter's ear,
And murmured something that alone
The stooping guard could hear.

And then before that startled throng
Saint Peter grasped his hand ;
And motioning his shining host
Each side the gate to stand,
He led him to the golden stairs,
And pointing straight ahead,
In clarion, far-reaching voice
To the wretched pilgrim said :
" Climb up, O weary one, climb up !
Climb high ! Climb higher yet,
Until you reach the plush-lined seats
That only martyrs get !
Then sit you down and rest yourself
While years of bliss roll on ! "

Then to the angels he remarked :
" *He's been living in Colon !* "

TWO WORDS

THERE are many things I love, my friends, and
many things I hate;
There are things I simply reverence, things I
abominate!
And I'd like to tell them all to you, outspoken, frank,
and fair;
But 'twould take more time and patience than we've
either got to spare.

So we'll drop externals totally, for Nature drew the
plan;
We can't change it one iota, nor no other power
can!
She placed thorns among the roses, gave the peach
its bloom and fuzz,
Some of us made straight, some crooked: "Hand-
some is that handsome does."

There are faces that are beautiful—as fair as
angels' wings!
There are faces so repulsive that their flaws a shud-
der brings!
But the loveliest face you ever saw may veil a leper's
taint,
And the face that's most repellent may disguise a
very saint!

'Tis in deed and motive we must look for all our
loves and loathes,
For appearances of good and ill are masquerading
clothes!
There's no man or woman either that forever can
deceive;
There's a warp or woof that's rotten in each fabric
that they weave!

So to come right down to business, all I love and
all I hate
Just two words describe completely—just two words
most fully state!
They are easy words to think of, they are hard
words to forget:
They hold all the good and evil that the world's
discovered yet!

I love gentlemen in thought and act who to them-
selves are true!
I love women who are faithful, whose devotion's
ever new!
I love people whose ambition is the wreath of
verity—
These I love, and these I find in this one word:
Sincerity!

I hate meanness, hate deception, and I hate a
pander—cur!
I hate arrogance and treachery, I hate a slanderer!

Hate a liar, hate the “ codfish ” in our aristocracy!—
These I hate, and these I find in this one word:
Hypocrisy!

You will pardon me these platitudes—I wasn’t
“ called ” to preach,
And I’m struggling for a higher plane than I fear
I’ll ever reach;
But I’d be very happy if, in spite of frowning fate, ,
I could make some people love and hate the things
I love and hate!

THEN AND NOW

SPAKE the Lord to His suffering servant,
The mild-mannered martyr of Uz,
From the midst of the turbulent tempest—
As the Lord most generally does :

“ Who is this that darkeneth counsel
By words without knowledge or sense?
Where wert thou when I laid the foundations
Of earth in the darkness intense?

“ When the morning stars chanted together,
And my suns shouted loudly for glee?
When I made the cloud-garment of ocean,
And his limits did fix and decree?

“ Hast thou ever commanded the dawning
By the light of thy signified grace?
Didst thou cause by thy precepts and teaching
The dayspring to know his own place?

“ Unto thee have the gates of death opened?
Hast thou seen the door's shadow thereof?
And the dwellings of light and of darkness—
Their places, dost know aught whereof?

“ Who gendered the hoar-frost of heaven?
Out of whose womb cometh the ice?
Will the waters pour forth their abundance
From the clouds at the sound of thy voice?

“ Canst thou bind the sweet power of Pleiad?
The bands of Orion unband?
Canst thou send forth the thunder and lightning,
Or hold them sedate in thy hand?

“ Shall he that contendeth instruct Me?
His duty to God shall he tell?
Let him that reproves the Almighty
Make answer—and answer it well!”

Thus spake the Lord out of the whirlwind
To the mild-mannered martyr of Uz;
But the Lord asked too many questions,
As, somehow, the Lord always does!

Yet now, if He'd speak in a zephyr,
The mildest that blows o'er the bay,
He'd get answers to all of His queries
Ere the sound of His voice died away!

FIDUS ACHATES

(A PET DOG)

O FAITHFUL friend! Companion
Of many Isthmian years!
Through dry and rainy season,
Through happiness and tears,
I've never known thee falter,
Whatever chance might bring :
Thy faith's an open psalter,
From which thy praise I sing!

Thy love each year increaseth
By never act of mine;
My conduct ever pleaseth
That wondrous heart of thine!
Tho' oft neglected, slighted,
On days of selfish gloom,
Thy fondness ne'er is blighted,
But e'er in fuller bloom!

Should Time decree us parting—
Oh, may this never be!—
I'll curse the fate disheart'ning
That severs me from thee!
May Death unbarb his arrow
Whene'er toward thee he shoots,
And spare my soul to harrow,
For I love thee, "Mr. Toots!"

W A R N E D

THERE is, so old Mohammed said
Some little time ago
(It was, if memory serves me well,
Twelve hundred years or so!),
A wondrous bridge across the space
'Twixt Earth and Paradise,
Of marvellous construction and
Most curious device.

Not wider is its footpath than
A famished spider's web;
The knife-edge of the guillotine
Is wider, so 'tis said!
And far beneath its dizzy height
Lies Hell's appalling gloom,
Where tortured souls forevermore
Work out their awful doom.
And o'er this gruesome bridge must pass
The spirits of the dead,
With no less speed and no less weight
Than Thought and Lightning wed!
The soul that travels safely here
Must sort its sins with care,
Nor e'er attempt a heavy one
Upon the span to bear.

Of all the sins that falls have caused
To those upon the trip,
That bulky load, hypocrisy,
Has made the most to slip.
If this is really so, dear friends,
Disastrously, I fear,
Will end the parlous journey when
We on the bridge appear!

TRANSMIGRATION

АH, ha, I know you now at last!
I've traced you thro' the ghostly past!
Down from the far Azoic Age
I know your each succeeding stage!
I mind you well! When I was stone
You could not then leave me alone,
For you were fungus—choked my breath
With your putrescent, mouldy death!
When I a megatherium—
The last surviving—had become,
You were the scale upon my eyes,
You were the itch upon my thighs!
And then when I was pachyderm
And ruminant, each in their turn,
You were the poison in the mud—
The bitter herb that spoiled the cud!

I was a monkey, then a man;
You first a louse, then saurian.
I know! 'Tis scarce a thousand years
Since you, a crocodile in tears,
Swam up the Ganges, ate my child,
And with your slime the stream defiled!
And then when I in Lisbon town
Incurred the Inquisition's frown,
You were the fiend in red and black
Who pressed the levers of the rack!

I died for liberty ; you were
The tyrant's executioner !
Your presence then became a joy—
You lost your power to annoy !
You saw my smile and your mistake,
And quickly did that sphere forsake.
Since then you haven't been a man ;
To retrograde you then began,
And now, tho' still with me you stay,
You're that to-morrow, this to-day.
The cur that howls the whole night through,
The fever lurking in the dew,
The sand-fly on my blood intent,
The sly mosquito, pestilent !
The ant that o'er the sugar crawls,
The spider on my head that falls !
You've found your office once again—
Your sharpest tool is petty pain !
Your greater efforts lose their wings—
You're potent but in little things !
Ah, yes, I know you thoroughly !
You'll cling to me eternally ;
And reincarnate though I be
Thro' century on century,
You'll dog my footsteps night and day
Till sense and matter pass away !
To happiness superlative
You are the prefix negative !
The qualification Evil sent—
Your name is *dis* and mine *content* !

