

Classic Poetry Series

**John Greenleaf Whittier**  
**- poems -**

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# John Greenleaf Whittier(17 December 1807 – 7 September 1892)

John Greenleaf Whittier was an influential American Quaker poet and ardent advocate of the abolition of slavery in the United States. He is usually listed as one of the Fireside Poets. Whittier was strongly influenced by the Scottish poet Robert Burns. Highly regarded in his lifetime and for a period thereafter, he is now remembered for his poem Snow-Bound, and the words of the hymn Dear Lord and Father of Mankind, from his poem The Brewing of Soma, sung to music by Hubert Parry.

## **Biography**

### **Early Life and Work**

John Greenleaf Whittier was born to John and Abigail (Hussey) at their rural homestead near Haverhill, Massachusetts, on December 17, 1807. He grew up on the farm in a household with his parents, a brother and two sisters, a maternal aunt and paternal uncle, and a constant flow of visitors and hired hands for the farm. Their farm was not very profitable. There was only enough money to get by. Whittier himself was not cut out for hard farm labor and suffered from bad health and physical frailty his whole life. Although he received little formal education, he was an avid reader who studied his father's six books on Quakerism until their teachings became the foundation of his ideology. Whittier was heavily influenced by the doctrines of his religion, particularly its stress on humanitarianism, compassion, and social responsibility.

Whittier was first introduced to poetry by a teacher. His sister sent his first poem, "The Exile's Departure", to the Newburyport Free Press without his permission and its editor, William Lloyd Garrison, published it on June 8, 1826. As a boy, it was discovered that Whittier was color-blind when he was unable to see a difference between ripe and unripe strawberries. Garrison as well as another local editor encouraged Whittier to attend the recently-opened Haverhill Academy. To raise money to attend the school, Whittier became a shoemaker for a time, and a deal was made to pay part of his tuition with food from the family farm. Before his second term, he earned money to cover tuition by serving as a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse in what is now Merrimac, Massachusetts. He attended Haverhill Academy from 1827 to 1828 and completed a high school education in only two terms.

Garrison gave Whittier the job of editor of the *National Philanthropist*, a Boston-based temperance weekly. Shortly after a change in management, Garrison reassigned him as editor of the weekly *American Manufacturer* in Boston. Whittier became an out-spoken critic of President Andrew Jackson, and by 1830 was editor of the prominent *New England Weekly Review* in Hartford, Connecticut, the most influential Whig journal in New England. In 1833 he published *The Song of the Vermonters, 1779*, which he had anonymously inserted in *The New England Magazine*. The poem was erroneously attributed to Ethan Allen for nearly sixty years.

### <b>Abolitionist Activity</b>

During the 1830s, Whittier became interested in politics, but after losing a Congressional election in 1832, he suffered a nervous breakdown and returned home at age twenty-five. The year 1833 was a turning point for Whittier; he resurrected his correspondence with Garrison, and the passionate abolitionist began to encourage the young Quaker to join his cause.

In 1833, Whittier published the antislavery pamphlet *Justice and Expediency*, and from there dedicated the next twenty years of his life to the abolitionist cause. The controversial pamphlet destroyed all of his political hopes—as his demand for immediate emancipation alienated both northern businessmen and southern slaveholders—but it also sealed his commitment to a cause that he deemed morally correct and socially necessary. He was a founding member of the American Anti-Slavery Society and signed the Anti-Slavery Declaration of 1833, which he often considered the most significant action of his life.

Whittier's political skill made him useful as a lobbyist, and his willingness to badger anti-slavery congressional leaders into joining the abolitionist cause was invaluable. From 1835 to 1838, he traveled widely in the North, attending conventions, securing votes, speaking to the public, and lobbying politicians. As he did so, Whittier received his fair share of violent responses, being several times mobbed, stoned, and run out of town. From 1838 to 1840, he was editor of *The Pennsylvania Freeman* in Philadelphia, one of the leading antislavery papers in the North, formerly known as the *National Enquirer*. In May 1838, the publication moved its offices to the newly-opened Pennsylvania Hall on North Sixth Street, which was shortly after burned by a pro-slavery mob. Whittier also continued to write poetry and nearly all of his poems in this period dealt with the problem of slavery.

By the end of the 1830s, the unity of the abolitionist movement had begun to fracture. Whittier stuck to his belief that moral action apart from political effort

was futile. He knew that success required legislative change, not merely moral suasion. This opinion alone engendered a bitter split from Garrison, and Whittier went on to become a founding member of the Liberty Party in 1839. By 1843, he was announcing the triumph of the fledgling party: "Liberty party is no longer an experiment. It is vigorous reality, exerting... a powerful influence". Whittier also unsuccessfully encouraged Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to join the party. He took editing jobs with the Middlesex Standard in Lowell, Massachusetts and the Essex Transcript in Amesbury until 1844. While in Lowell, he met Lucy Larcom, who became a lifelong friend.

In 1845, he began writing his essay "The Black Man" which included an anecdote about John Fountain, a free black who was jailed in Virginia for helping slaves escape. After his release, Fountain went on a speaking tour and thanked Whittier for writing his story.

Around this time, the stresses of editorial duties, worsening health, and dangerous mob violence caused him to have a physical breakdown. Whittier went home to Amesbury, and remained there for the rest of his life, ending his active participation in abolition. Even so, he continued to believe that the best way to gain abolitionist support was to broaden the Liberty Party's political appeal, and Whittier persisted in advocating the addition of other issues to their platform. He eventually participated in the evolution of the Liberty Party into the Free Soil Party, and some say his greatest political feat was convincing Charles Sumner to run on the Free-Soil ticket for the U.S. Senate in 1850.

Beginning in 1847, Whittier was editor of Gamaliel Bailey's *The National Era*, one of the most influential abolitionist newspapers in the North. For the next ten years it featured the best of his writing, both as prose and poetry. Being confined to his home and away from the action offered Whittier a chance to write better abolitionist poetry; he was even poet laureate for his party. Whittier's poems often used slavery to symbolize all kinds of oppression (physical, spiritual, economic), and his poems stirred up popular response because they appealed to feelings rather than logic.

Whittier produced two collections of antislavery poetry: *Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States*, between 1830 and 1838 and *Voices of Freedom* (1846). He was an elector in the presidential election of 1860 and of 1864, voting for Abraham Lincoln both times.

The passage of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 ended both slavery and his public cause, so Whittier turned to other forms of poetry for the remainder of his life.

## <b>Later Life</b>

Whittier was one of the founding contributors of the magazine *Atlantic Monthly*

One of his most enduring works, *Snow-Bound*, was first published in 1866. Whittier was surprised by its financial success, earning some \$10,000 from the first edition. In 1867, Whittier asked James Thomas Fields to get him a ticket to a reading by Charles Dickens during the British author's visit to the United States. After the event, he wrote a letter describing his experience:

My eyes ached all next day from the intensity of my gazing. I do not think his voice naturally particularly fine, but he uses it with great effect. He has wonderful dramatic power... I like him better than any public reader I have ever before heard.

Whittier spent the last few winters of his life, from 1876 to 1892, at Oak Knoll, the home of his cousins in Danvers, Massachusetts. Whittier died on September 7, 1892, at a friend's home in Hampton Falls, New Hampshire. He is buried in Amesbury, Massachusetts.

## <b>Poetry</b>

Whittier's first two published books were *Legends of New England* (1831) and the poem *Moll Pitcher* (1832). In 1833 he published *The Song of the Vermonters, 1779*, which he had anonymously inserted in *The New England Magazine*. The poem was erroneously attributed to Ethan Allen for nearly sixty years. This use of poetry in the service of his political beliefs is illustrated by his book *Poems Written during the Progress of the Abolition Question*.

Highly regarded in his lifetime and for a period thereafter, he is now largely remembered for his patriotic poem *Barbara Frietchie*, *Snow-Bound*, and a number of poems turned into hymns. Of these the best known is *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*, taken from his poem *The Brewing of Soma*. As such it has become extremely popular sung to the English composer Hubert Parry's tune *Repton* taken from the 1888 oratorio *Judith* and set to the latter part of Whittier's poem in 1924 by Dr George Gilbert Stocks. It is also sung as the hymn *Rest*, by Frederick Maker, and Charles Ives also set a part of it to music.

On its own, the hymn appears sentimental, though in the context of the entire poem, the stanzas make greater sense, being intended as a contrast with the fevered spirit of pre-Christian worship and that of some modern Christians. Whittier's Quaker universalism is better illustrated, however, by the hymn that

begins:

*O Brother Man, fold to thy heart thy brother:  
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;  
To worship rightly is to love each other,  
Each smile a hymn, each kindly word a prayer.*

His sometimes contrasting sense of the need for strong action against injustice can be seen in his poem "To Rönge" in honor of Johannes Ronge, the German religious figure and rebel leader of the 1848 rebellion in Germany:

*Thy work is to hew down. In God's name then:  
Put nerve into thy task. Let other men;  
Plant, as they may, that better tree whose fruit,  
The wounded bosom of the Church shall heal.*

Whittier's poem "At Port Royal 1861" describes the experience of Northern abolitionists arriving at Port Royal, South Carolina, as teachers and missionaries for the slaves who had been left behind when their owners fled because the Union Navy would arrive to blockade the coast. The poem includes the "Song of the Negro Boatmen," written in dialect:

*Oh, praise an' tanks! De Lord he come  
To set de people free;  
An' massa tink it day ob doom,  
An' we ob jubilee.  
De Lord dat heap de Red Sea waves  
He jus' as 'trong as den;  
He say de word: we las' night slaves;  
To-day, de Lord's freemen.  
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,  
We'll hab de rice an' corn:  
Oh, nebber you fear, if nebber you hear  
De driver blow his horn!*

Of all the poetry inspired by the Civil War, the "Song of the Negro Boatmen" was one of the most widely printed, and though Whittier never actually visited Port Royal, an abolitionist working there described his "Song of the Negro Boatmen" as "wonderfully applicable as we were being rowed across Hilton Head Harbor among United States gunboats."

**Criticism**

Nathaniel Hawthorne dismissed Whittier's *Literary Recreations and Miscellanies* (1854): "Whittier's book is poor stuff! I like the man, but have no high opinion either of his poetry or his prose." Editor George Ripley, however, found Whittier's poetry refreshing and said it had a "stately movement of versification, grandeur of imagery, a vein of tender and solemn pathos, cheerful trust" and a "pure and ennobling character". Boston critic Edwin Percy Whipple noted Whittier's moral and ethical tone mingled with sincere emotion. He wrote, "In reading this last volume, I feel as if my soul had taken a bath in holy water." Later scholars and critics questioned the depth of Whittier's poetry. One was Karl Keller, who noted, "Whittier has been a writer to love, not to belabor."

### <b>Legacy</b>

Whittier's family farm, known as the John Greenleaf Whittier Homestead or simply "Whittier's Birthplace", is now a historic site open to the public. His later residence in Amesbury, where he lived for 56 years, is also open to the public, now known as the John Greenleaf Whittier Home. Whittier's hometown of Haverhill has named many buildings and landmarks in his honor including J.G. Whittier Middle School, Greenleaf Elementary, and Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School. Numerous other schools around the country also bear his name.

A bridge named for Whittier, built in the style of the Sagamore and Bourne Bridges spanning Cape Cod Canal, carries Interstate 95 from Amesbury to Newburyport over the Merrimack River. A covered bridge spanning the Bearcamp River in Ossipee, New Hampshire is also named for Whittier, as is a nearby mountain.

The city of Whittier, California is named after the poet, as are the communities of Whittier, Alaska, and Whittier, Iowa, the Minneapolis neighborhood of Whittier, the Denver, Colorado, neighborhood of Whittier, and the town of Greenleaf, Idaho. Both Whittier College and Whittier Law School are also named after him. A park in the Saint Boniface area of Winnipeg is named after the poet in recognition of his poem "The Red River Voyageur".

The alternate history story *P.'s Correspondence* (1846) by Nathaniel Hawthorne, considered the first such story ever published in English, includes the notice "Whittier, a fiery Quaker youth, to whom the muse had perversely assigned a battle-trumpet, got himself lynched, in South Carolina". The date of that event in Hawthorne's invented timeline was 1835.

# A Christmas Carmen

I.

Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands,  
The chorus of voices, the clasping of hands;  
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,  
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born!  
With glad jubilations  
Bring hope to the nations!  
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun:  
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,  
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

II.

Sing the bridal of nations! with chorals of love  
Sing out the war-vulture and sing in the dove,  
Till the hearts of the peoples keep time in accord,  
And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord!  
Clasp hands of the nations  
In strong gratulations:  
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun;  
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,  
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

III.

Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace;  
East, west, north, and south let the long quarrel cease  
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,  
Sing of glory to God and of good-will to man!  
Hark! joining in chorus  
The heavens bend o'er us!  
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun;  
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,  
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Day

Talk not of sad November, when a day  
Of warm, glad sunshine fills the sky of noon,  
And a wind, borrowed from some morn of June,  
Stirs the brown grasses and the leafless spray.

On the unfrosted pool the pillared pines  
Lay their long shafts of shadow: the small rill,  
Singing a pleasant song of summer still,  
A line of silver, down the hill-slope shines.

Hushed the bird-voices and the hum of bees,  
In the thin grass the crickets pipe no more;  
But still the squirrel hoards his winter store,  
And drops his nut-shells from the shag-bark trees.

Softly the dark green hemlocks whisper: high  
Above, the spires of yellowing larches show,  
Where the woodpecker and home-loving crow  
And jay and nut-hatch winter's threat defy.

O gracious beauty, ever new and old!  
O sights and sounds of nature, doubly dear  
When the low sunshine warns the closing year  
Of snow-blown fields and waves of Arctic cold!

Close to my heart I fold each lovely thing  
The sweet day yields; and, not disconsolate,  
With the calm patience of the woods I wait  
For leaf and blossom when God gives us Spring!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Dream Of Summer

Bland as the morning breath of June  
The southwest breezes play;  
And, through its haze, the winter noon  
Seems warm as summer's day.  
The snow-plumed Angel of the North  
Has dropped his icy spear;  
Again the mossy earth looks forth,  
Again the streams gush clear.

The fox his hillside cell forsakes,  
The muskrat leaves his nook,  
The bluebird in the meadow brakes  
Is singing with the brook.  
'Bear up, O Mother Nature!' cry  
Bird, breeze, and streamlet free;  
'Our winter voices prophesy  
Of summer days to thee!'

So, in those winters of the soul,  
By bitter blasts and drear  
O'erswept from Memory's frozen pole,  
Will sunny days appear.  
Reviving Hope and Faith, they show  
The soul its living powers,  
And how beneath the winter's snow  
Lie germs of summer flowers!

The Night is mother of the Day,  
The Winter of the Spring,  
And ever upon old Decay  
The greenest mosses cling.  
Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,  
Through showers the sunbeams fall;  
For God, who loveth all His works,  
Has left His hope with all!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## A Greeting

Thrice welcome from the Land of Flowers  
And golden-fruited orange bowers  
To this sweet, green-turfed June of ours!  
To her who, in our evil time,  
Dragged into light the nation's crime  
With strength beyond the strength of men,  
And, mightier than their swords, her pen!  
To her who world-wide entrance gave  
To the log-cabin of the slave;  
Made all his wrongs and sorrows known,  
And all earth's languages his own,--  
North, South, and East and West, made all  
The common air electrical,  
Until the o'ercharged bolts of heaven  
Blazed down, and every chain was riven!

Welcome from each and all to her  
Whose Wooing of the Minister  
Revealed the warm heart of the man  
Beneath the creed-bound Puritan,  
And taught the kinship of the love  
Of man below and God above;  
To her whose vigorous pencil-strokes  
Sketched into life her Oldtown Folks;  
Whose fireside stories, grave or gay,  
In quaint Sam Lawson's vagrant way,  
With old New England's flavor rife,  
Waifs from her rude idyllic life,  
Are racy as the legends old  
By Chaucer or Boccaccio told;  
To her who keeps, through change of place  
And time, her native strength and grace,  
Alike where warm Sorrento smiles,  
Or where, by birchen-shaded isles,  
Whose summer winds have shivered o'er  
The icy drift of Labrador,  
She lifts to light the priceless Pearl  
Of Harpswell's angel-beckoned girl!  
To her at threescore years and ten

Be tributes of the tongue and pen;  
Be honor, praise, and heart-thanks given,  
The loves of earth, the hopes of heaven!

