Classic Poetry Series

George Moses Horton

- poems -

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George Moses Horton (1797–1884)

George Moses Horton was an African-American poet.

Biography

He was born into slavery on William Horton's plantation in Northampton County, North Carolina. As a very young child, he and several family members were moved to a tobacco farm in rural Chatham County, when his owner relocated. Horton composed poems in his mind through his teen years. He was allowed by his master to visit the nearby University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he recited poems to students who eagerly wrote them down and paid him for his compositions. His fame spread, and a collection of poems was published under the title The Hope of Liberty (1829). Horton was the first black southern author and the first African American poet to produce a volume in more than half a century.

Two more collections of Horton's poetry include Poetical Works (1845) and Naked Genius (1865). Horton began calling himself "the Colored Bard of North Carolina." Many of his works were vivid and powerful attacks on slavery.
After the American Civil War, Horton moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he lived until his death. Once in the north, he never published another verse.
During the summer of 2006, UNC Chapel Hill renamed a newly built dorm, previously known as Hinton James North, to George Moses Horton dormitory.

Works:

The Hope of Liberty (1829)
Poetical Works (1845)
Naked Genius (1865)

A Billet Doux

My brightest hopes are mix'd with tears,
Like hues of light and gloom;
As when mid sun-shine rain appears,
Love rises with a thousand fears,

To pine and still to bloom.
When I have told my last fond tale
In lines of song to thee,
And for departure spread my sail,
Say, lovely princess, wilt thou fail
To drop a tear for me?

O, princess, should my votive strain
Salute thy ear no more,
Like one deserted on the main,
I still shall gaze, alas! but vain,
On wedlock's flow'ry shore.

George Moses Horton

Clay’s Defeat

'Tis the hope of the noble defeated;
The aim of the marksman is vain;
The wish of destruction completed,
The soldier eternally slain.

When winter succeeds to the summer,
The bird is too chilly to sing;
No music is play'd for the drummer,
No carol is heard on the wing.

The court of a nation forsaken,
An edifice stripp'd of its dome,
Its fame from her pinnacle shaken,
Like the sigh heaving downfall of Rome.

Fall'n, fall'n is the chief of the witty,
The prince of republican power;
The star-crown of Washington City
Descends his political tower.

The gold-plated seat is bespoken,
The brave of the west is before;
The bowl at the fountain is broken,
The music of fame is no more.

No longer a wonderful story
Is told for the brave whig to hear,
Whose sun leaves his circuit of glory,
Or sinks from the light of his sphere.

George Moses Horton

Death Of A Favorite Chamber Maid

O death, thy power I own,
Whose mission was to rush,
And snatch the rose, so quickly blown,
Down from its native bush;
The flower of beauty doom'd to pine,
Ascends from this to worlds divine.

Death is a joyful doom,
Let tears of sorrow dry,
The rose on earth but fades to bloom
And blossom in the sky.
Why should the soul resist the hand
That bears her to celestial land.

Then, bonny bird, farewell,
Till hence we meet again;
Perhaps I have not long to dwell
Within this cumb'rous chain,
Till on elysian shores eve meet,
Till grief is lost and joy complete.

George Moses Horton

Death of an Old Carriage Horse

I was a harness horse,
Constrained to travel weak or strong,
With orders from oppressing force,
Push along, push along.
I had no space of rest,
And took at forks the roughest prong,
Still by the cruel driver pressed,
Push along, push along.
Vain strove the idle bird,
To charm me with her artless song,
But pleasure lingered from the word,
Push along, push along.

The order of the day
Was push, the peal of every tongue,
The only word was all the way,
Push along, push along.

Thus to my journey's end,
Had I to travel right or wrong,
'Till death my sweet and favored friend,
Bade me from life to push along.

George Moses Horton

Death Of Gen. Jackson - An Eulogy

Hark! from the mighty Hero's tomb,
I hear a voice proclaim!
A sound which fills the world with gloom,
But magnifies his name.

His flight from time let braves deplore,
And wail from state to state,
And sound abroad from shore to shore,
The death of one so great!

He scorn'd to live a captured slave,
And fought his passage through;
He dies, the prince of all the brave,
And bids the world adieu!

Sing to the mem'ry of his power,
Ye vagrant mountaineers,
Ye rustic peasants drop a shower
Of love for him in tears.

He wields the glittering sword no more,
With that transpiercing eye;
Ceases to roam the mountain o'er,
And gets him down to die!

Still let the nation spread his fame,
While marching from his tomb;
Aloud let all the world proclaim,
Jackson, forever bloom.

No longer to the world confin'd,
He goes down like a star;
He sets, and leaves his friends behind
To rein the steed of war.

Hark! from the mighty Hero's tomb,
I hear a voice proclaim!
A sound which fills the world with gloom,
But magnifies his name!

George Moses Horton

Departing Summer

When auburn Autumn mounts the stage,
And Summer fails her charms to yield,
Bleak nature turns another page,
To light the glories of the field.

At once the vale declines to bloom,
The forest smiles no longer gay;
Gardens are left without perfume,
The rose and lilly pine away.

The orchard bows her fruitless head,
As one divested of her store;
Or like a queen whose train has fled,
And left her sad to smile no more.

That bird which breath'd her vernal song,
And hopp'd along the flow'ry spray,
Now silent holds her warbling tongue,
Which dulcifies the feast of May.

But let each bitter have its sweet,
No change of nature is in vain;
'Tis just alternate cold and heat,
For time is pleasure mix'd with pain.

George Moses Horton

Division Of An Estate

It well bespeaks a man beheaded, quite
Divested of the laurel robe of life,
When every member struggles for its base,
The head; the power of order now recedes,
Unheeded efforts rise on every side,
With dull emotion rolling through the brain
Of apprehending slaves. The flocks and herds,
In sad confusion, now run to and fro,
And seem to ask, distressed, the reason why
That they are thus prostrated. Howl, ye dogs!
Ye cattle, low! ye sheep, astonish'd, bleat!
Ye bristling swine, trudge squealing through the glades,

Void of an owner to impart your food!
Sad horses, lift your heads and neigh aloud,
And caper frantic from the dismal scene;
Mow the last food upon your grass-clad lea,
And leave a solitary home behind,
In hopeless widowhood no longer gay!
The trav'ling sun of gain his journey ends
In unavailing pain; he sets with tears;
A king sequester'd sinking from his throne,
Succeeded by a train of busy friends,
Like stars which rise with smiles, to mark the flight
Of awful Phoebus to another world;
Stars after stars in fleet succession rise
Into the wide empire of fortune clear,
Regardless of the donor of their lamps,
Like heirs forgetful of parental care,
Without a grateful smile or filial tear,
Redound in rev'rence to expiring age.
But soon parental benediction flies
Like vivid meteors; in a moment gone,
As though they ne'er had been. But O! the state,
The dark suspense in which poor vassals stand,
Each mind upon the spire of chance hangs fluctuant;

The day of separation is at hand;
Imagination lifts her gloomy curtains,
Like ev'ning's mantle at the flight of day,
Thro' which the trembling pinnacle we spy,
On which we soon must stand with hopeful smiles,
Or apprehending frowns; to tumble on
The right or left forever.

George Moses Horton

Early Affeection

I loved thee from the earliest dawn,
When first I saw thy beauty's ray;
And will until life's eve comes on,
And beauty's blossom fades away;
And when all things go well with thee,
With smiles or tears remember me.

I'll love thee when thy morn is past
And wheedling galantry is o'er,
When youth is lost in age's blast,
And beauty can ascend no more;
And when life's journey ends with thee,
O then look back and think of me.

I'll love thee with a smile or frown,
Mid sorrow's gloom or pleasure's light;
And when the chain of life runs down,
Pursue thy last eternal flight;
When thou hast spread thy wing to flee,
Still, still a moment wait for me.

I love thee for those sparkling eyes,
To which my fondness was betray'd,
Bearing the tincture of the skies,
To glow when other beauties fade;
And when they sink too low to see,
Reflect an azure beam on me.

George Moses Horton

False Weight

If thou art fair, deal, lady, fair,
And let the scales be even;
Forbid the poising beam to rear,
And pull thee down from heaven.

Dost thou desire to die in peace,
For ev'ry sin forgiven,
Give back my right, thy weight decrease,
And mount like mine to heaven.

Rather give over to the poor,
Take ten and give eleven;
Or else be fair, I ask no more,
'Tis all required of heaven.

And when on thee for pay I call,
Which is but four for seven,
Keep nothing back, but pay it all,
It is not hid from heaven.

Remember hence the sentence past,
The truth in scripture given,
Last shall be first, and first be last,
In time, in earth, and heaven.

George Moses Horton

Farewell To Frances

Farewell! if ne'er I see thee more,
Though distant calls my flight impel,
I shall not less thy grace adore,
So friend, forever fare thee well.

Farewell! forever, did I say?
What, never more thy face to see?
Then take the last fond look to-day,
And still to-morrow think of me.

Farewell! alas, the tragic sound
Has many a tender bosom torn;
While desolation spread around,
Deserted friendship left to mourn.

Farewell! awakes the sleeping tear,
The dormant rill from sorrow's eye,
Express'd from one by nature dear,
Whose bosom heaves the latent sigh.

Farewell! is but departure's tale,
When fond association ends,
And fate expands her lofty sail,
To show the distant flight of friends.

Alas! and if we sure must part,
Far separated long to dwell,
I leave thee with a broken heart,
So friend, forever, fare thee well.

I leave thee, but forget thee never,
Words cannot my feeling tell,
'Fare thee well, and if forever,
Still forever fare thee well.'

George Moses Horton

General Grant -- The Hero Of The War

Brave Grant, thou hero of the war,
Thou art the emblem of the morning star,
Transpiring from the East to banish fear,
Revolving o'er a servile Hemisphere,
At large thou hast sustained the chief command
And at whose order all must rise and stand,
To hold position in the field is thine,
To sink in darkness or to rise and shine.

Thou art the leader of the Fed'ral band,
To send them at thy pleasure through the land,
Whose martial soldiers never did recoil
Nor fail in any place to take the spoil,
Thus organized was all the army firm,
And led unwavering to their lawful term,
Never repulsed or made to shrink with fear,
Advancing in their cause so truly dear.