A TOAST

I DRINK to him who when he knows he's wrong
Has manliness enough to say so;
Whose Yes, when others dodge, is clear and strong,
Who when he thinks No will but say No.

I drink to him whose spoken Yea and Nay
No skulkers shelter just behind them;
Whose sentiments are open as the day,
So when one needs them one can find them.

I drink to him who to his own affairs
Pays sole and strict attention purely;
Who deals not in his neighbor's wares—
For he's a *rara avis* surely!

SAINT PATRICK

HERE'S to you, dear old Patrick,
In tuns of Irish wine,
That tastes of bog and peat-fire,
And that merry heart of thine!
A hundred healths I've pledged you,
A hundred more I'll drink!
God keeps you, His pet crony,
Near His right hand, I think!

You, doubtless, sit there musing
O'er the life that had to pass;
Why don't you come and join me
In one last fragrant glass!
In body 'tis not possible—
You've cast flesh-pots away;
But aid me with your spirit
To drink your natal day!

You won't? 'Tis not your fault, then:
You've had your little fling,
And now you're sublimated—
Wear halo, robe, and wing!
But know, my dear old fellow,
I've kindly thoughts of thee
As I quaff this nightcap, dreaming
Of Seventeenths to be!

MALACHI

THE last of the prophets—old Malachi—

Way up on the great coping-stone
Of the loftiest tower of Paradise,
Sat pensively musing alone
As, weary of walking the golden streets,
And inspecting the palaces fair,
In my dream I ascended the battlements,
And discovered him sitting there.

I knew him at once, and I hastily climbed
Over many a huge parapet,
Till I reached him at last, and sat by his side
On the top of the tall minaret.
He seemed down in the mouth—dejected, in fact,
And I marvelled profoundly thereat ;
But, laconic as ever, he gave me Good-day,
And told me to take off my hat.

He'd a halo round *his* head that wouldn't come off,
Or he'd shed it, at least so he said ;
He remarked that he'd worn it for two thousand
years,
And 'twas getting as heavy as lead.
“ In fact,” said he, “ stranger, I'm awfully tired
Of—well, nearly everything here ;
The things that once seemed to me wondrously fine
Are becoming unbearably drear.

“ I am tired of the sunlight that never grows dim,
And I long for a shower of rain ;
A regular flood would be welcomed by me
Could I see but a rainbow again !
I am tired of metallic, glittering streets,
And I long for an old country road ;
I long for the mountains, the valleys, the fields—
To ride with the hay on the load !

“ I long for the trees, for the flowers, and ferns,
And I long to hear birds sing again ;
I am tired of the sound of hosanna and harp—
Stringed instruments give me a pain !
The jaspery sea is quite beautiful, yes,
But of late it is rather a bore ;
I am perfectly crazy to plunge in the surf,
And to smell the salt water once more !

“ I am tired of the summer—I wish it would snow !
I'd like to see hoar-frost and ice !
I'd like to build forts, and slide down the hills—
Oh, *wouldn't* that be mighty nice !
I'd like to be out in a howling old gale—
To buffet and battle the storm !
I wouldn't mind getting completely chilled through
For the bliss of again getting warm !

“ And, say!—never breathe it!—I once knew a girl
When I sojourned in Palestine there,
Whose shoulders were guiltless of feathers or wings,
Who wore sandals, and ‘ *did up* ’ her hair ! ”

Right here I awoke, and I think it was time,
 Tho' I lost what the seer meant to say.
Last night I retired, somewhat sick of this world,
 But I'm feeling more cheerful to-day!

ME TOO

THAR are these six things ez the Lord doth hate—

Yes, seven ez make Him sick!

I wuz thinkin' 'em over myself last night,

And they're enough tew make *enny one* kick!

Ye kin find the hull list, ef ye don't believe me,

In Proverbs, along to'rds the fust;

And uv all the sins uv humanity,

I guess they are clus tew the wust.

A proud look on the face uv a man

Ez hain't got no pride at all;

Who don't even know the sense uv the word—

Who thinks it means nothin' but gall!

A lyin' tongue thet wags, b'gosh,

Like the clack uv an old grist-mill—

Thet is hung in the middle and works both ends,

Thet death alone kin keep still!

Hands thet shed innercent blood comes next,

And I calkerlate ye'll agree

Thet thar's nothin' more pizon in enny one

Than deliberet krewelty!

And then thar's the heart thet's busy all day

And purty near all the night,

A-devizin' all kinds uv wickedness,

And tryin' tew make black look white!

Nur He don't like the feet thet be so swift

Ter run inter mischief and sich:

The path thet they make don't run very straight,

And like ez not leads tew a ditch!

A crooked witness ez can't speak the trewth
Don't cut enny figger with Him!
A perjerer's chances uv gittin' thar,
I reckon, are all-fired slim!
Then the feller thet's allers a-raizin' a row
'Twixt people ez wanter be friends:
He's the last on the list, but he wun't be the least
When He declars His dividends!

These are the things ez the Lord jest hates
And abomernets all the way threw;
I wuz thinkin' 'em over myself last night,
And I'll be durned ef I don't tew!

LITTLE JAMAICA MAN

A COOLIE TOWN LULLABY

DE sun's hangin' ovah de aidge of de worl',
Li'l man, li'l man;
An' de clouds in him breat' all frizzle an' curl,
Li'l Jamaica man.

HIT's gwine be dahk fe come bimeby,
Li'l man, li'l man;
So light up de tawch in you tail, firefly,
Li'l Jamaica man.

DE stahs got ta swing low down dis night,
Li'l man, li'l man;
De fool-vahgin moon feegit hile fe light,
Li'l Jamaica man.

BUT hit meks no diff'unce to dis sugah chile,
Li'l man, li'l man;
Hi fin' light 'nuff in him mummah smile,
Li'l Jamaica man.

DE win' blow hahd, but him no git skeer,
Li'l man, li'l man;
De tunnah crack, but him mummah here,
Li'l Jamaica man.

DE Lahd got him safe in Him 'evingly keep,
Li'l man, li'l man;
So sleep along, honey, sleep—sleep—sleep,
Li'l Jamaica man.

BENEATH THE ROSE

BENEATH the rose, who knows?
Perchance a serpent lurketh there,
Safe-screened within that bosom fair;
And passion's lightest breath that blows
May all the turpitude disclose
Clandestine there, beneath the rose!—
Who knows?

Beneath the rose, who knows?
Perchance a wrong is burning there,
A brand upon that bosom fair,
That wider, deeper, hourly grows—
A brand that ever flames and glows,
Suspected not, beneath the rose!—
Who knows?