Ah, dearer than the praise that stirs  
The air to-day, our love is hers!  
She needs no guaranty of fame  
Whose own is linked with Freedom's name.  
Long ages after ours shall keep  
Her memory living while we sleep;  
The waves that wash our gray coast lines,  
The winds that rock the Southern pines,  
Shall sing of her; the unending years  
Shall tell her tale in unborn ears.  
And when, with sins and follies past,  
Are numbered color-hate and caste,  
White, black, and red shall own as one  
The noblest work by woman done.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Lament

The circle is broken, one seat is forsaken,  
One bud from the tree of our friendship is shaken;  
One heart from among us no longer shall thrill  
With joy in our gladness, or grief in our ill.

Weep! lonely and lowly are slumbering now  
The light of her glances, the pride of her brow;  
Weep! sadly and long shall we listen in vain  
To hear the soft tones of her welcome again.

Give our tears to the dead! For humanity's claim  
From its silence and darkness is ever the same;  
The hope of that world whose existence is bliss  
May not stifle the tears of the mourners of this.

For, oh! if one glance the freed spirit can throw  
On the scene of its troubled probation below,  
Than the pride of the marble, the pomp of the dead,  
To that glance will be dearer the tears which we shed.

Oh, who can forget the mild light of her smile,  
Over lips moved with music and feeling the while,  
The eye's deep enchantment, dark, dream-like, and clear,  
In the glow of its gladness, the shade of its tear.

And the charm of her features, while over the whole  
Played the hues of the heart and the sunshine of soul;  
And the tones of her voice, like the music which seems  
Murmured low in our ears by the Angel of dreams!

But holier and dearer our memories hold  
Those treasures of feeling, more precious than gold,  
The love and the kindness and pity which gave  
Fresh flowers for the bridal, green wreaths for the grave!

The heart ever open to Charity's claim,  
Unmoved from its purpose by censure and blame,  
While vainly alike on her eye and her ear  
Fell the scorn of the heartless, the jesting and jeer.

How true to our hearts was that beautiful sleeper  
With smiles for the joyful, with tears for the weeper,  
Yet, evermore prompt, whether mournful or gay,  
With warnings in love to the passing astray.

For, though spotless herself, she could sorrow for them  
Who sullied with evil the spirit's pure gem;  
And a sigh or a tear could the erring reprove,  
And the sting of reproof was still tempered by love.

As a cloud of the sunset, slow melting in heaven,  
As a star that is lost when the daylight is given,  
As a glad dream of slumber, which wakens in bliss,  
She hath passed to the world of the holy from this.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Lay Of Old Time

One morning of the first sad Fall,  
Poor Adam and his bride  
Sat in the shade of Eden's wall--  
But on the outer side.

She, blushing in her fig-leaf suit  
For the chaste garb of old;  
He, sighing o'er his bitter fruit  
For Eden's drupes of gold.

Behind them, smiling in the morn,  
Their forfeit garden lay,  
Before them, wild with rock and thorn,  
The desert stretched away.

They heard the air above them fanned,  
A light step on the sward,  
And lo! they saw before them stand  
The angel of the Lord!

'Arise,' he said, 'why look behind,  
When hope is all before,  
And patient hand and willing mind,  
Your loss may yet restore?

'I leave with you a spell whose power  
Can make the desert glad,  
And call around you fruit and flower  
As fair as Eden had.

'I clothe your hands with power to lift  
The curse from off your soil;  
Your very doom shall seem a gift,  
Your loss a gain through Toil.

'Go, cheerful as yon humming-bees,  
To labor as to play.'  
White glimmering over Eden's trees  
The angel passed away.

The pilgrims of the world went forth  
Obedient to the word,  
And found where'er they tilled the earth  
A garden of the Lord!

The thorn-tree cast its evil fruit  
And blushed with plum and pear,  
And seeded grass and trodden root  
Grew sweet beneath their care.

We share our primal parents' fate,  
And, in our turn and day,  
Look back on Eden's sworded gate  
As sad and lost as they.

But still for us his native skies  
The pitying Angel leaves,  
And leads through Toil to Paradise  
New Adams and new Eves!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Legacy

Friend of my many years!  
When the great silence falls, at last, on me,  
Let me not leave, to pain and sadden thee,  
A memory of tears,  
But pleasant thoughts alone.  
Of one who was thy friendship's honored guest  
And drank the wine of consolation pressed  
From sorrows of thy own.  
I leave with thee a sense  
Of hands upheld and trials rendered less,  
The unselfish joy which is to helpfulness  
Its own great recompense.  
The knowledge that from thine,  
As from the garments of the Master, stole  
Calmness and strength, the virtue which makes whole  
And heals without a sign.  
Yea more, the assurance strong  
That love, which fails of perfect utterance here,  
Lives on to fill the heavenly atmosphere  
With its immortal song.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Letter

'TIS over, Moses! All is lost!  
I hear the bells a-ringing;  
Of Pharaoh and his Red Sea host  
I hear the Free-Wills singing.\*  
We're routed, Moses, horse and foot,  
If there be truth in figures,  
With Federal Whigs in hot pursuit,  
And Hale, and all the 'niggers.'  
Alack! alas! this month or more  
We've felt a sad foreboding;  
Our very dreams the burden bore  
Of central cliques exploding;  
Before our eyes a furnace shone,  
Where heads of dough were roasting,  
And one we took to be your own  
The traitor Hale was toasting!  
Our Belknap brother\* heard with awe  
The Congo minstrels playing;  
At Pittsfield Reuben Leavitt\* saw  
The ghost of Storrs a-praying;  
And Carroll's woods were sad to see,  
With black-winged crows a-darting;  
And Black Snout looked on Ossipee,  
New-glossed with Day and Martin.  
We thought the 'Old Man of the Notch'  
His face seemed changing wholly —  
His lips seemed thick; his nose seemed flat;  
His misty hair looked woolly;  
And Coös teamsters, shrieking, fled  
From the metamorphosed figure.  
'Look there!' they said, 'the Old Stone Head  
Himself is turning nigger!'  
The schoolhouse\* out of Canaan hauled  
Seemed turning on its track again,  
And like a great swamp-turtle crawled  
To Canaan village back again,  
Shook off the mud and settled flat  
Upon its underpinning;  
A nigger on its ridge-pole sat,

From ear to ear a-grinning.  
Gray H—d heard o' nights the sound  
Of rail-cars onward faring;  
Right over Democratic ground  
The iron horse came tearing.  
A flag waved o'er that spectral train,  
As high as Pittsfield steeple;  
Its emblem was a broken chain;  
Its motto: 'To the people!'  
I dreamed that Charley took his bed,  
With Hale for his physician;  
His daily dose an old 'unread  
And unREFERRED' petition.\*  
There Hayes and Tuck as nurses sat,  
As near as near could be, man;  
They leeches him with the 'Democrat';  
They blistered with the 'Freeman.'  
Ah! grisly portents! What avail  
Your terrors of forewarning?  
We wake to find the nightmare Hale  
Astride our breasts at morning!  
From Portsmouth lights to Indian stream  
Our foes their throats are trying;  
The very factory-spindles seem  
To mock us while they're flying.  
The hills have bonfires; in our streets  
Flags flout us in our faces;  
The newsboys, peddling off their sheets,  
Are hoarse with our disgraces.  
In vain we turn, for gibing wit  
And shoutings follow after,  
As if old Kearsarge had split  
His granite sides with laughter!  
What boots it that we pelted out  
The anti-slavery women,<sup>9</sup>  
And bravely strewed their hall about  
With tattered lace and trimming?  
Was it for such a sad reverse  
Our mobs became peacemakers,  
And kept their tar and wooden horse  
For Englishmen and Quakers?  
For this did shifty Atherton

Make gag rules for the Great House?  
Wiped we for this our feet upon  
Petitions in our State House?  
Plied we for this our axe of doom,  
No stubborn traitor sparing,  
Who scoffed at our opinion loom,  
And took to homespun wearing?  
Ah, Moses! hard it is to scan  
These crooked providences,  
Deducing from the wisest plan  
The saddest consequences!  
Strange that, in trampling as was meet  
The nigger-men's petition,  
We sprung a mine beneath our feet  
Which opened up perdition.  
How goodly, Moses, was the game  
In which we've long been actors,  
Supplying freedom with the name  
And slavery with the practice!  
Our smooth words fed the people's mouth,  
Their ears our party rattle;  
We kept them headed to the South,  
As drovers do their cattle.  
But now our game of politics  
The world at large is learning;  
And men grown gray in all our tricks  
State's evidence are turning.  
Votes and preambles subtly spun  
They cram with meanings louder,  
And load the Democratic gun  
With abolition powder.  
The ides of June! Woe worth the day  
When, turning all things over,  
The traitor Hale shall make his hay  
From Democratic clover!  
Who then shall take him in the law,  
Who punish crime so flagrant?  
Whose hand shall serve, whose pen shall draw,  
A writ against that 'vagrant'?  
Alas! no hope is left us here,  
And one can only pine for  
The envied place of overseer

Of slaves in Carolina!  
Pray, Moses, give Calhoun the wink,  
And see what pay he's giving!  
We're practised long enough, we think,  
To know the art of driving.  
And for the faithful rank and file,  
Who know their proper stations,  
Perhaps it may be worth their while  
To try the rice plantations.  
Let Hale exult, let Wilson scoff,  
To see us southward scamper;  
The slaves, we know, are 'better off  
Than laborers in New Hampshire!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Memorial

Oh, thicker, deeper, darker growing,  
The solemn vista to the tomb  
Must know henceforth another shadow,  
And give another cypress room.

In love surpassing that of brothers,  
We walked, O friend, from childhood's day;  
And, looking back o'er fifty summers,  
Our footprints track a common way.

One in our faith, and one our longing  
To make the world within our reach  
Somewhat the better for our living,  
And gladder for our human speech.

Thou heard'st with me the far-off voices,  
The old beguiling song of fame,  
But life to thee was warm and present,  
And love was better than a name.

To homely joys and loves and friendships  
Thy genial nature fondly clung;  
And so the shadow on the dial  
Ran back and left thee always young.

And who could blame the generous weakness  
Which, only to thyself unjust,  
So overprized the worth of others,  
And dwarfed thy own with self-distrust?

All hearts grew warmer in the presence  
Of one who, seeking not his own,  
Gave freely for the love of giving,  
Nor reaped for self the harvest sown.

Thy greeting smile was pledge and prelude  
Of generous deeds and kindly words;  
In thy large heart were fair guest-chambers,  
Open to sunrise and the birds;

The task was thine to mould and fashion  
Life's plastic newness into grace  
To make the boyish heart heroic,  
And light with thought the maiden's face.

O'er all the land, in town and prairie,  
With bended heads of mourning, stand  
The living forms that owe their beauty  
And fitness to thy shaping hand.

Thy call has come in ripened manhood,  
The noonday calm of heart and mind,  
While I, who dreamed of thy remaining  
To mourn me, linger still behind,

Live on, to own, with self-upbraiding,  
A debt of love still due from me,--  
The vain remembrance of occasions,  
Forever lost, of serving thee.

It was not mine among thy kindred  
To join the silent funeral prayers,  
But all that long sad day of summer  
My tears of mourning dropped with theirs.

All day the sea-waves sobbed with sorrow,  
The birds forgot their merry trills  
All day I heard the pines lamenting  
With thine upon thy homestead hills.

Green be those hillside pines forever,  
And green the meadowy lowlands be,  
And green the old memorial beeches,  
Name-carven in the woods of Lee.

Still let them greet thy life companions  
Who thither turn their pilgrim feet,  
In every mossy line recalling  
A tender memory sadly sweet.

O friend! if thought and sense avail not

To know thee henceforth as thou art,  
That all is well with thee forever  
I trust the instincts of my heart.

Thine be the quiet habitations,  
Thine the green pastures, blossom-sown,  
And smiles of saintly recognition,  
As sweet and tender as thy own.

Thou com'st not from the hush and shadow  
To meet us, but to thee we come,  
With thee we never can be strangers,  
And where thou art must still be home.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Memory

Here, while the loom of Winter weaves  
The shroud of flowers and fountains,  
I think of thee and summer eves  
Among the Northern mountains.

When thunder tolled the twilight's close,  
And winds the lake were rude on,  
And thou wert singing, \_Ca' the Yowes\_,  
The bonny yowes of Cluden!

When, close and closer, hushing breath,  
Our circle narrowed round thee,  
And smiles and tears made up the wreath  
Wherewith our silence crowned thee;

And, strangers all, we felt the ties  
Of sisters and of brothers;  
Ah! whose of all those kindly eyes  
Now smile upon another's?

The sport of Time, who still apart  
The waifs of life is flinging;  
Oh, nevermore shall heart to heart  
Draw nearer for that singing!

Yet when the panes are frosty-starred,  
And twilight's fire is gleaming,  
I hear the songs of Scotland's bard  
Sound softly through my dreaming!

A song that lends to winter snows  
The glow of summer weather,--  
Again I hear thee ca' the yowes  
To Cluden's hills of heather

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Mystery

The river hemmed with leaning trees  
Wound through its meadows green;  
A low, blue line of mountains showed  
The open pines between.

One sharp, tall peak above them all  
Clear into sunlight sprang  
I saw the river of my dreams,  
The mountains that I sang!

No clue of memory led me on,  
But well the ways I knew;  
A feeling of familiar things  
With every footstep grew.

Not otherwise above its crag  
Could lean the blasted pine;  
Not otherwise the maple hold  
Aloft its red ensign.

So up the long and shorn foot-hills  
The mountain road should creep;  
So, green and low, the meadow fold  
Its red-haired kine asleep.

The river wound as it should wind;  
Their place the mountains took;  
The white torn fringes of their clouds  
Wore no unwonted look.

Yet ne'er before that river's rim  
Was pressed by feet of mine,  
Never before mine eyes had crossed  
That broken mountain line.

A presence, strange at once and known,  
Walked with me as my guide;  
The skirts of some forgotten life  
Trailed noiseless at my side.

Was it a dim-remembered dream?  
Or glimpse through ions old?  
The secret which the mountains kept  
The river never told.

But from the vision ere it passed  
A tender hope I drew,  
And, pleasant as a dawn of spring,  
The thought within me grew,

That love would temper every change,  
And soften all surprise,  
And, misty with the dreams of earth,  
The hills of Heaven arise.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Name

The name the Gallic exile bore,  
St. Malo! from thy ancient mart,  
Became upon our Western shore  
Greenleaf for Feuillevert.

A name to hear in soft accord  
Of leaves by light winds overrun,  
Or read, upon the greening sward  
Of May, in shade and sun.

The name my infant ear first heard  
Breathed softly with a mother's kiss;  
His mother's own, no tenderer word  
My father spake than this.

No child have I to bear it on;  
Be thou its keeper; let it take  
From gifts well used and duty done  
New beauty for thy sake.

The fair ideals that outran  
My halting footsteps seek and find--  
The flawless symmetry of man,  
The poise of heart and mind.

Stand firmly where I felt the sway  
Of every wing that fancy flew,  
See clearly where I groped my way,  
Nor real from seeming knew.

And wisely choose, and bravely hold  
Thy faith unswerved by cross or crown,  
Like the stout Huguenot of old  
Whose name to thee comes down.

As Marot's songs made glad the heart  
Of that lone exile, haply mine  
May in life's heavy hours impart  
Some strength and hope to thine.

Yet when did Age transfer to Youth  
The hard-gained lessons of its day?  
Each lip must learn the taste of truth,  
Each foot must feel its way.

We cannot hold the hands of choice  
That touch or shun life's fateful keys;  
The whisper of the inward voice  
Is more than homilies.

Dear boy! for whom the flowers are born,  
Stars shine, and happy song-birds sing,  
What can my evening give to morn,  
My winter to thy spring!