The love of Union burned in every heart,
Which led them true and faithful from the start,
Whether upon water or on land,
They all obeyed their marshall's strict command,
By him the regiments were all surveyed,
His trumpet voice was by the whole obeyed,
His order right was every line to form,
And all be well prepared to front the storm.

Ye Southern gentlemen must grant him praise,
Nor on the flag of Union fail to gaze;
Ye ladies of the South forego the prize,
Our chief commander here to recognize,
From him the stream of general orders flow,
And every chief on him some praise bestow,
The well-known victor of the mighty cause
Demands from every voice a loud applause.

What more has great Napoleon ever done,
Though many battles in his course he won?
What more has Alexander e'er achieved,
Who left depopulated cities grieved?
To him we dedicate the whole in song,
The verses from our pen to him belong,
To him the Union banners are unfurled,
The star of peace the standard of the world.

George Moses Horton

George Moses Horton, Myself

I feel myself in need
Of the inspiring strains of ancient lore,
My heart to lift, my empty mind to feed,
And all the world explore.

I know that I am old
And never can recover what is past,
But for the future may some light unfold
And soar from ages blast.

I feel resolved to try,
My wish to prove, my calling to pursue,
Or mount up from the earth into the sky,
To show what Heaven can do.

My genius from a boy,
Has fluttered like a bird within my heart;
But could not thus confined her powers employ,
Impatient to depart.

She like a restless bird,
Would spread her wings, her power to be unfurl'd
And let her songs be loudly heard,
And dart from world to world.

George Moses Horton

Heavenly Love

Eternal spring of boundless grace,
It lifts the soul above,
Where God the Son unveils his face,
And shows that Heaven is love.

Love that revolves through endless years--
Love that can never pall;
Love which excludes the gloom of fears,
Love to whom God is all!

Love which can ransom every slave,
And set the pris'ner free;
Gild the dark horrors of the grave,
And still the raging sea.

Let but the partial smile of Heaven
Upon the bosom play,
The mystic sound of sins forgiven,
Can waft the soul away.

The pilgrim's spirits show this love,
They often soar on high;
Languish from this dim earth to move,
And leave the flesh to die.

Sing, oh my soul, rise up and run,
And leave this clay behind;
[illegible] ing thy swift flight beyond the sun,
Nor dwell in tents confined.

George Moses Horton

Imploring To Be Resigned At Death

Let me die and not tremble at death,
But smile at the close of my day,
And then, at the flight of my breath,
Like a bird of the morning in May,
Go chanting away.

Let me die without fear of the dead,
No horrors my soul shall dismay,
And with faith's pillow under my head,
With defiance to mortal decay,
Go chanting away.

Let me die like a son of the brave,
And martial distinction display,
Nor shrink from a thought of the grave,
No, but with a smile from the clay,
Go chanting away.

Let me die glad, regardless of pain,
No pang to this world to betray;
And the spirit cut loose from its chain,
So loath in the flesh to delay,
Go chanting away.

Let me die, and my worst foe forgive,
When death veils the last vital ray;
Since I have but a moment to live,
Let me, when the last debt I pay,
Go chanting away.

George Moses Horton

Love

Whilst tracing thy visage I sink in emotion,
For no other damsel so wond'rous I see;
Thy looks are so pleasing, thy charms so amazing,
I think of no other, my true-love, but thee.

With heart-burning rapture I gaze on thy beauty,
And fly like a bird to the boughs of a tree;
Thy looks are so pleasing, thy charms so amazing,
I fancy no other, my true-love, but thee.

Thus oft in the valley I think, and I wonder
Why cannot a maid with her lover agree?
Thy looks are so pleasing, thy charms so amazing,
I pine for no other, my true-love, but thee.

I'd fly from thy frowns with a heart full of sorrow--
Return, pretty damsel, and smile thou on me;
By every endeavor, I'll try thee forever,
And languish until I am fancied by thee.

George Moses Horton

Man, A Torch

Blown up with painful care and hard to light,
A glimmering torch blown in a moment out,
Suspended by a web, an angler's bait,
Floating at stake along the stream of chance,
Snatch'd from its hook by the fish of poverty,
A silent cavern is his last abode;
The king's repository veil'd with gloom,
The umbrage of a thousand oziers bowed,
The couch of hallowed bones, the grave's asylum,
The brave's retreat and end of ev'ry care.

George Moses Horton

Meditation On A Cold, Dark, And Rainy Night

Sweet on the house top falls the gentle shower,
When jet black darkness crowns the silent hour,
When shrill the owlet pours her hollow tone,
Like some lost child sequester'd and alone,
When Will's bewildering wisp begins to flare,
And Philomela breathes her dulcet air,
'Tis sweet to listen to her nightly tune,
Deprived of star-light or the smiling moon.
When deadly winds sweep round the rural shed,
And tell of strangers lost, without a bed,
Fond sympathy invokes her dol'rous lay,
And pleasure steals in sorrow's gloom away,
Till fost'ring Somnus bids my eyes to close,
And smiling visions open to repose;
Still on my soothing couch I lie at ease,
Still round my chamber flows the whistling breeze,
Still in the chain of sleep I lie confined,
To all the threat'ning ills of life resign'd,
Regardless of the wand'ring elf of night,
While phantoms break on my immortal sight.
The trump of morning bids my slumbers end,
While from a flood of rest I straight ascend,
When on a busy world I cast my eyes,
And think of nightly slumbers with surprise.

George Moses Horton

Memory

Sweet memory, like a pleasing dream,
Still lends a dull and feeble ray;
For ages with her vestige teems,
When beauty's trace is worn away.

When pleasure, with her harps unstrung,
Sits silent to be heard no more,
Or leaves them on the willows hung,
And pass-time glee forever o'er;

Still back in smiles thy glory steals
With ev'ning dew drops from thine eye;
The twilight bursting from thy wheels,
Ascends and bids oblivion fly.

Memory, thy bush prevails to bloom,
Design'd to fade, no, never, never,
Will stamp thy vestige on the tomb,
And bid th' immortal live forever.

When youth's bright sun has once declined
And bid his smiling day expire,
Mem'ry, thy torch steals up behind,
And sets thy hidden stars on fire.

George Moses Horton

Mr. Clay’s Reception At Raleigh, April, 1844

Salute the august train! a scene so grand,
With every tuneful band;
The mighty brave,
His country bound to save,
Extends his aiding hand;
For joy his vot'ries hoop and stamp,
Excited by the blaze of pomp!
Let ev'ry eye
The scene descry,
The sons of freedom's land.

They look ten thousand stars! lamp tumbler blaze,
To give the Hero praise!
Immortal Clay,
The cause is to pourtray!
Your tuneful voices raise;
The lights of our Columbian sun,
Break from his patriotic throne;
Let all admire
The faithful sire,
The chief musician plays.

Ye bustling crowds give way, proclaims the drum,
And give the Patriot room;
The cannon's sound,
The blast of trumpets bound,
Be this our father's home;
Now let the best musician play,
A skillful tune for Henry Clay!
Let every ear
With transport hear!
The President is come.

Let sister states greet the Columbian feast,
With each admiring guest;
Thou art our choice!
Let ev'ry joyful voice,
Sound from the east to west;
Let haughty Albion's lion roar,
The eagle must prevail to soar;
And in lovely form,
Above the storm,
Erect her peaceful nest.

Beyond each proud empire she throws her eye!
Which lifted to the sky,
No thunders roll,
To agitate her soul,
Beneath her feet they fly!
Let skillful fingers sweep the lyre,
Strike ev'ry ear! set hearts on fire!
Let monarchs sleep

Beyond the deep,
And howling faction die.

Nor hence forget the scene applauding day,
When every heart was gay;
The universal swell
Rush'd from the loud town bell;
In awful, grand array,
We see them form the bright parade;
And hark, a gladdening march is play'd!
Along the street,
The theme is sweet,
For every voice is Clay.

To the Capitol the low and upland peers
Resort with princely fears,
And homage pay;
A loud huzza for Clay!
Falls on our ears;
Loud from his lips the thunders roll,
And fill with wonder every soul;
Round the sire of state
All concentrate,
And every mortal hears.

George Moses Horton

On An Old Deluded Suitor

See sad deluded love, in years too late,
With tears desponding o'er the tomb of fate,
While dusky evening's veil excludes the light
Which in the morning broke upon his sight.
He now regrets his vain, his fruitless plan,
And sadly wonders at the faults of man.
'Tis now from beauty's torch he wheels aside,
And strives to soar above affection's tide;
'Tis now that sorrow feeds the worm of pain
With tears which never can the loss regain;
'Tis now he drinks the wormwood and the gall,
And all the sweets of early pleasures pall,
When from his breast the hope of fortune flies,
The songs of transport languish into sighs;
Fond, lovely rose, that beamed as she blew,
Of all the charms of youth the most untrue,
She, with delusive smiles, prevail'd to move
This silly heart into the snare of love;
Then like a flower closed against the bee,
Folds her arms and turns her back on me.
When on my fancy's eye her smiles she shed,
The torch by which deluded love was led,
Then, like a lark, from boyhood's maze I soar'd,
And thus in song her flattering smiles adored.
My heart was then by fondling love betray'd,
A thousand pleasures bloom'd but soon to fade,
From joy to joy my heart exulting flew,
In quest of one, though fair, yet far from true.

George Moses Horton

On Death

Deceitful worm, that undermines the clay,
Which slyly steals the thoughtless soul away,
Pervading neighborhoods with sad surprise,
Like sudden storms of wind and thunder rise.

The sounding death-watch lurks within the wall
Away some unsuspecting soul to call:
The pendant willow droops her waving head,
And sighing zephyrs whisper of the dead.

Methinks I hear the doleful midnight knell--
Some parting spirit bids the world farewell;
The taper burns as conscious of distress,
And seems to show the living number less.

Must a lov'd daughter from her father part,
And grieve for one who lies so near her heart?
And must she for the fatal loss bemoan,
Or faint to hear his last departing groan.