Beneath the rose, who knows?
Perchance a love is dying there,
Enfamished on that bosom fair—
A starveling, whose expiring throes
Are witnessed not by friends or foes
Who cannot see beneath the rose!—
Who knows?

Beneath the rose, who knows?
Perchance a joy is hiding there,
And madly thrills that bosom fair!
Whate'er there be, it never shows;
She still doth smile and calmly pose!
Can there be naught beneath the rose?—
Who knows?

AT SUNSET TIME

AT sunset time so long ago—
Ah, long ago! Ah, hearts of woe!—
We numbered in the shoreless West
The cloud-born Islands of the Blest,
And sought the one we once would know.

O'er seas serene of opal glow,
With softened thoughts we urged the quest
Till Night's far whisper bade us rest
At sunset time.

And now, tho' left alone, and tho'
Through tears the Isles but dimly show,
We seek, still seek the purple crest
Where, waiting, She hath made her nest,
And Hope—for She would have it so—
At sunset time.

I THINK OF THEE

THE sun has set—the stars are in the sky,
The clouds form valleys deep and mountains high,
And as I watch full many a form and face
Appear and vanish in the azure space,
I think of thee.

The sun has set—the weary day is done,
Another night of retrospect begun ;
Yet while fond memory tales of sadness tells,
One ray of comfort all the gloom dispels—
I think of thee.

The sun has set—across the land and sea
That seem to separate my love from me,
Still soul communes with soul, heart throbs with
heart ;
Tho' distance darkens we are not apart—
I think of thee.

SHE SENDS HER LOVE

SHE sends her love! My heart prepare
To cleave the last, thin band of air
Where slothful spirits hesitate
And sluggish souls deliberate,—
Then back to sordid earth repair.

We'll leave this atmosphere of care
And zones of ether penetrate—
For doth the word not clearly state,
 " She sends her love " ?

Yea! Jubilant our path shall fare
To that far Aiden none may dare
Save those—the passing fortunate,
To whom—O dear and charming fate—
O boon benign and rapture rare—
 She sends her love!

TO VIOLET

WHEN Nature scattered roses 'round
To please the eye of man,
She rested while she stood aloof
Her handiwork to scan.
She was by no means satisfied—
A flower was lacking yet;
And so she came to earth again
And brought the violet.

That's why, dear one, thy friends rejoice
And render thanks to-day;
Our souls are glad, our hearts are light—
We laugh, we sing, we play.
For Nature, bless her smiling face,
Our need did not forget,
But gave us what has pleased us most—
Our precious Violet!

THESE AWFUL DAYS

THE sun climbs over the indigo hills
And lazily mounts the sky;
So slothful his gait that noon we await
Ere his course is two hours high.
The waveless sea inertly lies
In the hush and quiet of death—
All nature's asleep in slumber deep,
And the breeze is an infant's breath.

O these are the days, the awful days,
When the fiercest spirit quails!
When the keenest zest is fain to rest,
When the strongest effort fails.
When the sluggish mind and the sluggish soul
To the sluggish pulse respond;
When desire is dead, ambition fled,
And we sink in the Slough of Despond!

THE HAPPIEST TIME

IN all the day the happiest time
Is when old blazing Red Eye sets,
And frogs in distant pools of slime
Begin their raucous pumps to prime;
When crickets practice their duets
And fireflies puff their cigarettes.

The deadly night-air not at all
Doth frighten me, for I'm immune;
And I've become so tropical,
So bilious and malarial,
Mosquitoes sing as sweet a tune
As ever did the birds of June.

So, on the balcony at ease,
I watch the stars wink merrily,
And palms play in the evening breeze
At see-saw with the almond trees—
And now it is that, verily,
I look at things quite cheerily.

This is the hour I'm glad to live,
And know I'd just as gladly die;
The hour that doth one courage give
To sift his sins in Candor's sieve,
And when in graded heaps they lie
To count them o'er without a sigh.

It is the hour that brings relief
From daylight's all-exposing glare;
That deadens doubt and dims belief,
And even dulls one's dearest grief;
When one's most hateful fault looks fair—
For 'tis the hour when *one don't care!*

And so to me the happiest time
Is when old blazing Red Eye sets,
And frogs in distant pools of slime
Begin their raucous pumps to prime—
When crickets practice their duets
And fireflies puff their cigarettes.

T A B O G A

I KNOW of an isle in the mighty Pacific,
To which Nature retires when her day's work is
done,
And thence doth she issue decrees soporific
That govern the world to the rising of sun.

There she marshals the stars and parades constella-
tions,
Commanding their march o'er the fleece-adorned
blue,
And orders the moon to pour silver libations
To the Master of Night and his shadowy crew.

On the crest of the mountain a rude cross erected
By rev'rently pious hands long years ago,
Spreads sheltering arms, in soft light reflected,
O'er the bamboo-built hamlet that nestles below.

Down verdure-clad slopes and terracing reaches
Where orange and mango and pine-apple grow,
One wanders thro' Eden to ocean-washed beaches—
An Eden that only the sun-children know.

Here Idleness tarries and Care is a stranger ;
Here Love has his grotto and fashions the darts
That bear on their flight their ever-sweet danger
To eagerly waiting and passionate hearts.

Alas that our happiness never lacks leaven—

That an anchor is chained unto every delight!

That Taboga's a place which might be called
Heaven,

Were it not for the fact that it isn't,—*not quite!*

ONLY A WEED

I DISCOVERED a flower yesterday
In a rubbish barrel growing;
It smilingly nodded its head at me,
In the gentle zephyr blowing.

Its petals were beaten from elfin gold
By a fairy as day was breaking;
She daintily fashioned them all alike,
From a heart her pattern taking.

She joined them together in matchless grace,
With a star each pendant gripping,
And enamelled them all with velvet gloss,
Her brush in the sunshine dipping.

From her diadem then, a tiny pearl
She loosed from its sheeny setting,
And fastened it down in a stellar zone
With tethers of filmy netting.

It was only a weed, when all is said,
In a rubbish barrel growing,
That smilingly nodded its head at me,
In the gentle zephyr blowing;

But I plucked it, and bring it here to you
With never a word of preaching:
Should it bear no lesson within itself,
Why, you're past the power of teaching!

SIMPLE AVEU

EVENING dons her starry robe,
All the world's asleep;
Luna, pale and cold, looks down,
Shadows sweep the deep.
Yet, dear heart, thy presence seems
Brightness full for me;
Sleeping, thou art all my dreams,
Awake, I think of thee!

List, oh, listen! Hear my vow
As I longing plead:
Faith and truth I pledge thee now,
Love in thought and deed!

Gently folds the wings of night,
Darkness falls apace;
Yet my soul is full of light—
Light from thy dear face.
Night can ne'er of life be part;
Darkness never be!
Day is ever in my heart
While I think of thee!

Gentle lady, of thy grace
Tell me thou art mine;
Then shall neither time nor place
All my love confine!

Banish every doubt and fear,
Grant my earnest plea;
Bless the suppliant waiting here
Thinking still of thee!

“THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES”

COME, let us sit together while
Old friends are round us falling,
And memory doth our tears beguile—
Departed days recalling.
Hold thou my hand, and I'll hold thine,
Thou friend of many graces,
While we drink a cup of salty wine
To the old familiar faces.

Long years have we together dwelt,
Thro' dry and rainy season ;
I've felt with thee, as thou hast felt
With me, o'er Fortune's treason.
We've seen our comrades sail away
To earth's far-distant places,
And 'tis salty wine we drink to-day
To the old familiar faces.

Together we have fought the fight—
Each other always aiding—
Together we have watched the light
'Neath each other's eyelids fading.
So put thy brave old hand in mine
While we count the empty spaces,
And drink a cup of salty wine
To the old familiar faces.

Full many a one we've borne to rest,
Our hearts with sorrow breaking;
Full many a friend on earth's cold breast
His last repose is taking.
Then let us drain death's loving-cup,
And dash away the traces:
'Tis salty, yet we'll drink it up
To the old familiar faces.

There's still an arrow left for us
In that exhaustless quiver;
Right soon, with Charon's pall o'er us,
We'll cross the inky river;
But put thy brave old hand in mine,
Thou friend of many graces,
And pledge with me in salty wine
The old familiar faces.

“OLD COMRADE”

God bless you, dear old comrade,
You're my kind of gentleman!
I've known you since the "eighties,"
When our years of grief began.
I've known you and I've loved you—
I couldn't help it, see?
And I've respected you, sir,
As you've respected me!

You've never thought your duty
Lay in making others feel
That on top was your position—
Theirs the bottom of the wheel.
Yours are Nature's manners,
Yours is the tender heart;
And the part that you have chosen
Is, by God, the better part!

You've sorrowed with the weeping,
You've been merry with the glad;
You've helped to bear the burden
When it almost drove us mad!
You've wasted no time talking,
You've simply said a word,
But in that word we've fancied
A sermon we have heard!

Again I say, God bless you
Wherever you may be!
Whatever be the distance
You can't get far from me!
I've known you and I've loved you
Since our years of grief began:
Here's a brimming bumper to you—
You're my kind of gentleman!

THE PRAYER OF A TIMID MAN

OH, answer me, Lord, from the whirlwind,
As Thou didst Thy servant of old!
Oh, tell me in speech without figures
The things I long to be told!

Cast into my heart's darkened chamber
One ray of Thine infinite light!
Drive out from my soul but an instant
The deepening shadow of night!

Give heed to my ceaseless petitions
As prostrate I lie at Thy feet!
Reply to my unspoken questions—
The questions I dare not repeat!

IF YE WEEP

If ye weep, ah, then weep least for him
Who mourns some loved one lost,
For tender Time smoothes finally
The brow with pain o'ercroست;
The wound will heal that seemeth now
E'er open to the touch:
And forgiven much—'tis written so—
Is he that loveth much.

If ye weep, ah, weep far more for him
Who sheds no outward tear,
But whose very soul the unshed tears
Of disappointment sear!
Who tries and fails and tries again,
And faileth o'er and o'er—
For him whose life naught visiteth
Save failure evermore!

If ye weep, ah, yes; weep most for him,
The unsuccessful man,
Whose weakness of each dear design
Leaves but the barren plan;
Who fails and, as a forest leaf,
Unheeded, falls to rot:
All charm unknown, all grace unseen,
For to him hope cometh not!

MEMORY

“There is no progress in the life which feeds on memory, only stagnation and death.”—*Elements of Theosophy*.

ON memory's progressless sea
Then let me, stagnant, lie
And rot with my remembrances
Until I, stagnant, die!

No gospel preach to me, I pray,
That robs me of the bliss—
Still sweetly tasted on my lips—
Of a sainted mother's kiss!

That teaches that the childish prayer
I prattled at her knee
Was silly nonsense, and unfit
To be recalled by me!

That teaches that a father's care,
The precepts that it taught,
Are wisdomless, devoid of truth,
And hence, accounted naught!

That sees in youth and love's first dream
No lessons that the mind
On *Karma* set, on progress bent,
Some benefit may find!

That would ignore the consciousness
Of life's maturer sins;
That teaches that with every day
Another life begins!

That dims the blush, that blunts the sting
Of an unworthy deed;
That teaches that of memory's whip
No mortal hath a need!

Ah, no, I'll suffer for my faults
Each wretched night and day;
And in kind acts small comfort find
In the old, old-fashioned way.

So, then, on memory's changeless sea
Pray, let me, stagnant, lie
And rot with my remembrances
Until I, stagnant, die!

THE WAVE

BEHOLD, far out upon the heaving sea
That dim, faint shadow-line that momentarily
Grows deeper, wider, longer, till at length,
It gathers form and ocean's awful strength,
And rushing onward o'er the hidden reef,
With one prolonged and thundrous sob of grief
Relinquishes its might; and on the shore
Becomes a pool—a giant wave no more!

And what of this? Why, this is human life.
Impelled, we know not how, we join a strife,
The purpose and design of which we are
As far from knowing as yon frozen star,
Whose wickless lamp a million years hath lit.
We rise, we fall, and that's the end of it!

JOB AND ANOTHER

ANOTHER

A MOAN for the hapless dying,
A moan for the helpless dead,
A moan for the thousands lying
On yonder hillock dread.
A moan for the passed and passing
Let us, the living, give;
And then, our voices massing,
A groan for those that live.

JOB

If Thou to a grave would'st guide me,
And over me darkness cast,
In secrecy would'st hide me
Till Thy day of wrath be past,
An appointed time, oh, set me
To wait Thy welcome call;
Nor, hidden, do Thou forget me,
Lest I, like the mountain, fall!

For now while e'en I slumber
Thou watchest o'er my sin;
My footsteps Thou dost number,
And the shrinking fears therein.
Desire with desire Thou cloyest;
The race ends ere 'tis ran:
Serenely Thou destroyest
The dearest hope of man!

ANOTHER

A moan for the hapless dying,
A moan for the helpless dead,
A moan for the thousands lying
On yonder hillock dread.
A moan for the passed and passing
Let us, the living, give;
And then, our voices massing,
A groan for those that live.

LET ME ALONE

I CARE not who the cup celestial wins,
Let me alone!

I've lost my grip, I'm wedded to my sins,
Let me alone!

Within my hand I hold no stone to throw;
Let that suffice: it is enough to know.

Fare straight ahead, oh, ye the sanctified!
Let me alone!

I pray ye, race upon the other side,
Let me alone!

I stumbled early, fell, and here I lie
Contented, so ye do but pass me by!

For me no visions of the Promised Land,
Let me alone!

For me? Not much! I would not with ye stand,
Let me alone!

For me nor sun, nor moon, nor star shall bow;
'Tis Reuben, 'tis not Joseph, dreaming now!

AU REVOIR

I WANDERED last night to the mystical mountain
Where the Muses recline 'neath the evergreen
trees;
And deeply I drank at the crystalline fountain,
While flowers of poesy perfumed the breeze.