A life not void of pure intent,  
With small desert of praise or blame,  
The love I felt, the good I meant,  
I leave thee with my name.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Sabbath Scene

SCARCE had the solemn Sabbath-bell  
Ceased quivering in the steeple,  
Scarce had the parson to his desk  
Walked stately through his people,  
When down the summer-shaded street  
A wasted female figure,  
With dusky brow and naked feet,  
Came rushing wild and eager.  
She saw the white spire through the trees,  
She heard the sweet hymn swelling:  
O pitying Christ! a refuge give  
The poor one in Thy dwelling!  
Like a scared fawn before the hounds,  
Right up the aisle she glided,  
While close behind her, whip in hand,  
A lank-haired hunter strided.  
She raised a keen and bitter cry,  
To Heaven. and Earth appealing;  
Were manhood's generous pulses dead?  
Had woman's heart no feeling?  
A score of stout hands rose between  
The hunter and the flying:  
Age clenched his staff, and maiden eyes  
Flashed tearful, yet defying.  
'Who dares profane this house and day?'  
Cried out the angry pastor.  
'Why, bless your soul, the wench's a slave,  
And I'm her lord and master!  
'I've law and gospel on my side,  
And who shall dare refuse me?'  
Down came the parson, bowing low,  
'My good sir, pray excuse me!  
'Of course I know your right divine  
To own and work and whip her;  
Quick, deacon, throw that Polyglott  
Before the wench, and trip her!'  
Plump dropped the holy tome, and o'er  
Its sacred pages stumbling,  
Bound hand and foot, a slave once more,

The hapless wretch lay trembling.  
I saw the parson tie the knots,  
The while his flock addressing,  
The Scriptural claims of slavery  
With text on text impressing.  
'Although,' said he, 'on Sabbath day  
All secular occupations  
Are deadly sins, we must fulfil  
Our moral obligations:  
'And this commends itself as one  
To every conscience tender;  
As Paul sent back Onesimus,  
My Christian friends, we send her!'  
Shriek rose on shriek, — the Sabbath air  
Her wild cries tore asunder;  
I listened, with hushed breath, to hear  
God answering with his thunder!  
All still! the very altar's cloth  
Had smothered down her shrieking,  
And, dumb, she turned from face to face,  
For human pity seeking!  
I saw her dragged along the aisle,  
Her shackles harshly clanking;  
I heard the parson, over all,  
The Lord devoutly thanking!  
My brain took fire: 'Is this,' I cried,  
'The end of prayer and preaching?  
Then down with pulpit, down with priest,  
And give us Nature's teaching!  
'Foul shame and scorn be on ye all  
Who turn the good to evil,  
And steal the Bible from the Lord,  
To give it to the Devil!  
'Than garbled text or parchment law  
I own a statute higher;  
And God is true, though every book  
And every man's a liar!'  
Just then I felt the deacon's hand  
In wrath my coat-tail seize on;  
I heard the priest cry, 'Infidel!'  
The lawyer mutter, 'Treason!'  
I started up, — where now were church,

Slave, master, priest, and people?  
I only heard the supper-bell,  
Instead of clanging steeple.  
But, on the open window's sill,  
O'er which the white blooms drifted,  
The pages of a good old Book  
The wind of summer lifted,  
And flower and vine, like angel wings  
Around the Holy Mother,  
Waved softly there, as if God's truth  
And Mercy kissed each other.  
And freely from the cherry-bough  
Above the casement swinging,  
With golden bosom to the sun,  
The oriole was singing.  
As bird and flower made plain of old  
The lesson of the Teacher,  
So now I heard the written Word  
Interpreted by Nature!  
For to my ear methought the breeze  
Bore Freedom's blessed word on;  
Thus saith the Lord: Break every yoke,  
Undo the heavy burden!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Sea Dream

We saw the slow tides go and come,  
The curving surf-lines lightly drawn,  
The gray rocks touched with tender bloom  
Beneath the fresh-blown rose of dawn.

We saw in richer sunsets lost  
The sombre pomp of showery noons;  
And signalled spectral sails that crossed  
The weird, low light of rising moons.

On stormy eves from cliff and head  
We saw the white spray tossed and spurned;  
While over all, in gold and red,  
Its face of fire the lighthouse turned.

The rail-car brought its daily crowds,  
Half curious, half indifferent,  
Like passing sails or floating clouds,  
We saw them as they came and went.

But, one calm morning, as we lay  
And watched the mirage-lifted wall  
Of coast, across the dreamy bay,  
And heard afar the curlew call,

And nearer voices, wild or tame,  
Of airy flock and childish throng,  
Up from the water's edge there came  
Faint snatches of familiar song.

Careless we heard the singer's choice  
Of old and common airs; at last  
The tender pathos of his voice  
In one low chanson held us fast.

A song that mingled joy and pain,  
And memories old and sadly sweet;  
While, timing to its minor strain,  
The waves in lapsing cadence beat.

. . . . .

The waves are glad in breeze and sun;  
The rocks are fringed with foam;  
I walk once more a haunted shore,  
A stranger, yet at home,  
A land of dreams I roam.

Is this the wind, the soft sea wind  
That stirred thy locks of brown?  
Are these the rocks whose mosses knew  
The trail of thy light gown,  
Where boy and girl sat down?

I see the gray fort's broken wall,  
The boats that rock below;  
And, out at sea, the passing sails  
We saw so long ago  
Rose-red in morning's glow.

The freshness of the early time  
On every breeze is blown;  
As glad the sea, as blue the sky,--  
The change is ours alone;  
The saddest is my own.

A stranger now, a world-worn man,  
Is he who bears my name;  
But thou, methinks, whose mortal life  
Immortal youth became,  
Art evermore the same.

Thou art not here, thou art not there,  
Thy place I cannot see;  
I only know that where thou art  
The blessed angels be,  
And heaven is glad for thee.

Forgive me if the evil years  
Have left on me their sign;  
Wash out, O soul so beautiful,

The many stains of mine  
In tears of love divine!

I could not look on thee and live,  
If thou wert by my side;  
The vision of a shining one,  
The white and heavenly bride,  
Is well to me denied.

But turn to me thy dear girl-face  
Without the angel's crown,  
The wedded roses of thy lips,  
Thy loose hair rippling down  
In waves of golden brown.

Look forth once more through space and time,  
And let thy sweet shade fall  
In tenderest grace of soul and form  
On memory's frescoed wall,  
A shadow, and yet all!

Draw near, more near, forever dear!  
Where'er I rest or roam,  
Or in the city's crowded streets,  
Or by the blown sea foam,  
The thought of thee is home!

. . . . .

At breakfast hour the singer read  
The city news, with comment wise,  
Like one who felt the pulse of trade  
Beneath his finger fall and rise.

His look, his air, his curt speech, told  
The man of action, not of books,  
To whom the corners made in gold  
And stocks were more than seaside nooks.

Of life beneath the life confessed  
His song had hinted unawares;  
Of flowers in traffic's ledgers pressed,

Of human hearts in bulls and bears.

But eyes in vain were turned to watch  
That face so hard and shrewd and strong;  
And ears in vain grew sharp to catch  
The meaning of that morning song.

In vain some sweet-voiced querist sought  
To sound him, leaving as she came;  
Her baited album only caught  
A common, unromantic name.

No word betrayed the mystery fine,  
That trembled on the singer's tongue;  
He came and went, and left no sign  
Behind him save the song he sung.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Song For The Time

UP, laggards of Freedom! — our free flag is cast  
To the blaze of the sun and the wings of the blast;  
Will ye turn from a struggle so bravely begun,  
From a foe that is breaking, a field that's half won?  
Whoso loves not his kind, and who fears not the Lord,  
Let him join that foe's service, accursed and abhorred!  
Let him do his base will, as the slave only can, —  
Let him put on the bloodhound, and put off the Man!  
Let him go where the cold blood that creeps in his veins  
Shall stiffen the slave-whip, and rust on his chains;  
Where the black slave shall laugh in his bonds, to behold  
The White Slave beside him, self-lettered and sold!  
But ye, who still boast of hearts beating and warm,  
Rise, from lake shore and ocean's, like waves in a storm,  
Come, throng round our banner in Liberty's name,  
Like winds from your mountains, like prairies aflame!  
Our foe, hidden long in his ambush of night,  
Now, forced from his covert, stands black in the light.  
Oh, the cruel to Man, and the hateful to God,  
Smite him down to the earth, that is cursed where he trod!  
For deeper than thunder of summer's loud shower,  
On the dome of the sky God is striking the hour!  
Shall we falter before what we're prayed for so long,  
When the Wrong is so weak, and the Right is so strong?  
Come forth all together! come old and come young,  
Freedom's vote in each hand, and her song on each tongue;  
Truth naked is stronger than Falsehood in mail;  
The Wrong cannot prosper, the Right cannot fail!  
Like leaves of the summer once numbered the foe,  
But the hoar-frost is falling, the northern winds blow;  
Like leaves of November ere long shall they fall,  
For earth wearies of them, and God's over all!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Song Inscribed To The Fremont Clubs

BENEATH thy skies, November!  
Thy skies of cloud and rain,  
Around our blazing camp-fires  
We close our ranks again.  
Then sound again the bugles,  
Call the muster-roll anew;  
If months have well-nigh won the field,  
What may not four years do?  
For God be praised! New England  
Takes once more her ancient place;  
Again the Pilgrim's banner  
Leads the vanguard of the race.  
Then sound again the bugles, etc.  
Along the lordly Hudson,  
A shout of triumph breaks;  
The Empire State is speaking,  
From the ocean to the lakes.  
Then sound again the bugles, etc.  
The Northern hills are blazing,  
The Northern skies are bright;  
And the fair young West is turning  
Her forehead to the light!  
Then sound again the bugles, etc.  
Push every outpost nearer,  
Press hard the hostile towers!  
Another Balaklava,  
And the Malakoff is ours!  
Then sound again the bugles,  
Call the muster-roll anew;  
If months have well-nigh won the field,  
What may not four years do?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Spiritual Manifestation

To-day the plant by Williams set  
Its summer bloom discloses;  
The wilding sweetthrier of his prayers  
Is crowned with cultured roses.

Once more the Island State repeats  
The lesson that he taught her,  
And binds his pearl of charity  
Upon her brown-locked daughter.

Is 't fancy that he watches still  
His Providence plantations?  
That still the careful Founder takes  
A part on these occasions.

Methinks I see that reverend form,  
Which all of us so well know  
He rises up to speak; he jogs  
The presidential elbow.

'Good friends,' he says, 'you reap a field  
I sowed in self-denial,  
For toleration had its griefs  
And charity its trial.

'Great grace, as saith Sir Thomas More,  
To him must needs be given  
Who heareth heresy and leaves  
The heretic to Heaven!

'I hear again the snuffled tones,  
I see in dreary vision  
Dyspeptic dreamers, spiritual bores,  
And prophets with a mission.

'Each zealot thrust before my eyes  
His Scripture-garbled label;  
All creeds were shouted in my ears  
As with the tongues of Babel.

'Scourged at one cart-tail, each denied  
The hope of every other;  
Each martyr shook his branded fist  
At the conscience of his brother!

'How cleft the dreary drone of man.  
The shriller pipe of woman,  
As Gorton led his saints elect,  
Who held all things in common!

'Their gay robes trailed in ditch and swamp,  
And torn by thorn and thicket,  
The dancing-girls of Merry Mount  
Came dragging to my wicket.

'Shrill Anabaptists, shorn of ears;  
Gray witch-wives, hobbling slowly;  
And Antinomians, free of law,  
Whose very sins were holy.

'Hoarse ranters, crazed Fifth Monarchists,  
Of stripes and bondage braggarts,  
Pale Churchmen, with singed rubrics snatched  
From Puritanic fagots.

'And last, not least, the Quakers came,  
With tongues still sore from burning,  
The Bay State's dust from off their feet  
Before my threshold spurning;

'A motley host, the Lord's debris,  
Faith's odds and ends together;  
Well might I shrink from guests with lungs  
Tough as their breeches leather

'If, when the hangman at their heels  
Came, rope in hand to catch them,  
I took the hunted outcasts in,  
I never sent to fetch them.

'I fed, but spared them not a whit;

I gave to all who walked in,  
Not clams and succotash alone,  
But stronger meat of doctrine.

'I proved the prophets false, I pricked  
The bubble of perfection,  
And clapped upon their inner light  
The snuffers of election.

'And looking backward on my times,  
This credit I am taking;  
I kept each sectary's dish apart,  
No spiritual chowder making.

'Where now the blending signs of sect  
Would puzzle their assorter,  
The dry-shod Quaker kept the land,  
The Baptist held the water.

'A common coat now serves for both,  
The hat's no more a fixture;  
And which was wet and which was dry,  
Who knows in such a mixture?

'Well! He who fashioned Peter's dream  
To bless them all is able;  
And bird and beast and creeping thing  
Make clean upon His table!

'I walked by my own light; but when  
The ways of faith divided,  
Was I to force unwilling feet  
To tread the path that I did?

'I touched the garment-hem of truth,  
Yet saw not all its splendor;  
I knew enough of doubt to feel  
For every conscience tender.

'God left men free of choice, as when  
His Eden-trees were planted;  
Because they chose amiss, should I

Deny the gift He granted?

'So, with a common sense of need,  
Our common weakness feeling,  
I left them with myself to God  
And His all-gracious dealing!

'I kept His plan whose rain and sun  
To tare and wheat are given;  
And if the ways to hell were free,  
I left then free to heaven!'

Take heart with us, O man of old,  
Soul-freedom's brave confessor,  
So love of God and man wax strong,  
Let sect and creed be lesser.

The jarring discords of thy day  
In ours one hymn are swelling;  
The wandering feet, the severed paths,  
All seek our Father's dwelling.

And slowly learns the world the truth  
That makes us all thy debtor,--  
That holy life is more than rite,  
And spirit more than letter;

That they who differ pole-wide serve  
Perchance the common Master,  
And other sheep He hath than they  
Who graze one narrow pasture!

For truth's worst foe is he who claims  
To act as God's avenger,  
And deems, beyond his sentry-beat,  
The crystal walls in danger!

Who sets for heresy his traps  
Of verbal quirk and quibble,  
And weeds the garden of the Lord  
With Satan's borrowed dibble.

To-day our hearts like organ keys  
One Master's touch are feeling;  
The branches of a common Vine  
Have only leaves of healing.

Co-workers, yet from varied fields,  
We share this restful nooning;  
The Quaker with the Baptist here  
Believes in close communing.

Forgive, dear saint, the playful tone,  
Too light for thy deserving;  
Thanks for thy generous faith in man,  
Thy trust in God unswerving.

Still echo in the hearts of men  
The words that thou hast spoken;  
No forge of hell can weld again  
The fetters thou hast broken.

The pilgrim needs a pass no more  
From Roman or Genevan;  
Thought-free, no ghostly tollman keeps  
Henceforth the road to Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Summer Pilgrimage

To kneel before some saintly shrine,  
To breathe the health of airs divine,  
Or bathe where sacred rivers flow,  
The cowled and turbaned pilgrims go.  
I too, a palmer, take, as they  
With staff and scallop-shell, my way  
To feel, from burdening cares and ills,  
The strong uplifting of the hills.

The years are many since, at first,  
For dreamed-of wonders all athirst,  
I saw on Winnepesaukee fall  
The shadow of the mountain wall.  
Ah! where are they who sailed with me  
The beautiful island-studded sea?  
And am I he whose keen surprise  
Flashed out from such unclouded eyes?

Still, when the sun of summer burns,  
My longing for the hills returns;  
And northward, leaving at my back  
The warm vale of the Merrimac,  
I go to meet the winds of morn,  
Blown down the hill-gaps, mountain-born,  
Breathe scent of pines, and satisfy  
The hunger of a lowland eye.

Again I see the day decline  
Along a ridged horizon line;  
Touching the hill-tops, as a nun  
Her beaded rosary, sinks the sun.  
One lake lies golden, which shall soon  
Be silver in the rising moon;  
And one, the crimson of the skies  
And mountain purple multiplies.