Methinks I see him speechless gaze awhile,
And on her drop his last paternal smile;
With gushing tears closing his humid eyes,
The last pulse beats, and in her arms he dies.

With pallid cheeks she lingers round his bier,
And heaves a farewell sigh with every tear;
With sorrow she consigns him to the dust,
And silent owns the fatal sentence just.

Still her sequestered mother seems to weep,
And spurns the balm which constitutes her sleep;
Her plaintive murmurs float upon the gale,
And almost make the stubborn rocks bewail.

O what is like the awful breach of death,
Whose fatal stroke invades the creature's breath!
It bids the voice of desolation roll,
And strikes the deepest awe within the bravest soul.

George Moses Horton

On Hearing Of The Intention Of A Gentleman To Purchase The Poet's Freedom

When on life's ocean first I spread my sail,
I then implored a mild auspicious gale;
And from the slippery strand I took my flight,
And sought the peaceful haven of delight.

Tyrannic storms arose upon my soul,
And dreadful did their mad'ning thunders roll;
The pensive muse was shaken from her sphere,
And hope, it vanish'd in the clouds of fear.

At length a golden sun broke thro' the gloom,
And from his smiles arose a sweet perfume--
A calm ensued, and birds began to sing,
And lo! the sacred muse resumed her wing.

With frantic joy she chaunted as she flew,
And kiss'd the clement hand that bore her thro'
Her envious foes did from her sight retreat,
Or prostrate fall beneath her burning feet.

'Twas like a proselyte, allied to Heaven--
Or rising spirits' boast of sins forgiven,
Whose shout dissolves the adamant away
Whose melting voice the stubborn rocks obey.

'Twas like the salutation of the dove,
Borne on the zephyr thro' some lonesome grove,
When Spring returns, and Winter's chill is past,
And vegetation smiles above the blast.

'Twas like the evening of a nuptial pair,
When love pervades the hour of sad despair--
'Twas like fair Helen's sweet return to Troy,
When every Grecian bosom swell'd with joy.

The silent harp which on the osiers hung,
Was then attuned, and manumission sung:
Away by hope the clouds of fear were driven,
And music breathed my gratitude to heaven.

Hard was the race to reach the distant goal,
The needle oft was shaken from the pole;
In such distress, who could forbear to weep?
Toss'd by the headlong billows of the deep!

The tantalizing beams which shone so plain,
Which turn'd my former pleasures into pain--
Which falsely promised all the joys of fame,
Gave way, and to a more substantial flame.

Some philanthropic souls as from afar,
With pity strove to break the slavish bar;
To whom my floods of gratitude shall roll,
And yield with pleasure to their soft control.

And sure of Providence this work begun--
He shod my feet this rugged race to run;
And in despite of all the swelling tide,
Along the dismal path will prove my guide.

Thus on the dusky verge of deep despair,
Eternal Providence was with me there;
When pleasure seemed to fade on life's gay dawn,
And the last beam of hope was almost gone.

George Moses Horton

On Liberty And Slavery

Alas! and am I born for this,
To wear this slavish chain?
Deprived of all created bliss,
Through hardship, toil and pain!

How long have I in bondage lain,
And languished to be free!
Alas! and must I still complain--
Deprived of liberty.

Oh, Heaven! and is there no relief
This side the silent grave--
To soothe the pain--to quell the grief
And anguish of a slave?

Come Liberty, thou cheerful sound,
Roll through my ravished ears!
Come, let my grief in joys be drowned,
And drive away my fears.

Say unto foul oppression, Cease:
Ye tyrants rage no more,
And let the joyful trump of peace,
Now bid the vassal soar.

Soar on the pinions of that dove
Which long has cooed for thee,
And breathed her notes from Afric's grove,
The sound of Liberty.

Oh, Liberty! thou golden prize,
So often sought by blood--
We crave thy sacred sun to rise,
The gift of nature's God:

Bid Slavery hide her haggard face,
And barbarism fly:
I scorn to see the sad disgrace
In which enslaved I lie.

Dear Liberty! upon thy breast,
I languish to respire;
And like the Swan unto her nest,
I'd to thy smiles retire.

Oh, blest asylum--heavenly balm!
Unto thy boughs I flee--
And in thy shades the storm shall calm,
With songs of Liberty!

George Moses Horton

On Spring

Hail, thou auspicious vernal dawn!
Ye birds, proclaim the winter's gone,
Ye warbling minstrels sing;
Pour forth your tribute as ye rise,
And thus salute the fragrant skies
The pleasing smiles of Spring.

Coo sweetly, oh thou harmless Dove,
And bid thy mate no longer rove,
In cold, hybernal vales;
Let music rise from every tongue,
Whilst winter flies before the song,
Which floats on gentle gales.

Ye frozen streams dissolve and flow
Along the valley, sweet and slow;
Divested fields be gay:
Ye drooping forests bloom on high,
And raise your branches to the sky,
And thus your charms display.

Thou world of heat--thou vital source,
The torpid insects feel thy force,
Which all with life supplies;
Gardens and orchards richly bloom,
And send a gale of sweet perfume,
To invite them as they rise.

Near where the crystal waters glide,
The male of birds escorts his bride,
And twitters on the spray;
He mounts upon his active wing,
To hail the bounty of the Spring,
The lavish pomp of May.

Inspiring month of youthful Love,
How oft we in the peaceful grove,
Survey the flowery plume;
Or sit beneath the sylvan shade,
Where branches wave above the head,
And smile on every bloom.

Exalted month, when thou art gone,
May Virtue then begin the dawn
Of an eternal Spring?
May raptures kindle on my tongue,

And start a new, eternal song,
Which ne'er shall cease to ring!

George Moses Horton

On Summer

Esteville fire begins to burn;
The auburn fields of harvest rise;
The torrid flames again return,
And thunders roll along the skies.

Perspiring Cancer lifts his head,
And roars terrific from on high;
Whose voice the timid creatures dread,
From which they strive with awe to fly.

The night-hawk ventures from his cell,
And starts his note in evening air;
He feels the heat his bosom swell,
Which drives away the gloom of fear.

Thou noisy insect, start thy drum;
Rise lamp-like bugs to light the train;
And bid sweet Philomela come,
And sound in front the nightly strain.

The bee begins her ceaseless hum,
And doth with sweet exertions rise;
And with delight she stores her comb,
And well her rising stock supplies.

Let sportive children well beware,
While sprightly frisking o'er the green;
And carefully avoid the snare,
Which lurks beneath the smiling scene.

The mistress bird assumes her nest,
And broods in silence on the tree,
Her note to cease, her wings at rest,
She patient waits her young to see.

The farmer hastens from the heat;
The weary plough-horse droops his head;
The cattle all at noon retreat,
And ruminate beneath the shade.

The burdened ox with dauntless rage,
Flies heedless to the liquid flood,
From which he quaffs, devoid of guage,
Regardless of his driver's rod.

Pomacious orchards now expand
Their laden branches o'er the lea;
And with their bounty fill the land,
While plenty smiles on every tree.

On fertile borders, near the stream,
Now gaze with pleasure and delight;
See loaded vines with melons teem--
'Tis paradise to human sight.

With rapture view the smiling fields,
Adorn the mountain and the plain,
Each, on the eve of Autumn, yields
A large supply of golden grain.

George Moses Horton

On The Consequences Of Happy Marriages

Hail happy pair from whom such raptures rise,
On whom I gaze with pleasure and surprize;
From thy bright rays the gloom of strife is driven,
For all the smiles of mutual love are Heaven.

Thrice happy pair! no earthly joys excel
Thy peaceful state; there constant pleasures dwell,
Which cheer the mind and elevate the soul,
Whilst discord sinks beneath their soft control.

The blaze of zeal extends from breast to breast,
While Heaven supplies each innocent request;
And lo! what fond regard their smiles reveal,
Attractive as the magnet to the steel.

Their peaceful life is all content and ease,
They with delight each other strive to please;
Each other's charms, they only can admire,
Whose bosoms burn with pure connubial fire.

Th' indelible vestige of unblemished love,
Must hence a guide to generations prove:
Though virtuous partners moulder in the tomb,
Their light may shine on ages yet to come.

With grateful tears their well-spent day shall close,
When death like evening calls them to repose;
Then mystic smiles may break from deep disguise,
Like Vesper's torch transpiring in the skies.

Like constellations still their works may shine,
In virtue's unextinguished blaze divine;
Happy are they whose race shall end the same--
Sweeter than odours is a virtuous name.

Such is the transcript of unfading grace,
[illegible] eflecting lustre on a future race.
[illegible] virtuous on this line delight to tread,
[illegible] magnify the honors of the dead--

Who like a Phoenix did not burn in vain,
Incinerated to revive again;
From whose exalted urn young love shall rise,
Exulting from a funeral sacrifice.

George Moses Horton

On The Conversion Of A Sister

'Tis the voice of my sister at home,
Resign'd to the treasures above,
Inviting the strangers to come,
And feast at the banquet of love.

'Tis a spirit cut loose from its chain,
'Tis the voice of a culprit forgiven,
Restored from a prison of pain,
With th' sound of a concert from heaven.

'Tis a beam from the regions of light,
A touch of beatific fire;
A spirit exulting for flight,
With a strong and impatient desire.

'Tis a drop from the ocean of love,
A foretaste of pleasures to come,
Distill'd from the fountain above,
The joy which awaits her at home.

George Moses Horton

On The Death Of An Infant

Blest Babe! it at length has withdrawn,
The Seraphs have rock'd it to sleep;
Away with an angelic smile it has gone,
And left a sad parent to weep!

It soars from the ocean of pain,
On breezes of precious perfume;
O be not discouraged when death is but gain--
The triumph of life from the tomb.

With pleasure I thought it my own,
And smil'd on its infantile charms;
But some mystic bird, like an eagle, came down,
And snatch'd it away from my arms.

Blest Babe, it ascends into Heaven,
It mounts with delight at the call;
And flies to the bosom from whence it was given,
The Parent and Patron of all.

George Moses Horton

On The Death Of Rebecca

Thou delicate blossom; thy short race is ended,
Thou sample of virtue and prize of the brave!
No more are thy beauties by mortals attended,
They now are but food for the worms and the grave.