And this was my object: To see if I could not
Imbibe or absorb of the gentlest of arts
Some aid to express—pray, tell me who would
not?—
The thoughts that this evening lie deep in our
hearts.

I deemed it my right and my privileged duty
To gather a garland of messages sweet;
A wreath of good wishes in blossoming beauty
As an earnest of friendship to place at thy feet.

Alas, for my dreams! With daybreak they vanished,
Leaving never a trace of their fragrance behind;
And I from Parnassus am evermore banished
With soul over-full, but with vacuous mind.

So, tremblingly, haltingly, timidly, weakly,
Yet voicing the feeling that governs us all;
Unworthily, doubtless, but humbly and meekly,
I pray for all blessings upon thee to fall.

I drink to the virtues that cause us to love thee,
I drink to the graces so purely thine own ;
I drink to kind skies—may they long smile above
thee—

And the tenderest twilight that ever was known !

A health to thy journey ! God grant us to lead it,
And on it the favors of fortune compel !
A health to the morning—God grant us to speed it—
When the word shall be Welcome instead of
Farewell !

VICTORIA THE WOMAN

(C. C. M.)

Down thro' a glorious century she treads,
Each step an added glory to the years;
Her fame the halo round a myriad heads,
Her name a name a willing world reveres:
A queen whose power naught hath long withstood,
A queen whose chiefest grace is womanhood.

Let others sing her grandeur on the throne;
In ode and epic let the pæan swell;
Her arms and state-craft chant in thrilling tone,
In deathless words her brilliant triumphs tell:
'Tis ours in humble verse—crude, incomplete—
To lay our tribute at the woman's feet.

All pride and pomp and circumstance aside
Flung with the trappings of the civic life,
We see her stand, a simple, modest bride—
Lamented Albert's true and loyal wife:
His love her crown, all other crowns apart,
His love the sceptre of her woman's heart.

In all the beauty of maternity
Example sweet and admonition mild,
Forgetting regal place that she may be
The guide and playmate of a little child:
Still steadfast as the crowding cycles fly,
In woman's realm her greatest majesty.

Handmaiden of the virtues, all and each,
Swift to reward, swift to rebuke as well;
The love of home her happiness to teach,
'Mid social purity her joy to dwell:
A censor of society, whose aim
Hath ever been to honor woman's name.

We hail her, then; and as the earth resounds
With soaring song and martial blare and blast,
While Glory leads her on her dazzling rounds,
We in her path would our poor offering cast:
The flower of our reverence for one
Whose queenly soul hath woman's duty done.

1901

Hail—and farewell! Bereaved and unconsoled,
Beside her tomb the world she dignified
Still reverent, listens while the tale is told
Of how a Queenly Woman ruled—and died:
And 'round her name that world for ages yet
Shall wreathe the homage of profound regret.

A SPRIG OF SAGE-BRUSH

A SPRIG of sage-brush I've brought to you
From the prairies of the West;
I know 'tis the season for mistletoe,
But I thought—well, you know best!
Perhaps, however, you'll listen awhile
And ponder the matter well;
And render your judgment afterward
On the tale I've got to tell.

I sing no song of knightly might,
Or deed of warrior brave,
Or tell of exploit nobly dared
A woman's fame to save;
All these, and more, 'tis my delight
To reverence with you;
But that there're other kinds of pluck
As great, I think is true.

'Twas early days in Medicine Lodge
On the road to No Man's Land,
When men played high, and settled games
With a gun in either hand.
When iron nerves and a steady eye
Were trumps when a row began,
And the reputation greatly prized
Of having killed one's man.

And the man whose reputation stood
Head-high above the rest
Was Isaac Walton—Ike for short—
The terror of the West.
No bully he, but quick and sure,
And tenacious of his right;
And no man ever saw him run
Or dodge the deadliest fight.

And very proud was Ike of this,
And his reputation kept
Unsullied save by those who short
Within the graveyard slept!
Until one night old Morris Smith,
Before a crowd of men,
Gave him the lie, and dared him shoot—
Not once, but thrice again!

A hush such as had not been known
For many a year and long—
Since lonely winds moaned o'er the spot—
Fell on that waiting throng!
And then—that hand of cruel aim,
That hand that ne'er before
Was known to falter—*dropped*, and Ike
Strode thro' the open door!

Next day a horseman far from town
Met Isaac—Ike for short—
And, trembling much, asked him if there
Was truth in the report.

“ Thar mebbe—yes—I run,” said Ike,
“ ‘ My reputation? ’ Lost!
‘ Why did I do it? ’—wall, yer see,
I kinder thought the cost

“ Of old Smith’s life ter them kids o’ his
A ruther steep price ter pay
Fer a repertation I kin git
In a damned sight cheaper way!”
I’ve brought this sprig of sage-brush here,
Tho’ it should be mistletoe;
But don’t you think I have an excuse?
Just think—and let me know!

THE MINORITY

WHENCE do they come, they of the lofty bearing,
Whose manners voice an elevated life,
Whose faces, smiles of triumph wearing,
Tell us of strife,
And victory won o'er weaknesses of nature,
And petty sinfulness? In what grave tone—
In what phraseology and nomenclature
To us unknown—
Do they commune together o'er the tale
Of how we strive to reach them but to fail?

We may not say! Perchance they are descended
In line unbroken from the Pharisee
Who once within the gates, his knee unbended,
Thanked God that he
Was not as other men! We must not murmur,
Oh, mourning brother of the frail estate!
Our steps will aye be weak, theirs aye the firmer!
We may be late;
Yet, haply still, each much-repentent fall
Shall aid us answer His last muster-call!

CHARITY

To brag or boast of one's own deeds
Is nature's mild insanity—
The pabulum on which one feeds
The craving, ever-pressing needs
Of this weakness of humanity.

And I would aid to place a ban
Upon all thoughts satirical;
For I believe that every man
Is, in his heart, a charlatan,
And more or less empirical.

Then why pose as exceptional,
Or claim superiorities,
When at thy soul's confessional
Thou hast, perforce, to mention all
Thine own inferiorities?

Come, let us strive to be so great
As to deny disparity
Between the faults with all innate,
And ours, that are commensurate—
Thus practising true charity!

THE PORTAL AND THE DOOR

I

THROUGH a shining portal springs a youth to grasp
his kingdom fair,
With a smile of fond assurance—careless, blithe and
debonair;
'Tis a heritage of gladness that he rapturously
claims,
And his joy-bejewelled sceptre just before him
brightly flames.

II

One who early plucked life's fruitage—thro' its rosy
surface tore;
To whose trembling lip still clings the dust left by
the ashen core;
One who longed and lost—a sad, stern man—chokes
down a bitter sob
As he slowly passes through a door that has no
outer knob.

TO JOHN PAYNE

To dream with thee in fair Armida's garden,
Thou sweetest dreamer of the dream-song land,
I entreat thy kind compliance;
I crave with thee alliance:
Across the sea that thou would'st clasp my hand.