With the untroubled quiet blends  
The distance-softened voice of friends;  
The girl's light laugh no discord brings

To the low song the pine-tree sings;  
And, not unwelcome, comes the hail  
Of boyhood from his nearing sail.  
The human presence breaks no spell,  
And sunset still is miracle!

Calm as the hour, methinks I feel  
A sense of worship o'er me steal;  
Not that of satyr-charming Pan,  
No cult of Nature shaming man,  
Not Beauty's self, but that which lives  
And shines through all the veils it weaves,--  
Soul of the mountain, lake, and wood,  
Their witness to the Eternal Good!

And if, by fond illusion, here  
The earth to heaven seems drawing near,  
And yon outlying range invites  
To other and serener heights,  
Scarce hid behind its topmost swell,  
The shining Mounts Delectable  
A dream may hint of truth no less  
Than the sharp light of wakefulness.

As through her vale of incense smoke.  
Of old the spell-rapt priestess spoke,  
More than her heathen oracle,  
May not this trance of sunset tell  
That Nature's forms of loveliness  
Their heavenly archetypes confess,  
Fashioned like Israel's ark alone  
From patterns in the Mount made known?

A holier beauty overbroods  
These fair and faint similitudes;  
Yet not unblest is he who sees  
Shadows of God's realities,  
And knows beyond this masquerade  
Of shape and color, light and shade,  
And dawn and set, and wax and wane,  
Eternal verities remain.

O gems of sapphire, granite set!  
O hills that charmed horizons fret  
I know how fair your morns can break,  
In rosy light on isle and lake;  
How over wooded slopes can run  
The noonday play of cloud and sun,  
And evening droop her oriflamme  
Of gold and red in still Asquam.

The summer moons may round again,  
And careless feet these hills profane;  
These sunsets waste on vacant eyes  
The lavish splendor of the skies;  
Fashion and folly, misplaced here,  
Sigh for their natural atmosphere,  
And travelled pride the outlook scorn  
Of lesser heights than Matterhorn.

But let me dream that hill and sky  
Of unseen beauty prophesy;  
And in these tinted lakes behold  
The trailing of the raiment fold  
Of that which, still eluding gaze,  
Allures to upward-tending ways,  
Whose footprints make, wherever found,  
Our common earth a holy ground.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Summons

MEN of the North-land! where's the manly spirit  
Of the true-hearted and the unshackled gone?  
Sons of old freemen, do we but inherit  
Their names alone?  
Is the old Pilgrim spirit quenched within us,  
Stoops the strong manhood of our souls so low,  
That Mammon's lure or Party's wile can win us  
To silence now?  
Now, when our land to ruin's brink is verging,  
In God's name, let us speak while there is time!  
Now, when the padlocks for our lips are forging,  
Silence is crime!  
What! shall we henceforth humbly ask as favors  
Rights all our own? In madness shall we barter,  
For treacherous peace, the freedom Nature gave us,  
God and our charter?  
Here shall the statesman forge his human fetters,  
Here the false jurist human rights deny,  
And in the church, their proud and skilled abettors.  
Make truth a lie?  
Torture the pages of the hallowed Bible,  
To sanction crime, and robbery, and blood?  
And, in Oppression's hateful service, libel  
Both man and God?  
Shall our New England stand erect no longer,  
But stoop in chains upon her downward way,  
Thicker to gather on her limbs and stronger  
Day after day?  
Oh no; methinks from all her wild, green mountains;  
From valleys where her slumbering fathers lie;  
From her blue rivers and her welling fountains,  
And clear, cold sky;  
From her rough coast, and isles, which hungry Ocean  
Gnaws with his surges; from the fisher's skiff,  
With white sail swaying to the billows' motion  
Round rock and cliff;  
From the free fireside of her unbought farmer;  
From her free laborer at his loom and wheel;  
From the brown smith-shop, where, beneath the hammer,

Rings the red steel;  
From each and all, if God hath not forsaken  
Our land, and left us to an evil choice,  
Loud as the summer thunderbolt shall waken  
A People's voice.  
Startling and stern! the Northern winds shall bear it  
Over Potomac's to St. Mary's wave;  
And buried Freedom shall awake to hear it  
Within her grave.  
Oh, let that voice go forth! The bondman sighing  
By Santee's wave, in Mississippi's cane,  
Shall feel the hope, within his bosom dying,  
Revive again.  
Let it go forth! The millions who are gazing  
Sadly upon us from afar shall smile,  
And unto God devout thanksgiving raising,  
Bless us the while.  
Oh for your ancient freedom, pure and holy,  
For the deliverance of a groaning earth,  
For the wronged captive, bleeding, crushed, and lowly,  
Let it go forth!  
Sons of the best of fathers! will ye falter  
With all they left ye perilled and at stake?  
Ho! once again on Freedom's holy altar  
The fire awake!  
Prayer-strengthened for the trial, come together,  
Put on the harness for the moral fight,  
And, with the blessing of your Heavenly Father,  
Maintain the right!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Welcome To Lowell

Take our hands, James Russell Lowell,  
Our hearts are all thy own;  
To-day we bid thee welcome  
Not for ourselves alone.

In the long years of thy absence  
Some of us have grown old,  
And some have passed the portals  
Of the Mystery untold;

For the hands that cannot clasp thee,  
For the voices that are dumb,  
For each and all I bid thee  
A grateful welcome home!

For Cedarcroft's sweet singer  
To the nine-fold Muses dear;  
For the Seer the winding Concord  
Paused by his door to hear;

For him, our guide and Nestor,  
Who the march of song began,  
The white locks of his ninety years  
Bared to thy winds, Cape Ann!

For him who, to the music  
Her pines and hemlocks played,  
Set the old and tender story  
Of the lorn Acadian maid;

For him, whose voice for freedom  
Swayed friend and foe at will,  
Hushed is the tongue of silver,  
The golden lips are still!

For her whose life of duty  
At scoff and menace smiled,  
Brave as the wife of Roland,  
Yet gentle as a Child.

And for him the three-hilled city  
Shall hold in memory long,  
Those name is the hint and token  
Of the pleasant Fields of Song!

For the old friends unforgotten,  
For the young thou hast not known,  
I speak their heart-warm greeting;  
Come back and take thy own!

From England's royal farewells,  
And honors fitly paid,  
Come back, dear Russell Lowell,  
To Elmwood's waiting shade!

Come home with all the garlands  
That crown of right thy head.  
I speak for comrades living,  
I speak for comrades dead!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Woman

Oh, dwarfed and wronged, and stained with ill,  
Behold! thou art a woman still!  
And, by that sacred name and dear,  
I bid thy better self appear.  
Still, through thy foul disguise, I see  
The rudimental purity,  
That, spite of change and loss, makes good  
Thy birthright-claim of womanhood;  
An inward loathing, deep, intense;  
A shame that is half innocence.  
Cast off the grave-clothes of thy sin!  
Rise from the dust thou liest in,  
As Mary rose at Jesus' word,  
Redeemed and white before the Lord!  
Reclaim thy lost soul! In His name,  
Rise up, and break thy bonds of shame.  
Art weak? He 's strong. Art fearful? Hear  
The world's O'ercomer: 'Be of cheer!'  
What lip shall judge when He approves?  
Who dare to scorn the child He loves?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# A Word For The Hour

The firmament breaks up. In black eclipse  
Light after light goes out. One evil star,  
Luridly glaring through the smoke of war,  
As in the dream of the Apocalypse,  
Drags others down. Let us not weakly weep  
Nor rashly threaten. Give us grace to keep  
Our faith and patience; wherefore should we leap  
On one hand into fratricidal fight,  
Or, on the other, yield eternal right,  
Frame lies of laws, and good and ill confound?  
What fear we? Safe on freedom's vantage ground  
Our feet are planted; let us there remain  
In unvengeful calm, no means untried  
Which truth can sanction, no just claim denied,  
The sad spectators of a suicide!  
They break the lines of Union: shall we light  
The fires of hell to weld anew the chain  
On that red anvil where each blow is pain?  
Draw we not even now a freer breath,  
As from our shoulders falls a load of death  
Loathsome as that the Tuscan's victim bore  
When keen with life to a dead horror bound?  
Why take we up the accursed thing again?  
Pity, forgive, but urge them back no more  
Who, drunk with passion, flaunt disunion's rag  
With its vile reptile blazon. Let us press  
The golden cluster on our brave old flag  
In closer union, and, if numbering less,  
Brighter shall shine the stars which still remain.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Abolition Of Slavery In The District Of Columbia, 1862

When first I saw our banner wave  
Above the nation's council-hall,  
I heard beneath its marble wall  
The clanking fetters of the slave!  
In the foul market-place I stood,  
And saw the Christian mother sold,  
And childhood with its locks of gold,  
Blue-eyed and fair with Saxon blood.  
I shut my eyes, I held my breath,  
And, smothering down the wrath and shame  
That set my Northern blood aflame,  
Stood silent, where to speak was death.  
Beside me gloomed the prison-cell  
Where wasted one in slow decline  
For uttering simple words of mine,  
And loving freedom all too well.  
The flag that floated from the dome  
Flapped menace in the morning air;  
I stood a perilled stranger where  
The human broker made his home.  
For crime was virtue: Gown and Sword  
And Law their threefold sanction gave,  
And to the quarry of the slave  
Went hawking with our symbol-bird.  
On the oppressor's side was power;  
And yet I knew that every wrong,  
However old, however strong,  
But waited God's avenging hour.  
I knew that truth would crush the lie,  
Somehow, some time, the end would be;  
Yet scarcely dared I hope to see  
The triumph with my mortal eye.  
But now I see it! In the sun  
A free flag floats from yonder dome,  
And at the nation's hearth and home  
The justice long delayed is done.  
Not as we hoped, in calm of prayer,  
The message of deliverance comes,  
But heralded by roll of drums

On waves of battle-troubled air!  
Midst sounds that madden and appall,  
The song that Bethlehem's shepherds knew !  
The harp of David melting through  
The demon-agonies of Saul!  
Not as we hoped; but what are we?  
Above our broken dreams and plans  
God lays, with wiser hand than man's,  
The corner-stones of liberty.  
I cavil not with Him: the voice  
That freedom's blessed gospel tells  
Is sweet to me as silver bells,  
Rejoicing! yea, I will rejoice!  
Dear friends still toiling in the sun;  
Ye dearer ones who, gone before,  
Are watching from the eternal shore  
The slow work by your hands begun,  
Rejoice with me! The chastening rod  
Blossoms with love; the furnace heat  
Grows cool beneath His blessed feet  
Whose form is as the Son of God!  
Rejoice! Our Marah's bitter springs  
Are sweetened; on our ground of grief  
Rise day by day in strong relief  
The prophecies of better things.  
Rejoice in hope! The day and night  
Are one with God, and one with them  
Who see by faith the cloudy hem  
Of Judgment fringed with Mercy's light

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Abraham Davenport

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

'T was on a May-day of the far old year  
Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell  
Over the bloom and sweet life of the Spring,  
Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,  
A horror of great darkness, like the night  
In day of which the Norland sagas tell,--

The Twilight of the Gods. The low-hung sky  
Was black with ominous clouds, save where its rim  
Was fringed with a dull glow, like that which climbs  
The crater's sides from the red hell below.  
Birds ceased to sing, and all the barn-yard fowls  
Roosted; the cattle at the pasture bars  
Lowed, and looked homeward; bats on leathern wings  
Flitted abroad; the sounds of labor died;  
Men prayed, and women wept; all ears grew sharp  
To hear the doom-blast of the trumpet shatter  
The black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ  
Might look from the rent clouds, not as he looked  
A loving guest at Bethany, but stern  
As Justice and inexorable Law.

Meanwhile in the old State House, dim as ghosts,  
Sat the lawgivers of Connecticut,  
Trembling beneath their legislative robes.  
'It is the Lord's Great Day! Let us adjourn,'  
Some said; and then, as if with one accord,  
All eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport.  
He rose, slow cleaving with his steady voice

The intolerable hush. 'This well may be  
The Day of Judgment which the world awaits;  
But be it so or not, I only know  
My present duty, and my Lord's command  
To occupy till He come. So at the post  
Where He hath set me in His providence,  
I choose, for one, to meet Him face to face,--  
No faithless servant frightened from my task,  
But ready when the Lord of the harvest calls;  
And therefore, with all reverence, I would say,  
Let God do His work, we will see to ours.  
Bring in the candles.' And they brought them in.

Then by the flaring lights the Speaker read,  
Albeit with husky voice and shaking hands,  
An act to amend an act to regulate  
The shad and alewife fisheries. Whereupon  
Wisely and well spake Abraham Davenport,  
Straight to the question, with no figures of speech  
Save the ten Arab signs, yet not without  
The shrewd dry humor natural to the man  
His awe-struck colleagues listening all the while,  
Between the pauses of his argument,  
To hear the thunder of the wrath of God  
Break from the hollow trumpet of the cloud.

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

. . . . .

He ceased: just then the ocean seemed  
To lift a half-faced moon in sight;  
And, shore-ward, o'er the waters gleamed,  
From crest to crest, a line of light,  
Such as of old, with solemn awe,  
The fishers by Gennesaret saw,  
When dry-shod o'er it walked the Son of God,  
Tracking the waves with light where'er his sandals trod.

Silently for a space each eye  
Upon that sudden glory turned  
Cool from the land the breeze blew by,  
The tent-ropes flapped, the long beach churned  
Its waves to foam; on either hand  
Stretched, far as sight, the hills of sand;  
With bays of marsh, and capes of bush and tree,  
The wood's black shore-line loomed beyond the meadowy sea.

The lady rose to leave. 'One song,  
Or hymn,' they urged, 'before we part.'  
And she, with lips to which belong  
Sweet intuitions of all art,  
Gave to the winds of night a strain  
Which they who heard would hear again;  
And to her voice the solemn ocean lent,  
Touching its harp of sand, a deep accompaniment.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Abram Morrison

'Midst the men and things which will  
Haunt an old man's memory still,  
Drollest, quaintest of them all,  
With a boy's laugh I recall  
Good old Abram Morrison.

When the Grist and Rolling Mill  
Ground and rumbled by Po Hill,  
And the old red school-house stood  
Midway in the Powow's flood,  
Here dwelt Abram Morrison.

From the Beach to far beyond  
Bear-Hill, Lion's Mouth and Pond,  
Marvellous to our tough old stock,  
Chips o' the Anglo-Saxon block,  
Seemed the Celtic Morrison.

Mudknock, Balmawhistle, all  
Only knew the Yankee drawl,  
Never brogue was heard till when,  
Foremost of his countrymen,  
Hither came Friend Morrison;

Yankee born, of alien blood,  
Kin of his had well withstood  
Pope and King with pike and ball  
Under Derry's leaguered wall,  
As became the Morrisons.

Wandering down from Nutfield woods  
With his household and his goods,  
Never was it clearly told  
How within our quiet fold  
Came to be a Morrison.

Once a soldier, blame him not  
That the Quaker he forgot,  
When, to think of battles won,

And the red-coats on the run,  
Laughed aloud Friend Morrison.

From gray Lewis over sea  
Bore his sires their family tree,  
On the rugged boughs of it  
Grafting Irish mirth and wit,  
And the brogue of Morrison.

Half a genius, quick to plan,  
Blundering like an Irishman,  
But with canny shrewdness lent  
By his far-off Scotch descent,  
Such was Abram Morrison.

Back and forth to daily meals,  
Rode his cherished pig on wheels,  
And to all who came to see  
'Aisier for the pig an' me,  
Sure it is,' said Morrison.

Simple-hearted, boy o'er-grown,  
With a humor quite his own,  
Of our sober-stepping ways,  
Speech and look and cautious phrase,  
Slow to learn was Morrison.

Much we loved his stories told  
Of a country strange and old,  
Where the fairies danced till dawn,  
And the goblin Leprecaun  
Looked, we thought, like Morrison.

Or wild tales of feud and fight,  
Witch and troll and second sight  
Whispered still where Stornoway  
Looks across its stormy bay,  
Once the home of Morrisons.

First was he to sing the praise  
Of the Powow's winding ways;  
And our straggling village took

City grandeur to the look  
Of its poet Morrison.

All his words have perished. Shame  
On the saddle-bags of Fame,  
That they bring not to our time  
One poor couplet of the rhyme  
Made by Abram Morrison!