Thou art gone to the tomb, whence there's no returning,
And left us behind in a vale of suspense;
In vain to the dust do we follow thee mourning,
The same doleful trump will soon call us all hence.

I view thee now launched on eternity's ocean,
Thy soul how it smiles as it floats on the wave;
It smiles as if filled with the softest emotion,
But looks not behind on the frowns of the grave.

The messenger came from afar to relieve thee--
In this lonesome valley no more shalt thon roam;
Bright seraphs now stand on the banks to receive thee,
And cry, 'Happy stranger, thou art welcome at home.'

Thou art gone to a feast, while thy friends are bewailing,
Oh, death is a song to the poor ransom'd slave;
Away with bright visions the spirit goes sailing,
And leaves the frail body to rest in the grave.

Rebecca is free from the pains of oppression,
No friends could prevail with her longer to stay;
She smiles on the fields of eternal fruition,
Whilst death like a bridegroom attends her away.

She is gone in the whirlwind--ye seraphs attend her,
Through Jordan's cold torrent her mantle may lave;
She soars in the chariot, and earth falls beneath her,
Resign'd in a shroud to a peaceable grave.

George Moses Horton

On The Evening And Morning

When Evening bids the Sun to rest retire,
Unwearied Ether sets her lamps on fire;
Lit by one torch, each is supplied in turn,
Till all the candles in the concave burn.

The night-hawk now, with his nocturnal tone,
Wakes up, and all the Owls begin to moan,
Or heave from dreary vales their dismal song,
Whilst in the air the meteors play along.

[illegible] ength the silver queen begins to rise,
[illegible] spread her glowing mantle in the skies,
[illegible] from the smiling chambers of the east,
[illegible] the eye to her resplendent feast.

What joy is this unto the rustic swain,
Who from the mount surveys the moon-lit plain;
Who with the spirit of a dauntles Pan
Controls his fleecy train and leads the van;

Or pensive, muses on the water's side,
Which purling doth thro' green meanders glide,
With watchful care he broods his heart away
'Till might is swallowed in the flood of day.

The meteors cease to play, that mov'd so fleet
And spectres from the murky groves retreat,
The prowling wolf withdraws, which bowl'd so bold
And bleating flocks may venture from the fold.

The night-hawk's din deserts the shepherd's ear,
Succeeded by the huntsman's trumpet clear,
O come Diana, start the morning chase
Thou ancient goddess of the hunting race.

Aurora's smiles adorn the mountain's brow,
The peasant hums delighted at his plow,
And lo, the dairy maid salutes her bounteous cow.

George Moses Horton

On The Pleasures Of College Life

With tears I leave these academic bowers,
And cease to cull the scientific flowers;
With tears I hail the fair succeeding train,
And take my exit with a breast of pain.
The Fresh may trace these wonders as they smile;
The stream of science like the river Nile,
Reflecting mental beauties as it flows,
Which all the charms of College life disclose;
This sacred current as it runs refines,
Whilst Byron sings and Shakspeare's mirror shines.
First like a garden flower did I rise,
When on the college bloom I cast my eyes;
I strove to emulate each smiling gem,
Resolved to wear the classic diadem;
But when the Freshman's garden breeze was gone;
Around me spread a vast extensive lawn;
'Twas there the muse of college life begun,
Beneath the rays of erudition's sun,

Where study drew the mystic focus down,
And lit the lamp of nature with renown;
There first I heard the epic thunders roll,
And Homer's light'ning darted through my soul.
Hard was the task to trace each devious line,
Though Locke and Newton bade me soar and shine;
I sunk beneath the heat of Franklin's blaze,
And struck the notes of philosophic praise;
With timid thought I strove the test to stand,
Reclining on a cultivated land,
Which often spread beneath a college bower,
And thus invoked the intellectual shower;
E'en that fond sire on whose depilous crown,
The smile of courts and states shall shed renown;
Now far above the noise of country strife,
I frown upon the gloom of rustic life,
Where no pure stream of bright distinction flows,
No mark between the thistle and the rose;
One's like a bird encaged and bare of food,
Borne by the fowler from his native wood,
Where sprightly oft he sprung from spray to spray,
And cheer'd the forest with his artless lay,

Or fluttered o'er the purling brook at will,
Sung in the dale or soar'd above the hill.
Such are the liberal charms of college life,
Where pleasure flows without a breeze of strife;
And such would be my pain if cast away,
Without the blooms of study to display.
Beware, ye college birds, again beware,
And shun the fowler with his subtile snare;
Nor fall as one from Eden, stript of all
The life and beauty of your native hall;

Nor from the garden of your honor go,
Whence all the streams of fame and wisdom flow;
Where brooding Milton's theme purls sweet along
With Pope upon the gales of epic song;
Where you may trace a bland Demosthenes,
Whose oratoric pen ne'er fails to please;
And Plato, with immortal Cicero,
And with the eloquence of Horace glow;
There cull the dainties of a great Ainsworth,
Who sets the feast of ancient language forth;
Or glide with Ovid on his simple stream,
And catch the heat from Virgil's rural beam;
Through Addison you trace creation's fire,
And all the rapid wheels of time admire;

Or pry with Paley's theologic rays,
And hail the hand of wisdom as you gaze;
Up Murray's pleasant hill you strive to climb,
To gain a golden summit all sublime,
And plod through conic sections all severe,
Which to procure is pleasure true and dear.
The students' pensive mind is often stung,
Whilst blundering through the Greek and Latin tongue;
Parsing in grammars which may suit the whole,
And will the dialect of each control.
Now let us take a retrospective view,
And whilst we pause, observe a branch or two.
Geography and Botany unfold
Their famous charms like precious seeds of gold;
Zoology doth all her groups descry,
And with Astronomy we soar on high;
But pen and ink and paper all would fail,
To write one third of this capacious tale.
Geography presents her flowery train,
Describes the mountain and surveys the plain,
Measures the sounding rivers as they grow,
Unto the trackless deeps to which they flow:
She measures well her agriculture's stores,

Which meet her commerce on the golden shore,
Includes the different seasons of the year,
And changes which pervade the atmosphere,
Treats of the dread phenomena which rise
In different shapes on earth, or issue from the skies;
She points in truth to Lapland's frozen clime,
And nicely measures all the steps of time;
Unfolds the vast equator's burning line,
Where all the stores of heat dissolve and shine;
Describes the earth as unperceived she rolls,
Her well-poised axis placed upon the poles.
Botany, whose charms her florists well display,
Whose lavish odours swell the pomp of May,

Whose curling wreaths the steady box adorn,
And fill with fragrance all the breeze of morn.
Through various means her plants are oft applied,
Improved by art, and well by nature tried;
Thro' her, the stores of herbage are unroll'd,
All which compose the vegetable world;
Even the sensitives, which feel and shrink,
From slightest touches, though they cannot think,
Not yet rejoice, void of the power to fear,

Or sense to smell, to see, to taste, or hear.
Zoology, with her delightful strain,
Doth well the different animals explain;
From multipedes to emmets in the dust,
And all the groveling reptiles of disgust;
She well descries the filthy beetle blind,
With insects high and low of every kind;
She with her microscope surveys the mite,
Which ne'er could be beheld by naked sight;
Thence she descends into the boundless deep,
Where dolphins play and monsters slowly creep;
Explores the foaming main from shore to shore,
And hears with awe the dshing sea bull roar;
Traces enormous whales exploding high
Their floods of briny water to the sky;
Desribes the quadrupeds of ever shape,
The bear, the camel, elephant and ape,
And artful monkey, which but lack to talk,
And like the human kind uprightly walk.
Astronomy, with her aerial powers,
Lifts us above this dreary globe of ours;
Throughout the realms of ether's vast expanse,
Her burning wings our towering minds advance;
Measures her tropic well from line to line,

And marks her rolling planets as they shine;
Describes the magnitude of every star,
And thence pursues her comets as they roll afar.
But nature never yet was half explored,
Though by philosopher and bard adored;
Astronomer and naturalist expire,
And languish that they could ascend no higher;
Expositors of words in every tongue,
Writers of prose and scribblers of song,
Would fail with all their mathematic powers,
And vainly study out their fleeting hours.
Sir Walter Raleigh, Pen and Roberson,
With Morse and Snowden, who are dead and gone,
They all were, though mused their lives away,
And left ten thousand wonders to display.
And though the fiery chemists probe the mine
The subterraneous bodies to define;

Though melting flames the force of matter try,
Rocks mix'd with brass and gold to pieces fly;
And those who follow the electric muse,
Amidst the wilds of vast creation loose
Themselves like pebbles in the swelling main,
And strive for naught these wanders to explain;

Galvin himself, the monarch of the whole,
Would blush his empty parchments to unroll.
These different branches to one ocean go,
Where all the streams of life together flow,
Where perfect wisdom swells the tide of joy,
A tide which must eternity employ;
A boundless sea of love without a shore,
Whose pleasure ebbs and flows forever more;
Volume Divine! O thou the sacred dew,
Thy fadeless fields see elders passing through,
Thy constant basis must support the whole,
The cabinet and alcove of the soul;
It matters not through what we may have pass'd,
To thee for sure support we fly at last;
Encyclopedias we may wander o'er,
And study every scientific lore,
Ancient and modern authors we may read,
The soul must starve or on thy pastures feed.
These bibliothic charms would surely fall,
And life grow dim within this college wall,
The wheels of study in the mind would tire,
If not supported by thy constant fire;
Greatest of all the precepts ever taught
Maps and vocabularies dearly bought,
Burns with his harp, Scott, Cambell, and their flowers,

Will shrink without the everlasting showers;
Theology, thou sweetest science yet,
Beneath whose boughs the silent classics sit,
And thus imbibe the sacred rays divine,
Which make the mitred faculty to shine;
O for a gleam of Buck, immortal muse,
With elder Scott and Henry to peruse;
These lines which did a secret bliss inspire,
And set the heads, the hearts, the tongues, on fire.
Such is the useful graduate indeed,
Not merely at the bar in law to plead,
Nor a physician best to heal the flesh,
But all the mystic power of soul and flesh;
On such a senior let archangels smile,
And all the students imitate his style,
Who bears with joy the mission all divine,
The beams of sanctitude, a Paul benign;
Whose sacred call is to evangelise,
A gospel prince, a legate of the skies,

Whose bright diploma is a deed from heaven,
The palm of love, the wreath of sins forgiven.