Deem not my hope but too audacious folly—
'Tis most sincere, this humble prayer of mine;
For tho' the world is ringing
With the notes of poets singing,
There is no voice that thrills me as does thine!

So, then, oh, thou most gracious, tender master,
I ask to follow on thine upward way:
I would suffer all thy sadness,
Would be glad with all thy gladness,
And with thee learn to dream and sing and pray!

A SHIP OF MIST

A SHIP of mist sails out of a cloud,
 Out of a cloud at the sunrise time;
The glint of the dawn is on sail and shroud,
 The glint of the dawn of the sunrise clime.
Into the blue from the harbor gray,
Into the blue of the living day,
Into the vast she sails away.

*Ahoy, lone sailor, what of the voyage?
"I've neither chart nor bearing, friend!"*

A ship of mist sails into a cloud,
 Into a cloud at the sunset time;
The shade of the dusk is on sail and shroud,
 The shade of the dusk of the sunset clime.
Into the gloom with the dying light,
Into the gloom of the endless night,
Into the vast she sails from sight.

*Ahoy, lone sailor, what of the voyage?
"I'm past the care of caring, friend!"*

WE LINGER STILL

WE linger still, tho' many a one
Who thought his labor just begun,
Has learned his task was but to fill
A narrow space on yonder hill;
And found it easy—quickly done!

O'er longer stints ere rest is won—
O'er work we may not slight or shun—
With ever-lessening speed and skill
We linger still.

His hopeless race the jaded sun
With tireless Time has nearly run;
The evening falls, the night winds chill
The fainting heart and failing will:
Expecting all things, fearing none,
We linger still.

WHEN I AM DEAD

WHEN I am dead no graven stone
Thou need'st erect to make it known
That one lies there of whom 'twas said :
His faults were not of heart, but head,
And such as all men should condone.
My sins are mine and mine alone!
Let no man's thoughts be once misled,
Or tastes for eulogy be fed
When I am dead!

Pray, tell the truth : that may atone
For a life of folly like my own,
By warning others not to tread
The path o'er which my feet have bled.
I'd have no " mantles " round me thrown
When I am dead!

TO HIM WHO WAITS

To him who waits all things, they say,
Will come upon a certain day:
The love that Love's own sloth belates,
The satisfaction of the hates,
For which one yearns, tho' does not pray.

Success will bring the wreath of bay
She filched from Fame, as sleeping lay
The sullen and unwilling Fates,
To him who waits.

It may be true! Ah, yes, it may!
But hearts grow feeble, Faith grows gray;
Her greed for sadness Sorrow sates;
Hope trembles, doubts and hesitates,
While Fortune loiters on her way
To him who waits.

MY WICKER JUG

My wicker jug before me stands,
A quart within its woven bands—
A quart of undiluted themes,
A quart of concentrated dreams
At vagrant Fancy's soft commands.

I ramble now enchanted lands
Of forest glades and purling streams—
The while benignly on me beams
My wicker jug.

Led by Caprice's listless hands,
I reach at last far Lethe's strands
Where Memory dies and darkness teems—
Save where beside me kindly gleams,
Still murmuring gently its demands,
My wicker jug.

THE SWEET OLD STORY

Down the tunnel long that Time hath built—
Thro' the circles smaller growing—
Past the doubts and fears
Of the arching years—
Toward the entrance dimly glowing
Doth Memory speed on her way to-night
Back to childhood's dormitory,
Just to hear once more
With the faith of yore
The sweet old Christmas story.

All unbid, she'll slip in the trundle-bed
To the space 'twixt down and feather;
And will lay her head,
As in time long fled,
Where the pillows meet together.
She will close her eyes at the face she sees
All ablaze with loving glory,
As a mother sweet
Will again repeat
The dear old Christmas story.

The angels and shepherds again will play
Their parts in the drama holy;
The star will appear,
The wise men revere,
The Babe in the manger lowly.

Then Memory, like Mary, will ponder well
These things of the ages hoary ;
And with tender art
Tell the softened heart
The old, old Christmas story.

Oh, the sweet old story!
The dear old story!
The old, old story to memory dear!
Hearts of the boldest,
The sternest, the coldest,
Grow warm o'er the story told once a year!

THE FALL OF OLD PANAMA

1671

HIS Catholic Majesty, Philip of Spain,
Ruled o'er the West Coast, the Indies and main;
His ships, heavy laden with pesos and plate,
Sailed o'er the South Sea with tribute of state.
From Lima and Quito his galleys pulled forth
For Panama pearls and gold of the North;
And cargoes of treasure were sent overland
While his soldiers kept guard from the gulf to the
strand.

From Panama Bay to the port "Name of God"
Long freight trains of slaves thro' the dense forests
trod:

Then, some through the straits and some from the
main,
King Philip's good ships sought their owner again.

On England's grand throne great Elizabeth reigned,
And on sea and on land her power maintained;
O'er the hearts of her subjects, o'er the conquests
they made,
O'er their lives and their fortunes her sceptre she
swayed.

But her title of "Queen of the Seas" to dispute
King Philip essayed from the land of the lute;
And velvet-clad Dons cast their love-songs aside
To battle the English, and wind, wave and tide.

In many and mortal affray they engaged,
And bravely and fiercely the struggle they waged,
But the men of old Devon—those stout hearts of
oak—

As often successfully parried each stroke.

The Drakes and the Gilberts, the Grenvils and
Leighs,

The Oxenhams, Raleighs—the props and the stays
Of England's first greatness—were the heroes of old
Who helped Britain's queen with the Spanish king's
gold.

They robbed the arch-robber of ill-gotten gain,
And brought England the glory they wrested from
Spain.

His galleons they captured, his treasure trains
seized—

Outfought him abroad and with zeal unappeased.
At home they defeated the Armada's great fleet,
And laid a world's spoil at Elizabeth's feet.

Alas, that such deeds should grow dim with the
years!

Alas, that such men should have trained buccaneers!
That from such examples—so noble, so true—
A race of marauders and ruffians grew!

That fiends such as Morgan should follow the wake
Of men like John Oxman and Sir Francis Drake,
Who swore by the oak, by the ash and the thorn,
God helping them always, to sail round the Horn

To fair Panama and the placid South Sea,
Which they saw one day from the top of the tree!
For old England's glory their standard to raise,
To cruise the Pacific and its isle-dotted bays.
Four miles from where Ancon looks down on the

New

Stood old Panama, whence Pizarro once drew
The bravest of followers Peru to obtain
And her Incas subject to the power of Spain;
Where once stood cathedrals and palaces fair,
Whose altars and vessels and tapestries rare
Were the pride of a people whose opulence then
Was the envy of kings and the longing of men;
Where once stately streets to the plains stretched
away,

And warehouses skirted the vessel-lined bay;
Where plantations and gardens and flowering trees
Once perfumed the tropical evening breeze—
Stands naught but a ruin half hidden from view,
A pirate's foul gift to his bloodthirsty crew!