When, on calm and fair First Days,  
Rattled down our one-horse chaise,  
Through the blossomed apple-boughs  
To the old, brown meeting-house,  
There was Abram Morrison.

Underneath his hat's broad brim  
Peered the queer old face of him;  
And with Irish jauntiness  
Swung the coat-tails of the dress  
Worn by Abram Morrison.

Still, in memory, on his feet,  
Leaning o'er the elders' seat,  
Mingling with a solemn drone,  
Celtic accents all his own,  
Rises Abram Morrison.

'Don't,' he's pleading, 'don't ye go,  
Dear young friends, to sight and show,  
Don't run after elephants,  
Learned pigs and presidents  
And the likes!' said Morrison.

On his well-worn theme intent,  
Simple, child-like, innocent,  
Heaven forgive the half-checked smile  
Of our careless boyhood, while  
Listening to Friend Morrison!

We have learned in later days  
Truth may speak in simplest phrase;  
That the man is not the less

For quaint ways and home-spun dress,  
Thanks to Abram Morrison!

Not to pander nor to please  
Come the needed homilies,  
With no lofty argument  
Is the fitting message sent,  
Through such lips as Morrison's.

Dead and gone! But while its track  
Powow keeps to Merrimac,  
While Po Hill is still on guard,  
Looking land and ocean ward,  
They shall tell of Morrison!

After half a century's lapse,  
We are wiser now, perhaps,  
But we miss our streets amid  
Something which the past has hid,  
Lost with Abram Morrison.

Gone forever with the queer  
Characters of that old year  
Now the many are as one;  
Broken is the mould that run  
Men like Abram Morrison.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Adjustment

The tree of Faith its bare, dry boughs must shed  
That nearer heaven the living ones may climb;  
The false must fail, though from our shores of time  
The old lament be heard, 'Great Pan is dead!'  
That wail is Error's, from his high place hurled;  
This sharp recoil is Evil undertrod;  
Our time's unrest, an angel sent of God  
Troubling with life the waters of the world.  
Even as they list the winds of the Spirit blow  
To turn or break our century-rusted vanes;  
Sands shift and waste; the rock alone remains  
Where, led of Heaven, the strong tides come and go,  
And storm-clouds, rent by thunderbolt and wind,  
Leave, free of mist, the permanent stars behind.

Therefore I trust, although to outward sense  
Both true and false seem shaken; I will hold  
With newer light my reverence for the old,  
And calmly wait the births of Providence.  
No gain is lost; the clear-eyed saints look down  
Untroubled on the wreck of schemes and creeds;  
Love yet remains, its rosary of good deeds  
Counting in task-field and o'erpeopled town;  
Truth has charmed life; the Inward Word survives,  
And, day by day, its revelation brings;  
Faith, hope, and charity, whatsoever things  
Which cannot be shaken, stand. Still holy lives  
Reveal the Christ of whom the letter told,  
And the new gospel verifies the old.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Aechdeacon Barbour

THROUGH the long hall the shuttered windows shed  
A dubious light on every upturned head;  
On locks like those of Absalom the fair,  
On the bald apex ringed with scanty hair,  
On blank indifference and on curious stare;  
On the pale Showman reading from his stage  
The hieroglyphics of that facial page;  
Half sad, half scornful, listening to the bruit  
Of restless cane-tap and impatient foot,  
And the shrill call, across the general din,  
'Roll up your curtain! Let the show begin!'  
At length a murmur like the winds that break  
Into green waves the prairie's grassy lake,  
Deepened and swelled to music clear and loud,  
And, as the west-wind lifts a summer cloud,  
The curtain rose, disclosing wide and far  
A green land stretching to the evening star,  
Fair rivers, skirted by primeval trees  
And flowers hummed over by the desert bees,  
Marked by tall bluffs whose slopes of greenness show  
Fantastic outcrops of the rock below;  
The slow result of patient Nature's pains,  
And plastic fingering of her sun and rains;  
Arch, tower, and gate, grotesquely windowed hall,  
And long escarpment of half-crumbled wall,  
Huger than those which, from steep hills of vine,  
Stare through their loopholes on the travelled Rhine;  
Suggesting vaguely to the gazer's mind  
A fancy, idle as the prairie wind,  
Of the land's dwellers in an age unguessed;  
The unsung Jotuns of the mystic West.  
Beyond, the prairie's sea-like swells surpass  
The Tartar's marvels of his Land of Grass,  
Vast as the sky against whose sunset shores  
Wave after wave the billowy greenness pours;  
And, onward still, like islands in that main  
Loom the rough peaks of many a mountain chain,  
Whence east and west a thousand waters run  
From winter lingering under summer's sun.

And, still beyond, long lines of foam and sand  
Tell where Pacific rolls his waves a-land,  
From many a wide-lapped port and land-locked bay,  
Opening with thunderous pomp the world's highway  
To Indian isles of spice, and marts of far Cathay.  
'Such,' said the Showman, as the curtain fell,  
'Is the new Canaan of our Israel;  
The land of promise to the swarming North,  
Which, hive-like, sends its annual surplus forth,  
To the poor Southron on his worn-out soil,  
Scathed by the curses of unnatural toil;  
To Europe's exiles seeking home and rest,  
And the lank nomads of the wandering West,  
Who, asking neither, in their love of change  
And the free bison's amplitude of range,  
Rear the log-hut, for present shelter meant,  
Not future comfort, like an Arab's tent.'  
Then spake a shrewd on-looker, 'Sir,' said he,  
'I like your picture, but I fain would see  
A sketch of what your promised land will be  
When, with electric nerve, and fiery-brained,  
With Nature's forces to its chariot chained,  
The future grasping, by the past obeyed,  
The twentieth century rounds a new decade.'  
Then said the Showman, sadly: 'He who grieves  
Over the scattering of the sibyl's leaves  
Unwisely mourns. Suffice it, that we know  
What needs must ripen from the seed we sow;  
That present time is but the mould wherein  
We cast the shapes of holiness and sin.  
A painful watcher of the passing hour,  
Its lust of gold, its strife for place and power;  
Its lack of manhood, honor, reverence, truth,  
Wise-thoughted age, and generous-hearted youth;  
Nor yet unmindful of each better sign,  
The low, far lights, which on th' horizon shine,  
Like those which sometimes tremble on the rim  
Of clouded skies when day is closing dim,  
Flashing athwart the purple spears of rain  
The hope of sunshine on the hills again:  
I need no prophet's word, nor shapes that pass  
Like clouding shadows o'er a magic glass;

For now, as ever, passionless and cold,  
Doth the dread angel of the future hold  
Evil and good before us, with no voice  
Or warning look to guide us in our choice;  
With spectral hands outreaching through the gloom  
The shadowy contrasts of the coming doom.  
Transferred from these, it now remains to give  
The sun and shade of Fate's alternative.'  
Then, with a burst of music, touching all  
The keys of thrifty life, — the mill-stream's fall,  
The engine's pant along its quivering rails,  
The anvil's ring, the measured beat of flails,  
The sweep of scythes, the reaper's whistled tune,  
Answering the summons of the bells of noon,  
The woodman's hail along the river shores,  
The steamboat's signal, and the dip of oars:  
Slowly the curtain rose from off a land  
Fair as God's garden. Broad on either hand  
The golden wheat-fields glimmered in the sun,  
And the tall maize its yellow tassels spun.  
Smooth highways set with hedge-rows living green,  
With steepled towns through shaded vistas seen,  
The school-house murmuring with its hive-like swarm,  
The brook-bank whitening in the grist-mill's storm,  
The painted farm-house shining through the leaves  
Of fruited orchards bending at its eaves,  
Where live again, around the Western hearth,  
The homely old-time virtues of the North;  
Where the blithe housewife rises with the day,  
And well-paid labor counts his task a play.  
And, grateful tokens of a Bible free,  
And the free Gospel of Humanity,  
Of diverse sects and differing names the shrines,  
One in their faith, whate'er their outward signs,  
Like varying strophes of the same sweet hymn  
From many a prairie's swell and river's brim,  
A thousand church-spires sancify the air  
Of the calm Sabbath, with their sign of prayer.  
Like sudden nightfall over bloom and green  
The curtain dropped: and, momentarily, between  
The clank of fetter and the crack of thong,  
Half sob, half laughter, music swept along;

A strange refrain, whose idle words and low,  
Like drunken mourners, kept the time of woe;  
As if the revellers at a masquerade  
Heard in the distance funeral marches played.  
Such music, dashing all his smiles with tears,  
The thoughtful voyager on Ponchartrain hears,  
Where, through the noonday dusk of wooded shores  
The negro boatman, singing to his oars,  
With a wild pathos borrowed of his wrong  
Redeems the jargon of his senseless song.  
'Look,' said the Showman, sternly, as he rolled  
His curtain upward. 'Fate's reverse behold!'  
A village straggling in loose disarray  
Of vulgar newness, premature decay;  
A tavern, crazy with its whiskey brawls,  
With 'Slaves at Auction!' garnishing its walls;  
Without, surrounded by a motley crowd,  
The shrewd-eyed salesman, garrulous and loud,  
A squire or colonel in his pride of place,  
Known at free fights, the caucus, and the race,  
Prompt to proclaim his honor without blot,  
And silence doubters with a ten-pace shot,  
Mingling the negro-driving bully's rant  
With pious phrase and democratic cant,  
Yet never scrupling, with a filthy jest,  
To sell the infant from its mother's breast,  
Break through all ties of wedlock, home, and kin,  
Yield shrinking girlhood up to graybeard sin;  
Sell all the virtues with his human stock,  
The Christian graces on his auction-block,  
And coolly count on shrewdest bargains driven  
In hearts regenerate, and in souls forgiven!  
Look once again! The moving canvas shows  
A slave plantation's slovenly repose,  
Where, in rude cabins rotting midst their weeds,  
The human chattel eats, and sleeps, and breeds;  
And, held a brute, in practice, as in law,  
Becomes in fact the thing he's taken for.  
There, early summoned to the hemp and corn,  
The nursing mother leaves her child new-born;  
There haggard sickness, weak and deathly faint,  
Crawls to his task, and fears to make complains;

And sad-eyed Rachels, childless in decay,  
Weep for their lost ones sold and torn away!  
Of ampler size the master's dwelling stands,  
In shabby keeping with his half-tilled lands;  
The gates unhinged, the yard with weeds unclean,  
The cracked veranda with a tipsy lean.  
Without, loose-scattered like a wreck adrift,  
Signs of misrule and tokens of unthrift;  
Within, profusion to discomfort joined,  
The listless body and the vacant mind;  
The fear, the hate, the theft and falsehood, born  
In menial hearts of toil, and stripes, and scorn!  
There, all the vices, which, like birds obscene,  
Batten on slavery loathsome and unclean,  
From the foul kitchen to the parlor rise,  
Pollute the nursery where the child-heir lies,  
Taint infant lips beyond all after cure,  
With the fell poison of a breast impure;  
Touch boyhood's passions with the breath of flame,  
From girlhood's instincts steal the blush of shame.  
So swells, from low to high, from weak to strong,  
The tragic chorus of the baleful wrong;  
Guilty or guiltless, all within its range  
Feel the blind justice of its sure revenge.  
Still scenes like these the moving chart reveals.  
Up the long western steppes the blighting steals;  
Down the Pacific slope the evil Fate  
Glides like a shadow to the Golden Gate:  
From sea to sea the drear eclipse is thrown,  
From sea to sea the Mauvaises Terres have grown,  
A belt of curses on the New World's zone!  
The curtain fell. All drew a freer breath,  
As men are wont to do when mournful death  
Is covered from their sight. The Showman stood  
With drooping brow in sorrow's attitude  
One moment, then with sudden gesture shook  
His loose hair back, and with the air and look  
Of one who felt, beyond the narrow stage  
And listening group, the presence of the age,  
And heard the footsteps of the things to be,  
Poured out his soul in earnest words and free.  
'O friends!' he said, 'in this poor trick of paint

You see the semblance, incomplete and faint,  
Of the two-fronted Future, which, to-day,  
Stands dim and silent, waiting in your way.  
To-day, your servant, subject to your will;  
To-morrow, master, or for good or ill.  
If the dark face of Slavery on you turns,  
If the mad curse its paper barrier spurns,  
If the world granary of the West is made  
The last foul market of the slaver's trade,  
Why rail at fate? The mischief is your own.  
Why hate your neighbor? 'Blame yourselves alone!  
'Men of the North! The South you charge with wrong  
Is weak and poor, while you are rich and strong.  
If questions, — idle and absurd as those  
The old-time monks and Paduan doctors chose, —  
Mere ghosts of questions, tariffs, and dead banks,  
And scarecrow pontiffs, never broke your ranks,  
Your thews united could, at once, roll back  
The jostled nation to its primal track.  
Nay, were you simply steadfast, manly, just,  
True to the faith your fathers left in trust,  
If stainless honor outweighed in your scale  
A codfish quintal or a factory bale,  
Full many a noble heart, (and such remain  
In all the South, like Lot in Siddim's plain,  
Who watch and wait, and from the wrong's control  
Keep white and pure their chastity of soul,)  
Now sick to loathing of your weak complaints,  
Your tricks as sinners, and your prayers as saints,  
Would half-way meet the frankness of your tone,  
And feel their pulses beating with your own,  
'The North! the South! no geographic line  
Can fix the boundary or the point define,  
Since each with each so closely interblends,  
Where Slavery rises, and where Freedom ends.  
Beneath your rocks the roots, far-reaching, hide  
Of the fell Upas on the Southern side;  
The tree whose branches in your northwinds wave  
Dropped its young blossoms on Mount Vernon's grave;  
The nursling growth of Monticello's crest  
Is now the glory of the free Northwest;  
To the wise maxims of her olden school

Virginia listened from thy lips, Rantoul;  
Seward's words of power, and Sumner's fresh renown,  
Flow from the pen that Jefferson laid down!  
And when, at length, her years of madness o'er,  
Like the crowned grazer on Euphrates' shore,  
From her long lapse to savagery, her mouth  
Bitter with baneful herbage, turns the South,  
Resumes her old attire, and seeks to smooth  
Her unkempt tresses at the glass of truth,  
Her early faith shall find a tongue again,  
New Wythes and Pinckneys swell that old refrain,  
Her sons with yours renew the ancient pact,  
The myth of Union prove at last a fact!  
Then, if one murmur mars the wide content,  
Some Northern lip will drawl the last dissent,  
Some Union-saving patriot of your own  
Lament to find his occupation gone.  
'Grant that the North's insulted, scorned, betrayed,  
O'erreached in bargains with her neighbor made,  
When selfish thrift and party held the scales  
For peddling dicker, not for honest sales, —  
Whom shall we strike? Who most deserves our blame?  
The braggart Southron, open in his aim,  
And bold as wicked, crashing straight through all  
That bars his purpose, like a cannon-ball?  
Or the mean traitor, breathing northern air,  
With nasal speech and puritanic hair,  
Whose cant the loss of principle survives,  
As the mud-turtle e'en its head outlives;  
Who, caught, chin-buried in some foul offence,  
Puts on a look of injured innocence,  
And consecrates his baseness to the cause  
Of constitution, union, and the laws?  
'Praise to the place-man who can hold aloof  
His still unpurchased manhood, office-proof;  
Who on his round of duty walks erect,  
And leaves it only rich in self-respect;  
As More maintained his virtue's lofty port  
In the Eighth Henry's base and bloody court.  
But, if exceptions here and there are found,  
Who tread thus safely on enchanted ground,  
The normal type, the fitting symbol still

Of those who fatten at the public mill,  
 Is the chained dog beside his master's door,  
 Or Circe's victim, feeding on all four!  
 'Give me the heroes who, at tuck of drum,  
 Salute thy staff, immortal Quattlebum!  
 Or they who, doubly armed with vote and gun,  
 Following thy lead, illustrious Atchison,  
 Their drunken franchise shift from scene to scene,  
 As tile-beard Jourdan did his guillotine!  
 Rather than him who, born beneath our skies,  
 To Slavery's hand its supplest tool supplies;  
 The party felon whose unblushing face  
 Looks from the pillory of his bribe of place,  
 And coolly makes a merit of disgrace,  
 Points to the footmarks of indignant scorn,  
 Shows the deep scars of satire's tossing horn;  
 And passes to his credit side the sum  
 Of all that makes a scoundrel's martyrdom!  
 ' Bane of the North, its canker and its moth!  
 These modern Esaus, bartering rights for broth!  
 Taxing our justice, with their double claim,  
 As fools for pity, and as knaves for blame;  
 Who, urged by party, sect, or trade, within  
 The fell embrace of Slavery's sphere of sin,  
 Part at the outset with their moral sense,  
 The watchful angel set for Truth's defence;  
 Confound all contrasts, good and ill; reverse  
 The poles of life, its blessing and its curse;  
 And lose thenceforth from their perverted sight  
 The eternal difference 'twixt the wrong and right;  
 To them the Law is but the iron span  
 That girds the ankles of imbruted man;  
 To them the Gospel has no higher aim  
 Than simple sanction of the master's claim,  
 Dragged in the slime of Slavery's loathsome trail,  
 Like Chaliar's Bible at his ass's tail!  
 'Such are the men who, with instinctive dread,  
 Whenever Freedom lifts her drooping head,  
 Make prophet-tripods of their office-stools,  
 And scare the nurseries and the village schools  
 With dire presage of ruin grim and great,  
 A broken Union and a foundered State!