George Moses Horton

On The Poetic Muse

Far, far above this world I soar,
And almost nature lose,
Aerial regions to explore,
With this ambitious Muse.

My towering thoughts with pinions rise,
Upon the gales of song,
Which waft me through the mental skies,
With music on my tongue.

My Muse is all on mystic fire,
Which kindles in my breast;
To scenes remote she doth aspire,
As never yet exprest.

Wrapt in the dust she scorns to lie,
Call'd by new charms away;
Nor will she e'er refuse to try
Such wonders to survey.

Such is the quiet bliss of soul,
When in some calm retreat,
Where pensive thoughts like streamlets roll,
And render silence sweet;

And when the vain tumultuous crowd
Shakes comfort from my mind,
My muse ascends above the cloud
And leaves the noise behind.

With vivid flight she mounts on high
Above the dusky maze,
And with a perspicacious eye
Doth far 'bove nature gaze.

George Moses Horton

On The Silence Of A Young Lady

ON ACCOUNT OF THE IMAGINARY FLIGHT OF HER SUITOR.

Oh, heartless dove! mount in the skies,
Spread thy soft wing upon the gale,
Or on thy sacred pinions rise,
Nor brood with silence in the vale.

Breathe on the air thy plaintive note,
Which oft has filled the lonesome grove,
And Iet thy melting ditty float--
The dirge of long lamented love.

Coo softly to the silent ear,
And make the floods of grief to roll;
And cause by love the sleeping tear,
To wake with sorrow from the soul

Is it the loss of pleasures past
Which makes thee droop thy sounding wing?
Does winter's rough, inclement blast
Forbid thy tragic voice to sing?

Is it because the Fragrant breeze
Along the sky forbears to flow--
Nor whispers low amidst the trees,
Whilst all the vallies frown below?

Why should a frown thy soul alarm,
And tear thy pleasures from thy breast?
Or veil the smiles of every charm,
And rob thee of thy peaceful rest.

Perhaps thy sleeping love may wake,
And hear thy penitential tone;
And suffer not thy heart to break,
Nor let a princess grieve alone.

Perhaps his pity may return,
With equal feeling from the heart,
And breast with breast together burn,
Never--no, never more to part.

Never, till death's resistless blow,

Whose call the dearest must obey--
In twain together then may go,
And thus together dwell for aye.

Say to the suitor, Come away,
Nor break the knot which love has tied--
Nor to the world thy trust betray,
And fly forever from thy bride.

George Moses Horton

On The Truth Of The Saviour

E'en John the Baptist did not know
Who Christ the Lord could be,
And bade his own disciples go
The strange event to see.

They said, Art thou the one of whom
'Twas written long before?
Is there another still to come,
Who will all things restore?

This is enough, without a name--
Go, tell him what is done;
Behold the feeble, weak and lame,
With strength rise up and run.

This is enough--the blind now see,
The dumb Hosannas sing;
Devils far from his presence flee,
As shades from morning's wing.

See the distress'd, all bath'd in tears,
Prostrate before him fall;
Immanuel speaks, and Lazarus hears--
The dead obeys his call.

This is enough--the fig-tree dies,
And withers at his frown;
Nature her God must recognize,
And drop her flowery crown.

At his command the fish increase,
And loaves of barley swell--
Ye hungry eat, and hold your peace,
And find a remnant still.

At his command the water blushed,
And all was turned to wine,
And in redundance flowed afresh,
And owned its God divine.

Behold the storms at his rebuke,
All calm upon the sea--
How can we for another look,
When none can work as he?

This is enough--it must be God,
From whom the plagues are driven;
At whose command the mountains nod,
And all the Host of Heaven!

George Moses Horton

On Winter

When smiling Summer's charms are past,
The voice of music dies;
Then Winter pours his chilling blast
From rough inclement skies.

The pensive dove shuts up her throat,
The larks forbear to soar,
Or raise one sweet, delightful note,
Which charm'd the ear before.

The screech-owl peals her shivering tone
Upon the brink of night;
As some sequestered child unknown,
Which feared to come in sight.

The cattle all desert the field,
And eager seek the glades
Of naked trees, which once did yield
Their sweet and pleasant shades.

The humming insects all are still,
The beetles rise no more.
The constant tinkling of the bell,
Along the heath is o'er.

Stern Boreas hurls each piercing gale
With snow-clad wings along,
Discharging volleys mixed with hail
Which chill the breeze of song.

Lo, all the Southern windows close,
Whence spicy breezes roll;
The herbage sinks in sad repose,
And Winter sweeps the whole.

Thus after youth old age comes on,
And brings the frost of time,
And e'er our vigor has withdrawn,
We shed the rose of prime.

Alas! how quick it is the case,
The scion youth is grown--
How soon it runs its morning race,
And beauty's sun goes down.

The Autumn of declining years
Must blanch the father's head,
Encumbered with a load of cares,
When youthful charms have fled.

George Moses Horton

Praise Of Creation

Creation fires my tongue!
Nature thy anthems raise;
And spread the universal song
Of thy Creator's praise!

Heaven's chief delight was Man
Before Creation's birth--
Ordained with joy to lead the van,
And reign the lord of earth.

When Sin was quite unknown,
And all the woes it brought,
He hailed the morn without a groan
Or one corroding thought.

When each revolving wheel
Assumed its sphere sublime,
Submissive Earth then heard the peal,
And struck the march of time.

The march in Heaven begun,
And splendor filled the skies,
When Wisdom bade the morning Sun
With joy from chaos rise.

The angels heard the tune
Throughout creation ring:
They seized their golden harps as soon
And touched on every string.

When time and space were young,
And music rolled along--
The morning stars together sung,
And Heaven was drown'd in song.

Ye towering eagles soar,
And fan Creation's blaze,
And ye terrific lion's roar,
To your Creator's praise.

Responsive thunders roll,
Loud acclamations sound,
And show your Maker's vast control
O'er all the worlds around.

Stupendous mountains smoke,
And lift your summits high,
To him who all your terrors woke,
Dark'ning the sapphire sky.

Now let my muse descend,
To view the march below--

Ye subterraneous worlds attend
And bid your chorus flow.

Ye vast volcanoes yell,
Whence fiery cliffs are hurled;
And all ye liquid oceans swell
Beneath the solid world.

Ye cataracts combine,
Nor let the pæan cease--
The universal concert join,
Thou dismal precipice.

But halt my feeble tongue,
My weary muse delays:
But, oh my soul, still float along
Upon the flood of praise!

George Moses Horton

Pride In Heaven

On heaven's ethereal plain,
Where hostile rage ambition first begun,
When the arch rebel strove himself to reign
And take Jehovah's throne.
Swift to the fight the seraphim
On floods of pride were seen to swim,
And bold defy the power supreme,
And thus their God disown.

High on a dome of state,
From azure fields he cast his daring eye,
Licentious trains his magazines await,
At whose command they fly.
The gloom excludes celestial charms,
When all the angels rush to arms,
Heaven shakes beneath the vast alarms,
And earth begins to sigh.

Eternal mountains move,
And seven-fold thunders rock the hills below,
While starry throngs desert the worlds above,
Beneath Jehovah's brow.
O Lucifer, thou morning son,
To glut thy pride what hast thou done?
Sing, O ye heavens, the plague is gone,
And weep, thou earth, for woe.

Creation felt the fall,
And trembling nature heav'd a dismal groan;
For that rebellion brought her into thrall,
She must her fate bemoan;
See angels fall no more to rise,
And feed the worm that never dies;
No ear of grace can hear their cries,
And hoarse lamenting tone.

Weak nature lay exposed,
And felt the wound in pleasing hate conceal'd;
And, void of fear, the secret charm disclosed
Which ev'ry ill reveal'd.
The venom struck through ev'ry vein,
And every creature felt the pain;
But undefiled a lamb was slain,
By which the wound was heal'd.

George Moses Horton

Prosperity

Come, thou queen of every creature,
Nature calls thee to her arms ;
Love sits gay on every feature,
Teeming with a thousand charms.

Meet me mid the wreathing bowers,
Greet me in the citron grove,
Where I saw the belle of flowers
Dealing with the blooms of love.

Hark! the lowly dove of Sharon,
Bids thee rise and come away,
From a vale both dry and barren,
Come to one where life is gay.

Come, thou queen of all the forest,
Fair Feronia, mountain glee,
Lovelier than the garden florist,
Or the goddess of the bee.

Come, Sterculus, and with pleasure,
Fertilize the teeming field;
From thy straw, dissolved at leisure,
Bid the lea her bounty yield.

Come, thou queen of every creature,
Nature calls thee to her arms;
Love sits gay on every feature,
Teeming with a thousand charms.

George Moses Horton

Recent Appearance Of A Lady

The joy of meeting one so fair,
Inspires the present stream of song;
A bonny belle,
That few excel,
And one with whom I few compare,
Though out of sight so long.

It is a cause of much delight,
When lads and lasses meet again;
But, bonny belle,
No long to dwell,
For soon, upon the wing of flight,
We haste away in pain.

That long hid form I smile to trace,
A star emerging out of gloom,
Exalted belle,
Whose powers impel,
And draw the heart by every grace,
The queen of every bloom.

Long out of sight, but still in mind,
Eternal me'mry holds its grasp,
Still, bonny belle,
'Tis sweet to tell
Of thee, when I am left behind
In sorrow's lonely clasp.

George Moses Horton

Reflections From The Flash Of A Meteor

So teach me to regard my day,
How small a point my life appears;
One gleam to death the whole betrays,
A momentary flash of years.

One moment smiles, the scene is past,
Life's gaudy bloom at once we shed,
And thinly beneath affliction's blast,
Or drop as soon among the dead.

Short is the chain wound up at morn,
Which oft runs down and stops at noon;
Thus in a moment man is born,
And, lo! the creature dies as soon.