From sacked Porto Bello redhanded they came,
All bloodstained from conquest unworthy the name,
To the mouth of the Chagres, where, high on the
hill,

San Lorenzo kept guard, to plunder and kill
Its devoted defenders, who courageously fought
For homes, wives and children, accounting as
naught

Their lives held so precious, so cherished before,
Could they drive the fierce pirates away from their
shore.

Three days they repulsed them, but to find every
night

The foe still upon them in ne'er-ending fight.

Their arms could not conquer the powers of hell!

San Lorenzo surrendered—ingloriously fell!

Burned, famished and bleeding from many a
wound,

They lay while their stronghold was razed to the
ground.

On, on up to Cruces the buccaneers sped,

But to find it in ashes, its inhabitants fled.

Yet on and still on, with Morgan ahead,

They pressed down the road that to Panama led.

Nine days through the forest unbroken they tramped,

And at last on a mount near the city encamped.

Before them the ocean for leagues away rolled;

Below them the islands lay bathed in the gold

Of the sun that, just setting, looked mournfully
down

On the last day of life of the ill-fated town:

While around them the plains with groves of bright
trees

Sheltered cattle and fountains their wants to ap-
pease.

The famed "golden cup" lay filled at their hand,

And to drain it at sunrise the buccaneers planned.

“ Oh, ho, for the morrow ! ” quoth Morgan the bold.
“ Oh, ho, for the day and the tale to be told ! ”

The dawn’s faint purple had scarce ’gan to light
The peak of Ancon, erst hid in the night,
When the blare of the trumpet and beat of the drum
Made known that the day of the struggle had come.
In the camp of the pirates “ To arms ! ” is the cry ;
“ Press forward, my hearties, our treasure is nigh !
Avoid the main road—there are ambuscades there—
Push on through the forest, your firearms prepare ! ”
Now out on the hill, still called the “ Advance,”
The buccaneers over their enemy glance.
Before them they see in the full light of day
The Spaniards drawn up in battle array.
Two squadrons of horse, four thousand of line,
With bullocks and peons their forces combine.
And then, were it safer for them to retreat,
Would Morgan have ordered the signal to beat ?
Too late it is now—it is triumph or die !
Though desperate to battle, ’twere folly to fly !
’Tis useless to falter ! On, onward, my men !
We have won against odds, we shall win once
again ! ”

And “ On ! ” cry the Spaniards, shouting “ *Viva el
Rey !* ”

Our numbers are greater ! Ours, ours is the day !
Our bullocks will rout them ! Huzza for old Spain !
The gore of the thieves shall enrich the plain ! ”

Alas, for the hopes so sadly misplaced,
For never before such a foe had they faced!
No Indians now, but trained men of might,
Who had learned in stern schools to die and to fight.
Two hours they fought 'neath the tropical sun,
Then threw down their muskets, and—Morgan had
won!

The verdant savanna like a great river runs
With the blood of six thousands of Panama's sons!
“On, on to the city!” cries Morgan the bold!
“Oh, ho, 'tis the day, and the tale is soon told!”

Then awful the combat, as over the walls
The bloodthirsty pirate in eagerness falls!
With Spartan-like valor did the sons of those who
Had assisted Pizarro to conquer Peru
Attempt to o'erpower the fierce buccaneer—
To save city and home and all they held dear!
But vainly they struggled—repulsed o'er and o'er,
The pirates return to the battle once more!
At last they are vanquished! “Now, comrades,
we'll sup
On the riches we find in the West's golden cup!”

“Fire, pillage and slaughter!” the order goes round
Till palace and cottage are burned to the ground;
Till cathedral and warehouse no treasures contain,
And in the whole city no gold doth remain;
Till mother and daughter are captured and chained
With father and brother, or ransom obtained.

Monasteries and hospitals—down with them all!
Leave not a stone standing on yon city wall!
“ Oh, ho, ’tis the day! ” quoth Morgan the bold!
“ Oh, ho, ’tis the day, and the tale is now told! ”

O demon insensate! O offspring of hell!
What pen may thine awful enormities tell!
How picture the cruelties, useless and vain,
Upon the march back through the forest again!
Old men tottering feebly ’neath Time’s hoary crown,
Frail women in chains and with burdens borne
 down,
Fresh youth and grown man and the child but just
 born,
Scourged pitilessly on with the lash and the thorn,
While sobs, lamentations and shrieks of despair
Unceasingly freighted the soft summer air!
The ink turns to tears and corrodes the sad pen
O’er the tortures at Cruces repeated again.
There, under the shade of the broad mango trees—
’Mid anguish that nothing may ever appease—
Are parents and children and husbands and wives,
Condemned without mercy to horrible lives!

Then back down the Chagres the buccaneers hie
To where ships near the castle awaiting them lie;
And embarked with his slaves, his treasure and gold,
Once again for Port Royal sails Morgan the bold!

THE LAND OF THE CACIQUE

NEAR the cliffs of Portobelo,
Where the fortress still is standing,
Near the moss-clad old cathedral
That the Dons built long ago ;
Eight degrees from the equator,
From the southward counting northward,
Lies the land of the Cacique,
Lies the region of San Blas.
There the skies are soft and tender,
And the clouds form wondrous pictures
Round the crimson sun disrobing
For his sleep beneath the sea ;
And the monarch of the forest,
The majestic palm-tree, waveth
Shining, multi-sceptred branches
O'er a kingdom all its own.
There the almond-tree doth flourish,
There the gorgeous mango groweth
Close beside the lustrous cacho,
And the tagua strews the ground.
There, upon the sylvan hillsides
And within the lovely valleys,
Nestles many an Indian village
Of the slender bamboo built.

'Tis a lyric of these people,
Of their customs quaint and curious,

Of the rites to them peculiar,
That the bard would strive to sing :
Sing in humble words and simple
To a harp uncouth and awkward,
As befits the modest minstrel
Of a lowly race of men.
Lowly? Yea, but lowly only
As retired from observation—
As without the pale of notice
Of the nations of the world.
For within his own dominion
The Cacique and his subjects
Are as dignified and haughty
As the proudest of mankind.
In their veins no mixed blood courseth,
In their land no stranger dwelleth,
For this simple child of nature
Guards his country with his life.
Guards his race from all admixture,
Guards his ancient superstitions,
His religion and his customs,
Zealously and jealously.
For a solemn oath doth bind him—
Sworn above his father's body—
To kill wife and son and daughter
Should an enemy approach
To obtain his fair possessions,
Or to other laws subdue him
Ere he marches to the battle
That can end but with his life.

Every hamlet hath its chieftain,
Subject still to the Cacique—
The Cacique of Sasardi—
Who is ruler over all.
Every village hath its Mila,
Arzoguete and Tulete
(Priest and teacher and physician,
Councillor and wisest men).
Primitive is their religion :
Little know they of the Godhead
That the Israelites discovered
And the Gentiles have improved.
No need here for costly churches :
Each rude hut is sanctuary,
From whence, dying, to the bosom
Of Eternal Rest they go.
And to show the Mighty Spirit
How on earth they toiled and labored,
The canoe and the machéte
And the arrows near them lie.
Each home hath its cemetery,
Built within a palm enclosure,
Where the dead swing in their hammocks,
Hid forever from the view.
Seldom dream the San Blas Indians,
Seldom lose their mental balance,
For an ancient superstition
Holds all such condemned to death.
'Tis a sign that evil spirits
Seek to cast their lot among them,

From their old beliefs to win them
Unto those they know not of.