Such are the patriots, self-bound to the stake  
Of office, martyrs for their country's sake:  
Who fill themselves the hungry jaws of Fate,  
And by their loss of manhood save the State.  
In the wide gulf themselves like Curtius throw,  
And test the virtues of cohesive dough;  
As tropic monkeys, linking heads and tails,  
Bridge o'er some torrent of Ecuador's vales!  
'Such are the men who in your churches rave  
To swearing-point, at mention of the slave!  
When some poor parsons haply unawares,  
Stammers of freedom in his timid prayers;  
Who, if some foot-sore negro through the town  
Steals northward, volunteer to hunt him down.  
Or, if some neighbor, flying from disease,  
Courts the mild balsam of the Southern breeze,  
With hue and cry pursue him on his track,  
And write Free-soiler on the poor man's back.  
Such are the men who leave the pedler's cart,  
While faring South, to learn the driver's art,  
Or, in white neckcloth, soothe with pious aim  
The graceful sorrows of some languid dame,  
Who, from the wreck of her bereavement, saves  
The double charm of widowhood and slaves!  
Pliant and apt, they lose no chance to show  
To what base depths apostasy can go;  
Outdo the natives in their readiness  
To roast a negro, or to mob a press;  
Poise a tarred schoolmate on the lyncher's rail,  
Or make a bonfire of their birthplace mail!  
'So some poor wretch, whose lips no longer bear  
The sacred burden of his mother's prayer,  
By fear impelled, or lust of gold enticed,  
Turns to the Crescent from the Cross of Christ,  
And, over-acting in superfluous zeal,  
Crawls prostrate where the faithful only kneel,  
Out-howls the Dervish, hugs his rags to court  
The squalid Santon's sanctity of dirt;  
And, when beneath the city gateway's span  
Files slow and long the Meccan caravan,  
And through its midst, pursued by Islam's prayers,  
The prophet's Word some favored camel bears,

The marked apostate has his place assigned  
The Koran-bearer's sacred rump behind,  
With brush and pitcher following, grave and mute,  
In meek attendance on the holy brute!  
' Men of the North! beneath your very eyes,  
By hearth and home, your real danger lies.  
Still day by day some hold of freedom falls  
Through home-bred traitors fed within its walls.  
Men whom yourselves with vote and purse sustain,  
At posts of honor, influence, and gain;  
The right of Slavery to your sons to teach,  
And 'South-side' Gospels in your pulpits preach,  
Transfix the Law to ancient freedom dear  
On the sharp point of her subverted spear,  
And imitate upon her cushion plump  
The mad Missourian lynching from his stump;  
Or, in your name, upon the Senate's floor  
Yield up to Slavery all it asks, and more;  
And, ere your dull eyes open to the cheat,  
Sell your old homestead underneath your feet!  
While such as these your loftiest outlooks hold,  
While truth and conscience with your wares are sold,  
While grave-browed merchants band themselves to aid  
An annual man-hunt for their Southern trade,  
What moral power within your grasp remains  
To stay the mischief on Nebraska's plains?  
High as the tides of generous impulse flow,  
As far rolls back the selfish undertow;  
And all your brave resolves, though aimed as true  
As the horse-pistol Balmawhapple drew,  
To Slavery's bastions lend as slight a shock  
As the poor trooper's shot to Stirling rock!  
'Yet, while the need of Freedom's cause demands  
The earnest efforts of your hearts and hands,  
Urged by all motives that can prompt the heart  
To prayer and toil and manhood's manliest part;  
Though to the soul's deep tocsin Nature joins  
The warning whisper of her Orphic pines,  
The north-wind's anger, and the south-wind's sigh,  
The midnight sword-dance of the northern sky,  
And, to the ear that bends above the sod  
Of the green the Fields of God,

In low, deep murmurs of rebuke or cheer,  
The land's dead fathers speak their hope or fear,  
Yet let not Passion wrest from Reason's hand  
The guiding rein and symbol of command.  
Blame not the caution proffering to your zeal  
A well-meant drag upon its hurrying wheel;  
Nor chide the man whose honest doubt extends  
To the means only, not the righteous ends;  
Nor fail to weigh the scruples and the fears  
Of milder natures and serener years.  
In the long strife with evil which began  
With the first lapse of new-created man,  
Wisely and well has Providence assigned  
To each his part, — some forward, some behind;  
And they, too, serve who temper and restrain  
The o'erwarm heart that sets on fire the brain.  
True to yourselves, feed Freedom's altar-flame  
With what you have; let others do the same.  
Spare timid doubters; set like flint your face  
Against the self-sold knaves of gain and place:  
Pity the weak; but with unsparing hand  
Cast out the traitors who infest the land;  
From bar, press, pulpit, east them everywhere,  
By dint of fasting, if you fail by prayer.  
And in their place bring men of antique mould,  
Like the grave fathers of your Age of Gold;  
Statesmen like those who sought the primal fount  
Of righteous law, the Sermon on the Mount;  
Lawyers who prize, like Quincy, (to our day  
Still spared, Heaven bless him!) honor more than pay,  
And Christian jurists, starry-pure, like Jay;  
Preachers like Woolman, or like them who bore  
The faith of Wesley to our Western shore,  
And held no convert genuine till he broke  
Alike his servants' and the Devil's yoke;  
And priests like him who Newport's market trod,  
And o'er its slave-ships shook the bolts of God!  
So shall your power, with a wise prudence used,  
Strong but forbearing, firm but not abused,  
In kindly keeping with the good of all,  
The nobler maxims of the past recall,  
Her natural home-born right to Freedom give,

And leave her foe his robber-right, — to live.  
Live, as the snake does in his noisome fen!  
Live, as the wolf does in his bone-strewn den!  
Live, clothed with cursing like a robe of flame,  
The focal point of million-fingered shame!  
Live, till the Southron, who, with all his faults,  
Has manly instincts, in his pride revolts,  
Dashes from off him, midst the glad world's cheers,  
The hideous nightmare of his dream of years,  
And lifts, self-prompted, with his own right hand,  
The vile encumbrance from his glorious land!  
'So, wheresoe'er our destiny sends forth  
Its widening circles to the South or North,  
Where'er our banner flaunts beneath the stars  
Its mimic splendors and its cloudlike bars,  
There shall Free Labor's hardy children stand  
The equal sovereigns of a slaveless land.  
And when at last the hunted bison tires,  
And dies o'ertaken by the squatter's fires;  
And westward, wave on wave, the living flood  
Breaks on the snow-line of majestic Hood;  
And lonely Shasta listening hears the tread  
Of Europe's fair-haired children, Hesper-led;  
And, gazing downward through his hoar-locks, sees  
The tawny Asian climb his giant knees,  
The Eastern sea shall hush his waves to hear  
Pacific's surf-beat answer Freedom's cheer,  
And one long rolling fire of triumph run  
Between the sunrise and the sunset gun!'

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My task is done. The Showman and his show,  
Themselves but shadows, into shadows go;  
And, if no song of idlesse I have sung,  
Nor tints of beauty on the canvas flung;  
If the harsh numbers grate on tender ears,  
And the rough picture overwrought appears;  
With deeper coloring, with a sterner blast,  
Before my soul a voice and vision passed,  
Such as might Milton's jarring trump require,  
Or glooms of Dante fringed with lurid fire.  
Oh; not of choice, for themes of public wrong  
I leave the green and pleasant paths of song,

The mild, sweet words which soften and adorn,  
For sharp rebuke and bitter laugh of scorn.  
More dear to me some song of private worth,  
Some homely idyl of my native North,  
Some summer pastoral of her inland vales,  
Or, grim and weird, her winter fireside tales  
Haunted by ghosts of unreturning sails;  
Lost barks at parting hung from stem to helm  
With prayers of love like dreams on Virgil's elm.  
Nor private grief nor malice holds my pen;  
I owe but kindness to my fellow-men;  
And, South or North, wherever hearts of prayer  
Their woes and weakness to our Father bear,  
Wherever fruits of Christian love are found  
In holy lives, to me is holy ground.  
But the time passes. It were vain to crave  
A late indulgence. What I had I gave.  
Forget the poet, but his warning heed,  
And shame his poor word with your nobler deed.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## After Election

THE day's sharp strife is ended now,  
Our work is done, God knoweth how!  
As on the thronged, unrestful town  
The patience of the moon looks down,  
I wait to hear, beside the wire,  
The voices of its tongues of fire.  
Slow, doubtful, faint, they seem at first:  
Be strong, my heart, to know the worst!  
Hark! there the Alleghanies spoke;  
That sound from lake and prairie broke,  
That sunset-gun of triumph rent  
The silence of a continent!  
That signal from Nebraska sprung,  
This, from Nevada's mountain tongue!  
Is that thy answer, strong and free,  
O loyal heart of Tennessee?  
What strange, glad voice is that which calls  
From Wagner's grave and Sumter's walls?  
From Mississippi's fountain-head  
A sound as of the hisoh's tread!  
There rustled freedom's Charter Oak!  
In that wild burst the Ozarks spoke!  
Cheer answers cheer from rise to set  
Of sun. We have a country yet!  
The praise, O God, be thine alone!  
Thou givest not for bread a stone;  
Thou hast not led us through the night  
To blind us with returning light;  
Not through the furnace have we passed,  
To perish at its mouth at last.  
O night of peace, thy flight restrain!  
November's moon, be slow to wane!  
Shine on the freedman's cabin floor,  
On brows of prayer a blessing pour;  
And give, with full assurance blest,  
The weary heart of Freedom rest!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## All's Well

The clouds, which rise with thunder, slake  
Our thirsty souls with rain;  
The blow most dreaded falls to break  
From off our limbs a chain;  
And wrongs of man to man but make  
The love of God more plain.  
As through the shadowy lens of even  
The eye looks farthest into heaven  
On gleams of star and depths of blue  
The glaring sunshine never knew!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Among The Hills

## PRELUDE

ALONG the roadside, like the flowers of gold  
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,  
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,  
And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers  
Hang motionless upon their upright staves.  
The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,  
Vying-weary with its long flight from the south,  
Unfelt; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf  
With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,  
Confesses it. The locust by the wall  
Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.  
A single hay-cart down the dusty road  
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep  
On the load's top. Against the neighboring hill,  
Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,  
The sheep show white, as if a snowdrift still  
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door  
A drowsy smell of flowers-gray heliotrope,  
And white sweet clover, and shy mignonette—  
Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends  
To the pervading symphony of peace.  
No time is this for hands long over-worn  
To task their strength; and (unto Him be praise  
Who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain  
Of years that did the work of centuries  
Have ceased, and we can draw our breath once more  
Freely and full. So, as yon harvesters  
Make glad their nooning underneath the elms  
With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,  
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn  
The leaves of memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'er  
Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,  
And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,  
Proud of field-lore and harvest craft, and feeling  
All their fine possibilities, how rich  
And restful even poverty and toil

Become when beauty, harmony, and love  
Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat  
At evening in the patriarch's tent, when man  
Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock  
The symbol of a Christian chivalry  
Tender and just and generous to her  
Who clothes with grace all duty; still, I know  
Too well the picture has another side,—  
How wearily the grind of toil goes on  
Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear  
And heart are starved amidst the plenitude  
Of nature, and how hard and colorless  
Is life without an atmosphere. I look  
Across the lapse of half a century,  
And call to mind old homesteads, where no flower  
Told that the spring had come, but evil weeds,  
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock in the place  
Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose  
And honeysuckle, where the house walls seemed  
Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine  
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves  
Across the curtainless windows, from whose panes  
Fluttered the signal rags of shiftlessness.  
Within, the cluttered kitchen-floor, unwashed  
(Broom-clean I think they called it); the best room  
Stifling with cellar damp, shut from the air  
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless,  
Save the inevitable sampler hung  
Over the fireplace, or a mourning piece,  
A green-haired woman, peony-cheeked, beneath  
Impossible willows; the wide-throated hearth  
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half concealing  
The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back;  
And, in sad keeping with all things about them,  
Shrill, querulous-women, sour and sullen men,  
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,  
With scarce a human interest save their own  
Monotonous round of small economies,  
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood;  
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,  
Treading the May-flowers with regardless feet;  
For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink

Sang not, nor winds made music in the leaves;  
For them in vain October's holocaust  
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,  
The sacramental mystery of the woods.  
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,  
But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,  
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls  
And winter pork with the least possible outlay  
Of salt and sanctity; in daily life  
Showing as little actual comprehension  
Of Christian charity and love and duty,  
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been  
Outdated like a last year's almanac  
Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled fields,  
And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,  
The veriest straggler limping on his rounds,  
The sun and air his sole inheritance,  
Laughed at a poverty that paid its taxes,  
And hugged his rags in self-complacency!

Not such should be the homesteads of a land  
Where whoso wisely wills and acts may dwell  
As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,  
With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to make  
His hour of leisure richer than a life  
Of fourscore to the barons of old time,  
Our yeoman should be equal to his home  
Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,  
A man to match his mountains, not to creep  
Dwarfed and abased below them. I would fain  
In this light way (of which I needs must own  
With the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings,  
"Story, God bless you! I have none to tell you!")  
Invite the eye to see and heart to feel  
The beauty and the joy within their reach,—  
Home, and home loves, and the beatitudes  
Of nature free to all. Haply in years  
That wait to take the places of our own,  
Heard where some breezy balcony looks down  
On happy homes, or where the lake in the moon  
Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as Ruth,  
In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet

Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine  
May seem the burden of a prophecy,  
Finding its late fulfilment in a change  
Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up  
Through broader culture, finer manners, love,  
And reverence, to the level of the hills.

O Golden Age, whose light is of the dawn,  
And not of sunset, forward, not behind,  
Flood the new heavens and earth, and with thee bring  
All the old virtues, whatsoever things  
Are pure and honest and of good repute,  
But add thereto whatever bard has sung  
Or seer has told of when in trance and dream  
They saw the Happy Isles of prophecy  
Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide  
Between the right and wrong; but give the heart  
The freedom of its fair inheritance;  
Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved so long,  
At Nature's table feast his ear and eye  
With joy and wonder; let all harmonies  
Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon  
The princely guest, whether in soft attire  
Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil,  
And, lending life to the dead form of faith,  
Give human nature reverence for the sake  
Of One who bore it, making it divine  
With the ineffable tenderness of God;  
Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,  
The heirship of an unknown destiny,  
The unsolved mystery round about us, make  
A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.  
Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things  
Should minister, as outward types and signs  
Of the eternal beauty which fulfils  
The one great purpose of creation, Love,  
The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!

. . . . .

For weeks the clouds had raked the hills  
And vexed the vales with raining,  
And all the woods were sad with mist,

And all the brooks complaining.  
At last, a sudden night-storm tore  
The mountain veils asunder,  
And swept the valleys clean before  
The bosom of the thunder.