Life's little torch how soon forgot,
Dim burning on its dreary shore;
Just like that star which downwards shot,
It glimmers and is seen no more.

Teach me to draw this transient breath,
With conscious awe my end to prove,
Early to make my peace with death,
As thus in haste from time we move.

heaven, through this murky vale,
Direct me with a burning pen;
Thus shall I on a tuneful gale
Fleet out my threescore years and ten.

George Moses Horton

Regret For The Departure Of Friends

As smoke from a volcano soars in the air,
The soul of man discontent mounts from a sigh,
Exhaled as to heaven in mystical prayer,
Invoking that love which forbids him to die.

Sweet hope, lovely passion, my grief ever chase,
And scatter the gloom which veils pleasure's bright ray,
O lend me thy wings, and assist me to trace
The flight of my fair one when gone far away.

When the dim star of pleasure sets glimmering alone,
The planet of beauty on life's dreary shore,
And th' fair bird of fancy forever is flown,
On pinions of haste to be heard of no more.

Hope, tell me, dear passion, thou wilt not forget,
To flourish still sweetly and blossom as gay,
Expelling like morning the gloom of regret,
When the lark of affection is gone far away.

If hurried into some unchangeable clime,
Where oceans of pleasure continually roll,
Far, far from the limited borders of time,
With a total division of body and soul.

Hope, tell me, dear passion, which must earth survive,
That love will be sweeter when nature is o'er,
And still without pain though eternity live,
In the triumph of pleasure when time is no more.

O love, when the day-light of pleasure shall close,
Let the vesper of death break on life's dusky even;
Let the faint sun of time set in peace as it rose,
And eternity open thy morning in heaven.

Then hope, lovely passion, thy torch shall expire,
Effusing on nature life's last feeble ray;
While the night maid of love sets her taper on fire,
To guard smiling beauty from time far away.

George Moses Horton

Rosabella - Purity Of Heart

Though with an angel's tongue
I set on fire the congregations all,
'Tis but a brazen bell that I have rung,
And I to nothing fall;
My theme is but an idle air
If Rosabella is not there,

Though I in thunders rave,
And hurl the blaze of oratoric flowers,
Others I move, but fail myself to save
With my declaiming powers;
I sink, alas! I know not where,
If Rosabella is not there.

Though I point out the way,
And closely circumscribe the path to heaven,
And pour my melting prayer without delay,
And vow my sins forgiven,
I sink into the gloom despair
If Rosabella is not there,

Though I may mountains move,
And make the vallies vocal with my song,
I'm vain without a stream of mystic love,
For all my heart is wrong;
I've laid myself a cruel snare,
If Rosabella is not there.

From bibliothic stores,
I fly, proclaiming heaven from land to land,
Or cross the seas and reach their distant shores,
Mid Gothic groups to stand;
O, let me of myself beware,
If Rosabella is not there.

Our classic books must fail,
And with their flowery tongues to ashes burn,
And not one groat a mortal wit avail
Upon his last return;
Be this the creature's faithful prayer,
That Rosabella may be there.

This spotless maid was born
The babe of heaven, and cannot be defiled;
The soul is dead and in a state forlorn
On which she has not smiled;
Vain are the virile and the fair,
If Rosabella be not there.

When other pleasures tire,
And mortal glories fade to glow no more,
She with the wings of truth augments her fire,

And still prevails to soar;
All else must die, the good and wise,
But Rosabella never dies.

George Moses Horton

The Creditor To His Proud Debtor

Ha, tott'ring Johny, strut and boast,
But think of what your feathers cost;
Your crowing days are short at most,
You bloom but soon to fade;
Surely you could not stand so wide,
If strictly to the bottom tried,
The wind would blow your plume aside
If half your debts were paid.
Then boast and bear the crack,
With the sheriff at your back;
Huzza for dandy Jack,
My jolly fop, my Joe.

The blue smoke from your segar flies,
Offensive to my nose and eyes;
The most of people would be wise
Your presence to evade;
Your pocket jingles loud with cash,
And thus you cut a foppish dash,
But, alas! dear boy, you would be trash,
If your accounts were paid.
Then boast and bear the crack, &c.

My duck bill boots would look as bright,
Had you in justice served me right;
Like you I then could step as light,
Before a flaunting maid;
As nicely could I clear my throat,
And to my tights my eyes devote;
But I'd leave you bare without that coat,
For which you have not paid.
Then boast and bear the crack, &c.

I'd toss myself with a scornful air,
And to a poor man pay no care;
I could rock cross-leg'd on my chair
Within the cloister shade;
I'd gird my neck with a light cravat,
And creaning wear my bell-crown hat;
But away my down would fly at that,
If once my debts were paid.
Then boast and bear the crack,
With a sheriff at your back;
Huzza for dandy Jack,
My jolly fop, my Joe.

George Moses Horton

The Dirge

Deserted of her Spouse, she sat lamenting in the chamber.

Hast thou gone and left me,
Void of faults but strictly true?
Fly far away
Without delay,
Adieu, my love, adieu.

Hast thou gone and left me,
Hence to seek another bride?
I must be still,
Thou hast thy will,
The world is free and wide.

Only hadst thou told me
Ere I drunk the bitter cup,
I could with shame,
Now bear the blame,
And freely give thee up.

But I'm left to ponder,
Now in the depth of sorrow's gloom;
Like some dull sprite,
In dead of night,
Bewailing o'er her tomb.

Swiftly fly and welcome;
It is the fate of fools to rove;
With whom I know
Wedlock is woe
Without the stream of love.

Where constant love is wanting,
Pleasure has not long to dwell;
I view my fate,
Alas, too late!
So partner, fare thee well.

But, my love, remember,
Hence we meet and face to face,
Thy heart shall ache,
Thy soul shall quake,
The wretch of all disgrace.

George Moses Horton

The Eye Of Love

I know her story-telling eye
Has more expression than her tongue;
And from that heart-extorted sigh,
At once the peal of love is rung.

When that soft eye lets fall a tear
Of doating fondness as we part,
The stream is from a cause sincere,
And issues from a melting heart.

What shall her fluttering pulse restrain,
The life-watch beating from her soul,
When all the power of hate is slain,
And love permits it no control.

When said her tongue, I wish thee well,
Her eye declared it must be true;
And every sentence seem'd to tell
The tale of sorrow told by few.

When low she bow'd and wheel'd aside,
I saw her blushing temples fade;
Her smiles were sunk in sorrow's tide,
But love was in her eye betray'd.

George Moses Horton

The Fate Of An Innocent Dog

When Tiger left his native yard,
He did not many ills regard,
A fleet and harmless cur;
Indeed, he was a trusty dog,
And did not through the pastures prog;
The grazing flocks to stir, poor dog,
The grazing flocks to stir.

He through a field by chance was led,
In quest of game not far ahead,
And made one active leap;
When all at once, alarm'd, he spied,
A creature welt'ring on its side,
A deadly wounded sheep, alas!
A deadly wounded sheep.

He there was fill'd with sudden fear,
Apprized of lurking danger near,
And there he left his trail;
Indeed, he was afraid to yelp,
Nor could he grant the creature help,
But wheel'd and drop'd his tail, poor dog,
But wheel'd and drop'd his tail.

It was his pass-time, pride and fun,
At morn the nimble hare to run,
When frost was on the grass;
Returning home who should he meet?
The weather's owner, coming fleet,
Who scorn'd to let him pass, alas!
Who scorn'd to let him pass.

Tiger could but his bristles raise,
A surly compliment he pays,
Insulted shows his wrath;
Returns a just defensive growl,
And does not turn aside to prowl,
But onward keeps the path, poor dog,
But onward keeps the path.

The raging owner found the brute,
But could afford it no recruit,
Nor raise it up to stand;
'Twas mangled by some other dogs,
A set of detrimental rogues,
Raised up at no command, alas!
Raised up at no command.

Sagacious Tiger left his bogs,
But bore the blame of other dogs,
With powder, fire and ball;
They kill'd the poor, unlawful game,

And then came back and eat the same ;
But Tiger paid for all, poor dog,
But Tiger paid for all.

Let ev'ry harmless dog beware
Lest he be taken in the snare,
And scorn such fields to roam;
A creature may be fraught with grace,
And suffer for the vile and base,
By straggling off from home, alas!
By straggling off from home.

The blood of creatures oft is spilt,
Who die without a shade of guilt;
Look out, or cease to roam;
Whilst up and down the world he plays
For pleasure, man in danger strays
Without a friend from home, alas!
Without a friend from home.

George Moses Horton

The Fearful Traveller In The Haunted Castle

Oft do I hear those windows ope
And shut with dread surprise,
And spirits murmur as they grope,
But break not on the eyes.

Still fancy spies the winding sheet,
The phantom and the shroud,
And bids the pulse of horror beat
Throughout my ears aloud.

Some unknown finger thumps the door,
From one of faltering voice,
Till some one seems to walk the floor
With an alarming noise.

The drum of horror holds her sound,
Which will not let me sleep,
When ghastly breezes float around,
And hidden goblins creep.

Methinks I hear some constant groan,
The din of all the dead,
While trembling thus I lie alone,
Upon this restless bed.

At length the blaze of morning broke
On my impatient view,
And truth or fancy told the joke,
And bade the night adieu.

'Twas but the noise of prowling rats,
Which ran with all their speed,
Pursued in haste by hungry cats,
Which on the vermin feed.

Those creatures crumbling off the cheese
Which on the table lay;
Some cats, too quick the rogues to seize,
With rumbling lost their prey.

Thus man is often his own elf,
Who makes the night his ghost,
And shrinks with horror from himself,
Which is to fear the most.

The cat growl'd as she held her prey,
Which shriek'd with all its might,
And drove she balm of sleep away
Throughout the live-long night.

George Moses Horton

The Graduate Leaving College

What summons do I hear?
The morning peal, departure's knell;
My eyes let fall a friendly tear,
And bid this place farewell.

Attending servants come,
The carriage wheels like thunders roar,
To bear the pensive seniors home,
Here to be seen no more.

Pass one more transient night,
The morning sweeps the college clean;
The graduate takes his last long flight,
No more in college seen.