Let us leave these sad statistics—
Let us visit the Fiestas :
Three days since unto an Ohme
A Punagua child was born ;
And with shouts of great rejoicing
And libations of the Chicha,
They will pierce the tiny nostril
For the hoop of yellow gold.
Haste we quickly to another—
To a festival more joyful :
For in turn the shy Punagua
Hath an Ohme now become.
Oh, the drinking! Oh, the dancing!
As they cut the maiden's tresses ;
In her father's house immure her
Till her husband shall be found.
Now bring forth the long Cachimba,
Bring the Ina, bring the Guarra,
Bring the men and bring the women :
The Nutschuqua claims his bride!
Long the parents pondered o'er it,
That among the young men waiting
They might choose the one most fitting
For their daughter and themselves.
Whom could choose they but Machua?
Who, like him, to snare the tortoise?
Who, like him, to drive the Ulo

Through the breakers of the coast?
On the voyage to Portobelo,
Though with cocoanuts deep laden,
His canoe is always leading,
Always first to reach the port.

Six days will he bravely labor,
Six days' toil to build the Ulo
That the law from him demandeth
Ere he once may see his bride.
Sweet Punagua, none may see her;
For until the boat is builded
In the pit the maid is hidden
From the sight of every one.
From her father's house they brought her
In the early morning darkness;
Now about her all the village,
In a circle gathered round,
Sit and smoke the wedding Guarra,
Sit and drink the wedding Chicha,
Stories tell of other weddings,
And traditions old recite.
Six days will they all be merry,
Six days till, his labor finished,
With rejoicing comes Machua—
Comes and claims his promised wife.
To her father's house he bears her,
There to serve their daughter's parents
Till to him is born a daughter,
And his freedom thus is gained.

Then upon the sylvan hillside,
Or within the lovely valley,
Or upon the beach of coral
They will build their palm-thatched home;
And in turn will rear their children
In the ancient superstitions,
And to all the tribe be useful
In the common industries.

Let them live in their seclusion,
Let them keep their fair possessions,
Let them rule themselves unaided,
O ye nations of the earth!
Let them practise their religion,
And observe their rights and customs
O ye pushing missionaries
Of accepted creed and sect!
Trouble not this gentle people—
Leave them to their peace and quiet—
Nor disturb this tropic Eden
Of the red men of San Blas!

ON THE BROW OF THE HILL

(The cemetery of Monkey Hill, or Mount Hope—by which latter name it is more euphoniously though less widely known—is situated about two miles to the southward of Colon, and overlooks a wide expanse of diversified tropical country. At its base lies the extensive plant of the Panama Canal Company, and, beyond, the straggling little city and broad Caribbean Sea. The spot was first used as a burial-place about the year 1853, shortly after the beginning of the work on the Panama Railroad.

Although of such recent origin, there is probably no more populous Necropolis in the New World; and while many of the tales that are told of it are considerably exaggerated, they all, unfortunately, have a foundation in fact.

Should Macaulay's Traveller in his lonely wanderings visit this tragic mount, visions, perhaps not so extensive, but certainly as melancholy as those which could appear to him on the ruins of London Bridge, would materially assist in his speculations upon the littleness of man and the barrenness of life.)

BENEATH the sea the diving sun
Is searching for another day;
This weary one, its life work done,
Expires with yon swift-fading ray.

Low at my feet the drowsy town
Lies dully mute, awaiting sleep;
In gathering dusk the foothills frown,
And o'er the waves dark shadows creep.

Where once fierce toil the landscape blurred,
And greed's o'erweening passion dwelt,
Now only laggard steps are heard—
The pulse of life can scarce be felt.

The lights that pant with feeble breath
Anon will vanish in the gloom,
And in the very lair of Death
I muse upon an unknown tomb.

Around in graves thrice multiplied
The bones of countless thousands lie;
They found their wish here satisfied
Who sought a nod as Wealth passed by.

Success and Failure side by side
Enrich the dank and ocherous mold;
Conducted by the Pallid Guide,
Alike come here the faint and bold.

The envious and the kind of heart
On evil and on good intent
Out here perform one common part—
Their separate ways together blent.

The cunning scheme, the noble plan
That busy intellects evolved
Here find the worst and best of man—
Life's mazeful problem here is solved.

Yon rotting cross that marks the place
Of ended quest in stranger land
The cancelling months will soon efface,
Nor leave a vestige of it stand.

Yet hear the tale those ruins tell
Ere he who knows the story falls ;
And tarrying on this hill of hell,
Obeys the last, most dread of calls.

The man whose dust commingles there
Belike with that of some low thief
Gave promise of a life as fair
As e'er succumbed to blighting grief.

He came in Fortune's crowded train
To wrest from her a fleeting smile ;
Erelong he seemed his end to gain,
And reigned a favorite for a while.

Around him gather hosts of friends,
Whose praise and gifts are wondrous sweet ;
Who watch that no harsh word offends,
And strew bright roses 'neath his feet.

Beloved by women, sought by men,
His life is one continued joy ;
He buys each pleasure o'er again,
Nor in the gold detects alloy.

What wonder that the reckless crew
His early teachings soon erase ;
That their ideals his mind imbue—
His once keen moral sense debase !

On, on he travels down the road—
Laughs gaily in each sober face;
Just now he bears no heavy load—
Of coming care he sees no trace.

What use the story to prolong?
'Tis hackneyed—stale on every tongue:
The burden of each dismal song
That poets have for ages sung.

The smiles of Fortune are withdrawn—
Her fickle favors quickly end;
His satellites forget to fawn—
He seeks in vain one faithful friend.

In broken health, enfeebled mind,
To menials then for aid he flies;
And, lastly, failing that to find,
He hugs his misery—and dies.

A conscience-stricken one remains,
Who stealthily erects this cross,
Recording one of Hades' gains,
And sadly marking Heaven's loss.

Bend low, thou gloomy, starless sky,
And in thy tears each hillock lave!
Sob on, thou mournful wind, and sigh
O'er stoneless tomb and nameless grave!

CURTAIN

THE rhymster should apologize, perhaps,
For many a silly jest and foolish lapse;
But, then, no purposed mischief hath he done,
And truth, you know, oft masquerades as fun.
It may be that his utterances trite
Some good may do—some senseless wrong may
right.
There may be, 'mongst them all, one word with
pow'r
To call a smile—to cheer some lonely hour:
If so, then, he whose sentences involved
Contain more puzzles than may e'er be solved,
Fore'er deserts his feeble, unfledged Muse—
His tuneless lyre abandons to disuse!
If so—if happ'ly so!—then ring the bell,
And drop the curtain. 'Tis a glad Farewell!