Through Sandwich notch the west-wind sang  
Good morrow to the cotter;  
And once again Chocorua's horn  
Of shadow pierced the water.

Above his broad lake Ossipee,  
Once more the sunshine wearing,  
Stooped, tracing on that silver shield  
His grim armorial bearing.

Clear drawn against the hard blue sky,  
The peaks had winter's keenness;  
And, close on autumn's frost, the vales  
Had more than June's fresh greenness.

Again the sodden forest floors  
With golden lights were checkered,  
Once more rejoicing leaves in wind  
And sunshine danced and flickered.

It was as if the summer's late  
Atoning for it's sadness  
Had borrowed every season's charm  
To end its days in gladness.

I call to mind those banded vales  
Of shadow and of shining,  
Through which, my hostess at my side,  
I drove in day's declining.

We held our sideling way above  
The river's whitening shallows,  
By homesteads old, with wide-flung barns  
Swept through and through by swallows,—

By maple orchards, belts of pine

And larches climbing darkly  
The mountain slopes, and, over all,  
The great peaks rising starkly.

You should have seen that long hill-range  
With gaps of brightness riven,—  
How through each pass and hollow streamed  
The purpling lights of heaven,—

Rivers of gold-mist flowing down  
From far celestial fountains,—  
The great sun flaming through the rifts  
Beyond the wall of mountains.

We paused at last where home-bound cows  
Brought down the pasture's treasure,  
And in the barn the rhythmic flails  
Beat out a harvest measure.

We heard the night-hawk's sullen plunge,  
The crow his tree-mates calling:  
The shadows lengthening down the slopes  
About our feet were falling.

And through them smote the level sun  
In broken lines of splendor,  
Touched the gray rocks and made the green  
Of the shorn grass more tender.

The maples bending o'er the gate,  
Their arch of leaves just tinted  
With yellow warmth, the golden glow  
Of coming autumn hinted.

Keen white between the farm-house showed,  
And smiled on porch and trellis,  
The fair democracy of flowers  
That equals cot and palace.

And weaving garlands for her dog,  
'Twixt chidings and caresses,  
A human flower of childhood shook

The sunshine from her tresses.

On either hand we saw the signs  
Of fancy and of shrewdness,  
Where taste had wound its arms of vines  
Round thrift's uncomely rudeness.

The sun-brown farmer in his frock  
Shook hands, and called to Mary  
Bare-armed, as Juno might, she came,  
White-aproned from her dairy.

Her air, her smile, her motions, told  
Of womanly completeness;  
A music as of household songs  
Was in her voice of sweetness.

Not fair alone in curve and line,  
But something more and better,  
The secret charm eluding art,  
Its spirit, not its letter;—

An inborn grace that nothing lacked  
Of culture or appliance,  
The warmth of genial courtesy,  
The calm of self-reliance.

Before her queenly womanhood  
How dared our hostess utter  
The paltry errand of her need  
To buy her fresh-churned butter?

She led the way with housewife pride,  
Her goodly store disclosing,  
Full tenderly the golden balls  
With practised hands disposing.

Then, while along the western hills  
We watched the changeful glory  
Of sunset, on our homeward way,  
I heard her simple story.

The early crickets sang; the stream  
Plashed through my friend's narration:  
Her rustic patois of the hills  
Lost in my free-translation.

"More wise," she said, "than those who swarm  
Our hills in middle summer,  
She came, when June's first roses blow,  
To greet the early comer.

"From school and ball and rout she came,  
The city's fair, pale daughter,  
To drink the wine of mountain air  
Beside the Bearcamp Water.

"Her step grew firmer on the hills  
That watch our homesteads over;  
On cheek and lip, from summer fields,  
She caught the bloom of clover.

"For health comes sparkling in the streams  
From cool Chocorua stealing:  
There's iron in our Northern winds;  
Our pines are trees of healing.

"She sat beneath the broad-armed elms  
That skirt the mowing-meadow,  
And watched the gentle west-wind weave  
The grass with shine and shadow.

"Beside her, from the summer heat  
To share her grateful screening,  
With forehead bared, the farmer stood,  
Upon his pitchfork leaning.

"Framed in its damp, dark locks, his face  
Had nothing mean or common,—  
Strong, manly, true, the tenderness  
And pride beloved of woman.

"She looked up, glowing with the health  
The country air had brought her,

And, laughing, said: 'You lack a wife,  
Your mother lacks a daughter.

"To mend your frock and bake your bread  
You do not need a lady:  
Be sure among these brown old homes  
Is some one waiting ready,—

"Some fair, sweet girl with skilful hand  
And cheerful heart for treasure,  
Who never played with ivory keys,  
Or danced the polka's measure.'

"He bent his black brows to a frown,  
He set his white teeth tightly.  
'T is well,' he said, 'for one like you  
To choose for me so lightly.

"You think, because my life is rude  
I take no note of sweetness:  
I tell you love has naught to do  
With meetness or unmeetness.

"Itself its best excuse, it asks  
No leave of pride or fashion  
When silken zone or homespun frock  
It stirs with throbs of passion.

"You think me deaf and blind: you bring  
Your winning graces hither  
As free as if from cradle-time  
We two had played together.

"You tempt me with your laughing eyes,  
Your cheek of sundown's blushes,  
A motion as of waving grain,  
A music as of thrushes.

"The plaything of your summer sport,  
The spells you weave around me  
You cannot at your will undo,  
Nor leave me as you found me.

“You go as lightly as you came,  
Your life is well without me;  
What care you that these hills will close  
Like prison-walls about me?

“No mood is mine to seek a wife,  
Or daughter for my mother  
Who loves you loses in that love  
All power to love another!

“I dare your pity or your scorn,  
With pride your own exceeding;  
I fling my heart into your lap  
Without a word of pleading.’

“She looked up in his face of pain  
So archly, yet so tender  
‘And if I lend you mine,’ she said,  
‘Will you forgive the lender?’

“Nor frock nor tan can hide the man;  
And see you not, my farmer,  
How weak and fond a woman waits  
Behind this silken armor?

“I love you: on that love alone,  
And not my worth, presuming,  
Will you not trust for summer fruit  
The tree in May-day blooming?’

“Alone the hangbird overhead,  
His hair-swung cradle straining,  
Looked down to see love’s miracle,—  
The giving that is gaining.

“And so the farmer found a wife,  
His mother found a daughter  
There looks no happier home than hers  
On pleasant Bearcamp Water.

“Flowers spring to blossom where she walks

The careful ways of duty;  
Our hard, stiff lines of life with her  
Are flowing curves of beauty.

“Our homes are cheerier for her sake,  
Our door-yards brighter blooming,  
And all about the social air  
Is sweeter for her coming.

“Unspoken homilies of peace  
Her daily life is preaching;  
The still refreshment of the dew  
Is her unconscious teaching.

“And never tenderer hand than hers  
Unknits the brow of ailing;  
Her garments to the sick man’s ear  
Have music in their trailing.

“And when, in pleasant harvest moons,  
The youthful huskers gather,  
Or sleigh-drives on the mountain ways  
Defy the winter weather,—

“In sugar-camps, when south and warm  
The winds of March are blowing,  
And sweetly from its thawing veins  
The maple’s blood is flowing,—

“In summer, where some lily pond  
Its virgin zone is baring,  
Or where the ruddy autumn fire  
Lights up the apple-paring,—

“The coarseness of a ruder time  
Her finer mirth displaces,  
A subtler sense of pleasure fills  
Each rustic sport she graces.

“Her presence lends its warmth and health  
To all who come before it.  
If woman lost us Eden, such

As she alone restore it.

"For larger life and wiser aims  
The farmer is her debtor;  
Who holds to his another's heart  
Must needs be worse or better.

"Through her his civic service shows  
A purer-toned ambition;  
No double consciousness divides  
The man and politician.

"In party's doubtful ways he trusts  
Her instincts to determine;  
At the loud polls, the thought of her  
Recalls Christ's Mountain Sermon.

"He owns her logic of the heart,  
And wisdom of unreason,  
Supplying, while he doubts and weighs,  
The needed word in season.

"He sees with pride her richer thought,  
Her fancy's freer ranges;  
And love thus deepened to respect  
Is proof against all changes.

"And if she walks at ease in ways  
His feet are slow to travel,  
And if she reads with cultured eyes  
What his may scarce unravel,

"Still clearer, for her keener sight  
Of beauty and of wonder,  
He learns the meaning of the hills  
He dwelt from childhood under.

"And higher, warmed with summer lights,  
Or winter-crowned and hoary,  
The ridged horizon lifts for him  
Its inner veils of glory.

“He has his own free, bookless lore,  
The lessons nature taught him,  
The wisdom which the woods and hills  
And toiling men have brought him:

“The steady force of will whereby  
Her flexile grace seems sweeter;  
The sturdy counterpoise which makes  
Her woman’s life completer.

“A latent fire of soul which lacks  
No breath of love to fan it;  
And wit, that, like his native brooks,  
Plays over solid granite.

“How dwarfed against his manliness  
She sees the poor pretension,  
The wants, the aims, the follies, born  
Of fashion and convention.

“How life behind its accidents  
Stands strong and self-sustaining,  
The human fact transcending all  
The losing and the gaining.

“And so in grateful interchange  
Of teacher and of hearer,  
Their lives their true distinctness keep  
While daily drawing nearer.

“And if the husband or the wife  
In home’s strong light discovers  
Such slight defaults as failed to meet  
The blinded eyes of lovers,

“Why need we care to ask?—who dreams  
Without their thorns of roses,  
Or wonders that the truest steel  
The readiest spark discloses?

“For still in mutual sufferance lies  
The secret of true living;

Love scarce is love that never knows  
The sweetness of forgiving.

“We send the Squire to General Court,  
He takes his young wife thither;  
No prouder man election day  
Rides through the sweet June weather.

“He sees with eyes of manly trust  
All hearts to her inclining;  
Not less for him his household light  
That others share its shining.”

Thus, while my hostess spake, there grew  
Before me, warmer tinted  
And outlined with a tenderer grace,  
The picture that she hinted.

The sunset smouldered as we drove  
Beneath the deep hill-shadows.  
Below us wreaths of white fog walked  
Like ghosts the haunted meadows.

Sounding the summer night, the stars  
Dropped down their golden plummets;  
The pale arc of the Northern lights  
Rose o'er the mountain summits,—

Until, at last, beneath its bridge,  
We heard the Bearcamp flowing,  
And saw across the mapled lawn  
The welcome home lights glowing;—

And, musing on the tale I heard,  
’T were well, thought I, if often  
To rugged farm-life came the gift  
To harmonize and soften;—

If more and more we found the troth  
Of fact and fancy plighted,  
And culture’s charm and labor’s strength  
In rural homes united,—

The simple life, the homely hearth,  
With beauty's sphere surrounding,  
And blessing toil where toil abounds  
With graces more abounding.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Amy Wentworth

TO WILLIAM BRADFORD.

As they who watch by sick-beds find relief  
Unwittingly from the great stress of grief  
And anxious care, in fantasies outwrought  
From the hearth's embers flickering low, or caught  
From whispering wind, or tread of passing feet,  
Or vagrant memory calling up some sweet  
Snatch of old song or romance, whence or why  
They scarcely know or ask,--so, thou and I,  
Nursed in the faith that Truth alone is strong  
In the endurance which outwearies Wrong,  
With meek persistence baffling brutal force,  
And trusting God against the universe,--  
We, doomed to watch a strife we may not share  
With other weapons than the patriot's prayer,  
Yet owning, with full hearts and moistened eyes,  
The awful beauty of self-sacrifice,  
And wrung by keenest sympathy for all  
Who give their loved ones for the living wall  
'Twixt law and treason,--in this evil day  
May haply find, through automatic play  
Of pen and pencil, solace to our pain,  
And hearten others with the strength we gain.  
I know it has been said our times require  
No play of art, nor dalliance with the lyre,  
No weak essay with Fancy's chloroform  
To calm the hot, mad pulses of the storm,  
But the stern war-blast rather, such as sets  
The battle's teeth of serried bayonets,  
And pictures grim as Vernet's. Yet with these  
Some softer tints may blend, and milder keys  
Relieve the storm-stunned ear. Let us keep sweet,  
If so we may, our hearts, even while we eat  
The bitter harvest of our own device  
And half a century's moral cowardice.  
As Nurnberg sang while Wittenberg defied,  
And Kranach painted by his Luther's side,  
And through the war-march of the Puritan

The silver stream of Marvell's music ran,  
So let the household melodies be sung,  
The pleasant pictures on the wall be hung--  
So let us hold against the hosts of night  
And slavery all our vantage-ground of light.  
Let Treason boast its savagery, and shake  
From its flag-folds its symbol rattlesnake,  
Nurse its fine arts, lay human skins in tan,  
And carve its pipe-bowls from the bones of man,  
And make the tale of Fijian banquets dull  
By drinking whiskey from a loyal skull,--  
But let us guard, till this sad war shall cease,  
(God grant it soon!) the graceful arts of peace  
No foes are conquered who the victors teach  
Their vandal manners and barbaric speech.

And while, with hearts of thankfulness, we bear  
Of the great common burden our full share,  
Let none upbraid us that the waves entice  
Thy sea-dipped pencil, or some quaint device,  
Rhythmic, and sweet, beguiles my pen away  
From the sharp strifes and sorrows of to-day.  
Thus, while the east-wind keen from Labrador  
Sings it the leafless elms, and from the shore  
Of the great sea comes the monotonous roar  
Of the long-breaking surf, and all the sky  
Is gray with cloud, home-bound and dull, I try  
To time a simple legend to the sounds  
Of winds in the woods, and waves on pebbled bounds,--  
A song for oars to chime with, such as might  
Be sung by tired sea-painters, who at night  
Look from their hemlock camps, by quiet cove  
Or beach, moon-lighted, on the waves they love.  
(So hast thou looked, when level sunset lay  
On the calm bosom of some Eastern bay,  
And all the spray-moist rocks and waves that rolled  
Up the white sand-slopes flashed with ruddy gold.)  
Something it has--a flavor of the sea,  
And the sea's freedom--which reminds of thee.  
Its faded picture, dimly smiling down  
From the blurred fresco of the ancient town,  
I have not touched with warmer tints in vain,

If, in this dark, sad year, it steals one thought  
from pain.

.....

Her fingers shame the ivory keys  
They dance so light along;  
The bloom upon her parted lips  
Is sweeter than the song.

O perfumed suitor, spare thy smiles!  
Her thoughts are not of thee;  
She better loves the salted wind,  
The voices of the sea.

Her heart is like an outbound ship  
That at its anchor swings;  
The murmur of the stranded shell  
Is in the song she sings.

She sings, and, smiling, hears her praise,  
But dreams the while of one  
Who watches from his sea-blown deck  
The icebergs in the sun.

She questions all the winds that blow,  
And every fog-wreath dim,  
And bids the sea-birds flying north  
Bear messages to him.

She speeds them with the thanks of men  
He perilled life to save,  
And grateful prayers like holy oil  
To smooth for him the wave.

Brown Viking of the fishing-smack!  
Fair toast of all the town!--  
The skipper's jerkin ill beseems  
The lady's silken gown!

But ne'er shall Amy Wentworth wear

For him the blush of shame  
Who dares to set his manly gifts  
Against her ancient name.

The stream is brightest at its spring,  
And blood is not like wine;  
Nor honored less than he who heirs  
Is he who founds a line.

Full lightly shall the prize be won,  
If love be Fortune's spur;  
And never maiden stoops to him  
Who lifts himself to her.

Her home is brave in Jaffrey Street,  
With stately stairways worn  
By feet of old Colonial knights  
And ladies gentle-born.

Still green about its ample porch  
The English ivy twines,  
Trained back to show in English oak  
The herald's carven signs.

And on her, from the wainscot old,  
Ancestral faces frown,--  
And this has worn the soldier's sword,  
And that the judge's gown.

But, strong of will and proud as they,  
She walks the gallery floor  
As if she trod her sailor's deck  
By stormy Labrador.

The sweetbrier blooms on Kittery-side,  
And green are Elliot's bowers;  
Her garden is the pebbled beach,  
The mosses are her flowers.