The bee, which courts the flower,
Must with some pain itself employ,
And then fly, at the day's last hour,
Home to its hive with joy.

George Moses Horton

The Happy Bird’s Nest

When on my cottage falls the placid shower,
When ev'ning calls the labourer home to rest,
When glad the bee deserts the humid flower,
O then the bird assumes her peaceful nest.

When sable shadows grow unshapely tall,
And Sol's resplendent wheel descends the west,
The knell of respiration tolls for all,
And Hesper smiles upon the linnet's nest.

When o'er the mountain bounds the fair gazell,
The night bird tells her day-departing jest,
She gladly leaves her melancholy dell,
And spreads her pinions o'er the linnet's nest.

Then harmless Dian spreads her lucid sail,
And glides through ether with her silver crest,
Bidding the watchful bird still pour her tale,
And cheer the happy linnet on her nest.

Thus may some guardian angel bear her light,
And o'er thy tomb, departed genius, rest,
Whilst thou shalt take thy long eternal flight,
And leave some faithful bird to guard thy nest.

George Moses Horton

The Loss Of Female Character

See that fallen Princess! her splendor is gone--
The pomp of her morning is over;
Her day-star of pleasure refuses to dawn,
She wanders a nocturnal rover.

Alas! she resembles Jerusalem's fall,
The fate of that wonderful city;
When grief with astonishment rung from the wall,
Instead of the heart-cheering ditty.

When music was silent, no more to be rung,
When Sion wept over her daughter;
On grief's drooping willows their harps they were hung,
When pendent o'er Babylon's water.

She looks like some Star that has fall'n from her sphere,
No more by her cluster surrounded;
Her comrades of pleasure refuse her to cheer,
And leave her dethron'd and confounded.

She looks like some Queen who has boasted in vain,
Whose diamond refuses to glitter;
Deserted by those who once bow'd in her train,
Whose flight to her soul must be bitter.

She looks like the twilight, her sun sunk away,
He sets; but to rise again never!
Like the Eve, with a blush bids farewell to the day,
And darkness conceals her forever.

George Moses Horton

The Lover's Farewell

And wilt thou, love, my soul display,
And all my secret thoughts betray?
I strove but could not hold thee fast,
My heart flies off with thee at last.

The favorite daughter of the dawn,
On love's mild breeze will soon be gone:
I strove but could not cease to love,
Nor from my heart the weight remove.

And wilt thou, love, my soul beguile,
And gull thy fav'rite with a smile?
Nay, soft affection answers, nay,
And beauty wings my heart away.

I steal on tiptoe from these bowers,
All spangled with a thousand flowers;
I sigh, yet leave them all behind,
To gain the object of my mind.

And wilt thou, love, command my soul,
And waft me with a light controul?--
Adieu to all the blooms of May,
Farewell--I fly with love away!

I leave my parents here behind,
And all my friends--to love resigned--
'Tis grief to go, but death to stay:
Farewell--I'm gone with love away!

George Moses Horton

The Musical Chamber

I TRUST that my friends will remember,
Whilst I these my pleasures display,
Resort to my musical chamber,
The laurel crown'd desert in May.

Resort to this chamber at leisure,
Attend it by night and by day;
To feast on the dainties of pleasure,
Which cannot be stinted in May.

This place is both pleasing and moral,
A chamber both lovely and gay,
In the shade of a ne'er fading laurel,
Whose grace in December is May.

Abounding with every fine story,
While time passes hurrying away,
This place is a banquet of glory,
Which rings with the ditties of May.

The chamber of Chatham and Dolly,
A place of a comical play,
Gave place unto Love's fine folly,
The birds and sweet flowers of May.

Here Venus attends with her lover,
Here Floras their suitors betray,
And uncommon secrets discover,
Which break from the bosom of May.

Here ever young Hebe sits smiling,
The wonders of youth to portray,
Excluding old age from defiling
The lads and the lassies of May.

Call by, little stranger, one minute,
Your joy will reward your delay;
Come, feast with the lark and the linnet,
And drink of the waters of May.

Walk in, little mistress, be steady,
You 'r welcome a visit to pay;
All things in the chamber are ready,
Resolve to be married in May.

George Moses Horton

The Powers Of Love

It lifts the poor man from his cell
To fortune's bright alcove;
Its mighty sway few, few can tell,
Mid envious foes it conquers ill;
There's nothing half like love.

Ye weary strangers, void of rest,
Who late through life have strove,
Like the late bird which seeks its nest,
If you would hence in truth be blest,
Light on the bough of love.

The vagrant plebeian, void of friends,
Constrain'd through wilds to rove,
On this his safety whole depends,
One faithful smile his trouble ends,
A smile of constant love.

Thus did a captured wretch complain,
Imploring heaven above,
Till one with sympathetic pain,
Flew to his arms and broke the chain,
And grief took flight from love.

Let clouds of danger rise and roar,
And hope's firm pillars move;
With storms behind and death before,
O grant me this, I crave no more,
There's nothing half like love.

When nature wakes soft pity's coo
The hawk deserts the dove,
Compassion melts the creature through,
With palpitations felt by few,
The wrecking throbs of love.

Let surly discord take its flight
From wedlock's peaceful grove,
While union breaks the arm of fight,
With darkness swallow'd up in light,
O what is there like love.

George Moses Horton

The Retreat From Moscow

Sad Moscow, thy fate do I see,
Fire! fire! in the city all cry;
Like quails from the eagle all flee,
Escape in a moment or die.

It looks like the battle of Troy,
The storm rises higher and higher;
The scene of destruction all hearts must annoy,
The whirlwinds, the smoke, and the fire.

The dread conflagration rolls forth,
Augmenting the rage of the wind,
Which blows it from south unto north,
And leaves but the embers behind.

It looks like Gomorrah; the flame
Is moving still nigher and nigher,
Aloud from all quarters the people proclaim,
The whirlwinds, the smoke, and the fire.

A dead fumigation now swells,
A blue circle darkens the air,
With tones as the pealing of bells,
Farewell to the brave and the fair.

O Moscow, thou city of grace,
Consign'd to a dread burning pyre,
From morning to ev'ning with sorrow I trace
The wild winds, the smoke, and the fire.

The dogs in the kennel all howl,
The wether takes flight with the ox,
Appal'd on the wing is the fowl,
The pigeon deserting her box.

With a heart full of pain, in the night
Mid hillocks and bogs I retire,
Through lone, deadly vallies I steer by its light,
The wild storm, the smoke, and the fire.

Though far the crash breaks on my ear,
The stars glimmer dull in the sky,
The shrieks of the women I hear,
The fall of the kingdom is nigh.

heaven, when earth is no more,
And all things in nature expire,
May I thus, with safety, keep distant before
The whirlwinds, the smoke, and the fire.

George Moses Horton

The Rising Sun

The king of day rides on,
To give the placid morning birth;
On wheels of glory moves his throne,
Whose light adorns the earth.

When once his limpid maid
Has the imperial course begun,
The lark deserts the dusky glade,
And soars to meet the sun.

Up from the orient deep,
Aurora mounts without delay,
With brooms of light the plains to sweep,
And purge the gloom away.

Ye ghostly scenes give way,
Our king is coming now in sight,
Bearing the diadem of day,
Whose crest expels the night.

Thus we, like birds, retreat
To groves, and hide from ev'ry eye;
Our slumb'ring dust will rise and meet
Its morning in the sky.

The immaterial sun,
Now hid within empyreal gloom,
Will break forth on a brighter throne,
And call us from the tomb.

George Moses Horton

The Setting Sun

'Tis sweet to trace the setting sun
Wheel blushing down the west;
When his diurnal race is run,
The traveller stops the gloom to shun,
And lodge his bones to rest.

Far from the eye he sinks apace,
But still throws back his light
From oceans of resplendent grace,
Whence sleeping vesper paints her face,
And bids the sun good night.

To those hesperian fields by night
My thoughts in vision stray,
Like spirits stealing into light,
From gloom upon the wing of flight,
Soaring from time away.

Our eagle, with his pinions furl'd,
Takes his departing peep,
And hails the occidental world,
Swift round whose base the globes are whirl'd,
Whilst weary creatures sleep.

George Moses Horton

The Slave's Complaint

Am I sadly cast aside,
On misfortune's rugged tide?
Will the world my pains deride
Forever?
Must I dwell in Slavery's night,
And all pleasure take its flight,
Far beyond my feeble sight,
Forever?
Worst of all, must Hope grow dim,
And withhold her cheering beam?
Rather let me sleep and dream
Forever!

Something still my heart surveys,
Groping through this dreary maze;
Is it Hope? -- then burn and blaze
Forever!

Leave me not a wretch confined,
Altogether lame and blind --
Unto gross despair consigned,
Forever!

Heaven! in whom can I confide?
Canst thou not for all provide?
Condescend to be my guide
Forever:

And when this transient life shall end,
Oh, may some kind eternal friend
Bid me from servitude ascend,
Forever!

George Moses Horton

The Swan - Vain Pleasures

The Swan which boasted mid the tide,
Whose nest was guarded by the wave,
Floated for pleasure till she died,
And sunk beneath the flood to lave.

The bird of fashion drops her wing,
The rose-bush now declines to bloom;
The gentle breezes of the spring
No longer waft a sweet perfume.

Fair beauty with those lovely eyes,
Withers along her vital stream;
Proud fortune leaves her throne, and flies
From pleasure, as a flattering dream.

The eagle of exalted fame,
Which spreads his pinions far to sail,
Struggled to fan his dying flame,
Till pleasure pall'd in every gale.

And gaudy mammon, sordid gain,
Whose plume has faded, once so gay,
Languishes mid her flowery train,
Whilst pleasure flies like fumes away.

Vain pleasures, O how short to last!
Like leaves which quick to ashes burn;
Which kindle from the slightest blast,
And slight to nothing hence return.

George Moses Horton

The Tipler To His Bottle

What hast thou ever done for me?
Defeated every good endeavor;
I never can through life agree
To place my confidence in thee,
Not ever, no, never!

Often have I thy steam admired,
Thou nothing hast avail'd me ever;
Vain have I thought myself inspired,
Say, have I else but pain acquired?
Not ever, no, never!

No earthly good, no stream of health,
Flows from thy fount, thou cheerful giver;
From thee, affluence sinks to stealth,
From thee I pluck no bloom of health,
Whatever, no, never!

Thou canst impart a nobel mind,
Power from my tongue flows like a river;
The gas flows dead, I'm left behind,
To all that's evil down confined,
To flourish more never!

With thee I must through life complain,
Thy powers at large will union sever;
Disgorge no more thy killing bane,
The bird hope flies from thee in pain,
To return more never!

George Moses Horton

The Traveller

'Tis sweet to think of home.

When from my native clime,
Mid lonely vallies pensive far I roam,
Mid rocks and hills where waters roll sublime,
'Tis sweet to think of home.

My retrospective gaze
Bounds on a dark horizon far behind,
But yet the stars of homely pleasures blaze
And glimmer on my mind.

When pealing thunders roll,
And ruffian winds howl, threat'ning life with gloom,
To Heaven's kind hand I then commit the whole,
And smile to think of home.

But cease, my pensive soul,
To languish at departure's gloomy shrine;
Still look in front and hail the joyful goal,
The pleasure teeming line.

When on the deep wide sea
I wander, sailing mid the swelling foam,
Tost from the land by many a long degree,
O, then I think of thee.

I never shall forget
The by-gone pleasures of my native shore,
Until the sun of life forbears to set,
And pain is known no more.

When nature seems to weep,
And life hangs trembling o'er the watery tomb,
Hope lifts her peaceful sail to brave the deep,
And bids me think of home.

My favorite pigeon rest,
Nor on the plane of sorrow drop thy train,
But on the bough of hope erect thy nest,
Till friends shall meet again.

Though in the hermit's cell,
Where eager friends to cheer me fail to come,
Where Zeph'rus seems a joyless tale to tell,
No thought is sweet but home.

George Moses Horton

The Woodman And The Money Hunter

Throughout our rambles much we find;
The bee trees burst with honey;
Wild birds we tame of every kind,
At once they seem to be resign'd;
I know but one that lags behind,
There's nothing lags but money.

The woods afford us much supply,
The opossum, coon, and coney;
They all are tame and venture nigh,
Regardless of the public eye,
I know but one among them shy,
There's nothing shy but money.

And she lies in the bankrupt shade;
The cunning fox is funny;
When thus the public debts are paid,
Deceitful cash is not afraid,
Where funds are hid for private trade,
There's nothing paid but money.

Then let us roam the woods along,
And drive the coon and coney;
Our lead is good, our powder strong,
To shoot the pigeons as they throng,
But sing no more the idle song,
Nor prowl the chase for money.

George Moses Horton

To Catharine

I'll love thee as long as I live,
Whate'er thy condition may be;
All else but my life would I give,
That thou wast as partial to me.

I love thee because thou art fair,
And fancy no other beside;
I languish thy pleasures to share,
Whatever my life may betide.

I'll love thee when youth's vital beam
Grows dim on the visage of cares;
And trace back on time's rapid stream,
Thy beauty when sinking in years.

Though nature no longer is gay,
With blooms which the simple adore,
Let virtue forbid me to say,
That Cath'rine is lovely no more.

George Moses Horton

To A Departing Favorite

Thou mayst retire, but think of me
When thou art gone afar,
Where'er in life thy travels be,
If tost along the brackish sea,
Or borne upon the car.

Thou mayst retire, I care not where,
Thy name my theme shall be;
With thee in heart I shall be there,
Content thy good or ill to share,
If dead to lodge with thee.

Thou mayst retire beyond the deep,
And leave thy sister train,
To roam the wilds where dangers sleep,
And leave affection sad to weep
In bitterness and pain.

Thou mayst retire, and yet be glad
To leave me thus alone,
Lamenting and bewailing sad;
Farewell, thy sunk deluded lad
May rise when thou art gone.

George Moses Horton

To Eliza

Eliza, tell thy lover why
Or what induced thee to deceive me?
Fare thee well--away I fly--
I shun the lass who thus will grieve me.

Eliza, still thou art my song,
Although by force I may forsake thee;
Fare thee well, for I was wrong
To woo thee while another take thee.

Eliza, pause and think a while--
Sweet lass! I shall forget thee never:
Fare thee well! although I smile,
I grieve to give thee up forever.

Eliza, I shall think of thee--
My heart shall ever twine about thee;
Fare thee well--but think of me,
Compell'd to live and die without thee.
'Fare thee well!--and if forever,
Still forever fare thee well!'

George Moses Horton

To Miss Tempe

Bless'd hope, when Tempe takes her last long flight,
And leaves her lass-lorn lover to complain,
Like Luna mantling o'er the brow of night,
Thy glowing wing dispels the gloom of pain.

Yes, wondrous hope, when Tempe sails afar,
Thy vital lamp remains to burn behind,
While by-gone pleasure, like a setting star,
Rejects her glory o'er the twilight mind.

Thy glowing wing was never spread to tire,
Expanded o'er the mansion of the brave,
To fan and set the heaving breast on fire,
That soars in triumph from affliction's wave.

Then, Tempe, dart along the ocean drear,
Hope yet forbids my cheerful soul to weep,
But marks thy passage with affection's tear,
And hails thee on the bosom of the deep.

Farewell, since thou wilt leave thy native shore,
I smile to think I am not left alone;
Auspicious hope shall yet my peace restore,
When thou art from the beach forever gone.

George Moses Horton

To The Gad-Fly

Majestic insect! from thy royal hum,
The flies retreat, or starve before they'll come;
The obedient plough-horse may, devoid of fear,
Perform his task with joy, when thou art near.

As at the Lion's dread alarming roar,
The inferior beasts will never wander more,
Lest unawares he should be seized away,
And to the prowling monster fall a prey.

With silent pleasure often do I trace
The fly upon the wing, with rapid pace,
The fugitive proclaims upon the wind,
The death-bound sheriff is not far behind.

Ye thirsty flies beware, nor dare approach,
Nor on the toiling animal encroach;
Be vigilant, before you buzz too late,
The victim of a melancholy fate.

Such seems the caution of the once chased fly,
Whilst to the horse she dare not venture nigh;
This useful Gad-Fly traversing the field,
with care the lab'ring animal to shield.

Such is the eye of Providential care,
Along the path of life forever there;
Whose guardian hand by day doth mortals keep
And gently lays them down at night to sleep.

Immortal Guard, shall I thy pleasures grieve
Like Noah's dove, wilt thou the creature leave,
No never, never, whilst on earth I stay.
And after death, then fly with me away.

George Moses Horton

To The King Of Macedonia

Thou may'st with pleasure hail the dawn,
And greet the morning's eye;
Remember, king, the night comes on,
The fleeting day will soon be gone,
Not distant, loud proclaims the funeral tone,
Phillip, thou hast to die.

With thee thy dame, the queen of birds,
May spread her wing to fly;
Or smile to trace the numerous herds,
Thunders from the Lord of lords,
I hear some peal surpassing human words,
Philip, thou hast to die.

Thou mayst thy mighty host survey
And neighboring kings defy,
Whilst round thy retinues flit gay,
Beneath thy pomp's imperial ray,
Make merry on the tide of joy to day,
To-morrow thou shalt die.

I heave to hear the day's last peal,
A sorrow teeming sigh;
The morning's flutt'ring bird has flown,
The roses fade, so quickly blown,
The lofty king falls robeless from his throne,
Philip was born to die.

'Twas thus the haughty king of France
Strove to ascend on high;
Lifting his adamantine lance,
He bade his dauntless war-horse prance,
Defied the world, and rode the car of chance,
To rage, to fume and die.

Thus vile, thus obstinately vain,
He pours his distant brag,
Regardless of his millions slain,
Regales his pale surviving train,
Was but wraped in his infernal chain,
Dies on the ocean crag.

This faithful lesson read to all
Creation, far and nigh,
It is the fate, from Adam's fall,
The swain, the king, the low, and tall,
The watchman of the grave must give the call,
Mortal, thou hast to die.

George Moses Horton

Troubled With The Itch, And Rubbing Sulfur

'Tis bitter, yet 'tis sweet,
Scratching effects but transient ease;
Pleasure and pain together meet,
And vanish as they please.

My nails, the only balm,
To ev'ry bump are oft applied,
And thus the rage will sweetly calm
Which aggravates my hide.

It soon returns again;
A frown succeeds to ev'ry smile;
Grinning I scratch and curse the pain,
But grieve to be so vile.

In fine, I know not which
Can play the most deceitful game,
The devil, sulphur, or the itch;
The three are but the same.

The devil sows the itch,
And sulphur has a loathsome smell,
And with my clothes as black as pitch,
I stink where'er I dwell.

Excoriated deep,
By friction play'd on ev'ry part,
It oft deprives me of my sleep,
And plagues me to my heart.

George Moses Horton

True Friendship

Friendship, thou balm for ev'ry ill,
I must aspire to thee;
Whose breezes bid the heart be still,
And render sweet the patient's pill,
And set the pris'ner free.

Friendship, it is the softest soul
Which feels another's pain;
And must with equal sighs condole,
While sympathetic streamlets roll,
Which nothing can restrain.

Not to be nominated smart,
Of mortals to be seen,
She does not thus her gifts impart,
Her aid is from a feeling heart,
A principle within.

When the lone stranger, forced to roam,
Comes shiv'ring to her door,
At once he finds a welcome home,
The torch of grace dispels his gloom,
And bids him grope no more.

Friendship was never known to fail
The voice of need to hear,
When ruthless ills our peace assail,
When from our hearts she draws the veil,
And drys the falling tear.

When dogs and devils snarl and fight,
She hides and dwells alone;
When friends and kindred disunite,
With pity she surveys the right,
And gives to each his own.

Friendship has not a sister grace
Her wonders to exceed;
She is the queen of all her race,
Whose charms the stoutest must embrace
When in the vale of need.

Friendship is but the feeling sigh,
The sympathizing tear,
Constrain'd to flow till others dry,
Nor lets the needy soul pass by,
Nor scorns to see or hear.

George Moses Horton