She looks across the harbor-bar  
To see the white gulls fly;  
His greeting from the Northern sea

Is in their clanging cry.

She hums a song, and dreams that he,  
As in its romance old,  
Shall homeward ride with silken sails  
And masts of beaten gold!

Oh, rank is good, and gold is fair,  
And high and low mate ill;  
But love has never known a law  
Beyond its own sweet will!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# An Artist Of The Beautiful

GEORGE FULLER

Haunted of Beauty, like the marvellous youth  
Who sang Saint Agnes' Eve! How passing fair  
Her shapes took color in thy homestead air!  
How on thy canvas even her dreams were truth!  
Magician! who from commonest elements  
Called up divine ideals, clothed upon  
By mystic lights soft blending into one  
Womanly grace and child-like innocence.  
Teacher I thy lesson was not given in vain.  
Beauty is goodness; ugliness is sin;  
Art's place is sacred: nothing foul therein  
May crawl or tread with bestial feet profane.  
If rightly choosing is the painter's test,  
Thy choice, O master, ever was the best.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# An Autograph

I write my name as one,  
On sands by waves o'errun  
Or winter's frosted pane,  
Traces a record vain.

Oblivion's blankness claims  
Wiser and better names,  
And well my own may pass  
As from the strand or glass.

Wash on, O waves of time!  
Melt, noons, the frosty rime!  
Welcome the shadow vast,  
The silence that shall last!

When I and all who know  
And love me vanish so,  
What harm to them or me  
Will the lost memory be?

If any words of mine,  
Through right of life divine,  
Remain, what matters it  
Whose hand the message writ?

Why should the "crown's quest"  
Sit on my worst or best?  
Why should the showman claim  
The poor ghost of my name?

Yet, as when dies a sound  
Its spectre lingers round,  
Haply my spent life will  
Leave some faint echo still.

A whisper giving breath  
Of praise or blame to death,  
Soothing or saddening such  
As loved the living much.

Therefore with yearnings vain  
And fond I still would fain  
A kindly judgment seek,  
A tender thought bespeak.

And, while my words are read,  
Let this at least be said:  
"Whate'er his life's defeatures,  
He loved his fellow-creatures.

"If, of the Law's stone table,  
To hold he scarce was able  
The first great precept fast,  
He kept for man the last.

"Through mortal lapse and dulness  
What lacks the Eternal Fulness,  
If still our weakness can  
Love Him in loving man?

"Age brought him no despairing  
Of the world's future faring;  
In human nature still  
He found more good than ill.

"To all who dumbly suffered,  
His tongue and pen he offered;  
His life was not his own,  
Nor lived for self alone.

"Hater of din and riot  
He lived in days unquiet;  
And, lover of all beauty,  
Trod the hard ways of duty.

"He meant no wrong to any  
He sought the good of many,  
Yet knew both sin and folly, --  
May God forgive him wholly!"



# An Easter Flower Gift

O dearest bloom the seasons know,  
Flowers of the Resurrection blow,  
Our hope and faith restore;  
And through the bitterness of death  
And loss and sorrow, breathe a breath  
Of life forevermore!

The thought of Love Immortal blends  
With fond remembrances of friends;  
In you, O sacred flowers,  
By human love made doubly sweet,  
The heavenly and the earthly meet,  
The heart of Christ and ours!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# An Outdoor Reception

On these green banks, where falls too soon  
The shade of Autumn's afternoon,  
The south wind blowing soft and sweet,  
The water gliding at nay feet,  
The distant northern range uplift  
By the slant sunshine over it,  
With changes of the mountain mist  
From tender blush to amethyst,  
The valley's stretch of shade and gleam  
Fair as in Mirza's Bagdad dream,  
With glad young faces smiling near  
And merry voices in my ear,  
I sit, methinks, as Hafiz might  
In Iran's Garden of Delight.  
For Persian roses blushing red,  
Aster and gentian bloom instead;  
For Shiraz wine, this mountain air;  
For feast, the blueberries which I share  
With one who proffers with stained hands  
Her gleanings from yon pasture lands,  
Wild fruit that art and culture spoil,  
The harvest of an untilled soil;  
And with her one whose tender eyes  
Reflect the change of April skies,  
Midway 'twixt child and maiden yet,  
Fresh as Spring's earliest violet;  
And one whose look and voice and ways  
Make where she goes idyllic days;  
And one whose sweet, still countenance  
Seems dreamful of a child's romance;  
And others, welcome as are these,  
Like and unlike, varieties  
Of pearls on nature's chaplet strung,  
And all are fair, for all are young.  
Gathered from seaside cities old,  
From midland prairie, lake, and wold,  
From the great wheat-fields, which might feed  
The hunger of a world at need,  
In healthful change of rest and play

Their school-vacations glide away.

No critics these: they only see  
An old and kindly friend in me,  
In whose amused, indulgent look  
Their innocent mirth has no rebuke.  
They scarce can know my rugged rhymes,  
The harsher songs of evil times,  
Nor graver themes in minor keys  
Of life's and death's solemnities;  
But haply, as they bear in mind  
Some verse of lighter, happier kind,--  
Hints of the boyhood of the man,  
Youth viewed from life's meridian,  
Half seriously and half in play  
My pleasant interviewers pay  
Their visit, with no fell intent  
Of taking notes and punishment.

As yonder solitary pine  
Is ringed below with flower and vine,  
More favored than that lonely tree,  
The bloom of girlhood circles me.  
In such an atmosphere of youth  
I half forget my age's truth;  
The shadow of my life's long date  
Runs backward on the dial-plate,  
Until it seems a step might span  
The gulf between the boy and man.

My young friends smile, as if some jay  
On bleak December's leafless spray  
Essayed to sing the songs of May.  
Well, let them smile, and live to know,  
When their brown locks are flecked with snow,  
'T is tedious to be always sage  
And pose the dignity of age,  
While so much of our early lives  
On memory's playground still survives,  
And owns, as at the present hour,  
The spell of youth's magnetic power.

But though I feel, with Solomon,  
'T is pleasant to behold the sun,  
I would not if I could repeat  
A life which still is good and sweet;  
I keep in age, as in my prime,  
A not uncheerful step with time,  
And, grateful for all blessings sent,  
I go the common way, content  
To make no new experiment.  
On easy terms with law and fate,  
For what must be I calmly wait,  
And trust the path I cannot see,--  
That God is good sufficeth me.  
And when at last on life's strange play  
The curtain falls, I only pray  
That hope may lose itself in truth,  
And age in Heaven's immortal youth,  
And all our loves and longing prove  
The foretaste of diviner love.

The day is done. Its afterglow  
Along the west is burning low.  
My visitors, like birds, have flown;  
I hear their voices, fainter grown,  
And dimly through the dusk I see  
Their 'kerchiefs wave good-night to me,--  
Light hearts of girlhood, knowing nought  
Of all the cheer their coming brought;  
And, in their going, unaware  
Of silent-following feet of prayer  
Heaven make their budding promise good  
With flowers of gracious womanhood!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Andrew Rykman's Prayer

Andrew Rykman's dead and gone;  
You can see his leaning slate  
In the graveyard, and thereon  
Read his name and date.

Trust is truer than our fears  
Runs the legend through the moss,  
Gain is not in added years,  
Nor in death is loss

Still the feet that thither trod,  
All the friendly eyes are dim;  
Only Nature, now, and God  
Have a care for him.

There the dews of quiet fall,  
Singing birds and soft winds stray:  
Shall the tender Heart of all  
Be less kind than they?

What he was and what he is  
They who ask may haply find,  
If they read this prayer of his  
Which he left behind.

. . . .

Pardon, Lord, the lips that dare  
Shape in words a mortal's prayer!  
Prayer, that, when my day is done,  
And I see its setting sun,  
Shorn and beamless, cold and dim,  
Sink beneath the horizon's rim,--  
When this ball of rock and clay  
Crumbles from my feet away,  
And the solid shores of sense  
Melt into the vague immense,  
Father! I may come to Thee

Even with the beggar's plea,  
As the poorest of Thy poor,  
With my needs, and nothing more.

Not as one who seeks his home  
With a step assured I come;  
Still behind the tread I hear  
Of my life-companion, Fear;  
Still a shadow deep and vast  
From my westering feet is cast,  
Wavering, doubtful, undefined,  
Never shapen nor outlined  
From myself the fear has grown,  
And the shadow is my own.

Yet, O Lord, through all a sense  
Of Thy tender providence  
Stays my failing heart on Thee,  
And confirms the feeble knee;  
And, at times, my worn feet press  
Spaces of cool quietness,  
Lilied whiteness shone upon  
Not by light of moon or sun.  
Hours there be of inmost calm,  
Broken but by grateful psalm,  
When I love Thee more than fear Thee,  
And Thy blessed Christ seems near me,  
With forgiving look, as when  
He beheld the Magdalen.  
Well I know that all things move  
To the spheral rhythm of love,--  
That to Thee, O Lord of all!  
Nothing can of chance befall  
Child and seraph, mote and star,  
Well Thou knowest what we are  
Through Thy vast creative plan  
Looking, from the worm to man,  
There is pity in Thine eyes,  
But no hatred nor surprise.  
Not in blind caprice of will,  
Not in cunning sleight of skill,  
Not for show of power, was wrought

Nature's marvel in Thy thought.  
Never careless hand and vain  
Smites these chords of joy and pain;  
No immortal selfishness  
Plays the game of curse and bless  
Heaven and earth are witnesses  
That Thy glory goodness is.

Not for sport of mind and force  
Hast Thou made Thy universe,  
But as atmosphere and zone  
Of Thy loving heart alone.  
Man, who walketh in a show,  
Sees before him, to and fro,  
Shadow and illusion go;  
All things flow and fluctuate,  
Now contract and now dilate.  
In the welter of this sea,  
Nothing stable is but Thee;  
In this whirl of swooning trance,  
Thou alone art permanence;  
All without Thee only seems,  
All beside is choice of dreams.  
Never yet in darkest mood  
Doubted I that Thou wast good,  
Nor mistook my will for fate,  
Pain of sin for heavenly hate,--  
Never dreamed the gates of pearl  
Rise from out the burning marl,  
Or that good can only live  
Of the bad conservative,  
And through counterpoise of hell  
Heaven alone be possible.

For myself alone I doubt;  
All is well, I know, without;  
I alone the beauty mar,  
I alone the music jar.  
Yet, with hands by evil stained,  
And an ear by discord pained,  
I am groping for the keys  
Of the heavenly harmonies;

Still within my heart I bear  
Love for all things good and fair.  
Hands of want or souls in pain  
Have not sought my door in vain;  
I have kept my fealty good  
To the human brotherhood;  
Scarcely have I asked in prayer  
That which others might not share.  
I, who hear with secret shame  
Praise that paineth more than blame,  
Rich alone in favors lent,  
Virtuous by accident,  
Doubtful where I fain would rest,  
Frailest where I seem the best,  
Only strong for lack of test,--  
What am I, that I should press  
Special pleas of selfishness,  
Coolly mounting into heaven  
On my neighbor unforgiven?  
Ne'er to me, howe'er disguised,  
Comes a saint unrecognized;  
Never fails my heart to greet  
Noble deed with warmer beat;  
Halt and maimed, I own not less  
All the grace of holiness;  
Nor, through shame or self-distrust,  
Less I love the pure and just.  
Lord, forgive these words of mine  
What have I that is not Thine?  
Whatsoe'er I fain would boast  
Needs Thy pitying pardon most.  
Thou, O Elder Brother! who  
In Thy flesh our trial knew,  
Thou, who hast been touched by these  
Our most sad infirmities,  
Thou alone the gulf canst span  
In the dual heart of man,  
And between the soul and sense  
Reconcile all difference,  
Change the dream of me and mine  
For the truth of Thee and Thine,  
And, through chaos, doubt, and strife,

Interfuse Thy calm of life.  
Haply, thus by Thee renewed,  
In Thy borrowed goodness good,  
Some sweet morning yet in God's  
Dim, veonian periods,  
Joyful I shall wake to see  
Those I love who rest in Thee,  
And to them in Thee allied  
Shall my soul be satisfied.

Scarcely Hope hath shaped for me  
What the future life may be.  
Other lips may well be bold;  
Like the publican of old,  
I can only urge the plea,  
'Lord, be merciful to me!'  
Nothing of desert I claim,  
Unto me belongeth shame.  
Not for me the, crowns of gold,  
Palms, and harpings manifold;  
Not for erring eye and feet  
Jasper wall and golden street.  
What thou wilt, O Father, give I  
All is gain that I receive.

If my voice I may not raise  
In the elders' song of praise,  
If I may not, sin-defiled,  
Claim my birthright as a child,  
Suffer it that I to Thee  
As an hired servant be;  
Let the lowliest task be mine,  
Grateful, so the work be Thine;  
Let me find the humblest place  
In the shadow of Thy grace  
Blest to me were any spot  
Where temptation whispers not.  
If there be some weaker one,  
Give me strength to help him on  
If a blinder soul there be,  
Let me guide him nearer Thee.  
Make my mortal dreams come true

With the work I fain would do;  
Clothe with life the weak intent,  
Let me be the thing I meant;  
Let me find in Thy employ  
Peace that dearer is than joy;  
Out of self to love be led  
And to heaven acclimated,  
Until all things sweet and good  
Seem my natural habitude.

. . . .

So we read the prayer of him  
Who, with John of Labadie,  
Trode, of old, the oozy rim  
Of the Zuyder Zee.

Thus did Andrew Rykman pray.  
Are we wiser, better grown,  
That we may not, in our day,  
Make his prayer our own?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Anniversary Poem

ONCE, more, dear friends, you meet beneath  
A clouded sky:  
Not yet the sword has found its sheath,  
And on the sweet spring airs the breath  
Of war floats by.  
Yet trouble springs not from the ground,  
Nor pain from chance;  
The Eternal order circles round,  
And wave and storm find mete and bound  
In Providence.  
Full long our feet the flowery ways  
Of peace have trod,  
Content with creed and garb and phrase:  
A harder path in earlier days  
Led up to God.  
Too cheaply truths, once purchased dear,  
Are made our own;  
Too long the world has smiled to hear  
Our boast of full corn in the ear  
By others sown;  
To see us stir the martyr fires  
Of long ago,  
And wrap our satisfied desires  
In the singed mantles that our sires  
Have dropped below.  
But now the cross our worthies bore  
On us is laid;  
Profession's quiet sleep is o'er,  
And in the scale of truth once more  
Our faith is weighed.  
The cry of innocent blood at last  
Is calling down  
An answer in the whirlwind-blast,  
The thunder and the shadow cast  
From Heaven's dark frown.  
The land is red with judgments. Who  
Stands guiltless forth?  
Have we been faithful as we knew,  
To God and to our brother true,

To Heaven and Earth?  
How faint, through din of merchandise  
And count of gain,  
Have seemed to us the captive's cries!  
How far away the tears and sighs  
Of souls in pain!  
This day the fearful reckoning comes  
To each and all;  
We hear amidst our peaceful homes  
The summons of the conscript drums,  
The bugle's call.  
Our path is plain; the war-net draws  
Round us in vain,  
While, faithful to the Higher Cause,  
We keep our fealty to the laws  
Through patient pain.  
The levelled gun, the battle-brand,  
We may not take:  
But, calmly loyal, we can stand  
And suffer with our suffering land  
For conscience' sake.  
Why ask for ease where all is pain?  
Shall we alone  
Be left to add our gain to gain,  
When over Armageddon's plain  
The trump is blown?  
To suffer well is well to serve;  
Safe in our Lord  
The rigid lines of law shall curve  
To spare us; from our heads shall swerve  
Its smiting sword.  
And light is mingled with the gloom,  
And joy with grief;  
Divinest compensations come,  
Through thorns of judgment mercies bloom  
In sweet relief.  
Thanks for our privilege to bless,  
By word and deed,  
The widow in her keen distress,  
The childless and the fatherless,  
The hearts that bleed!  
For fields of duty, opening wide,

Where all our powers  
Are tasked the eager steps to guide  
Of millions on a path untried:  
The slave is ours!  
Ours by traditions dear and old,  
Which make the race  
Our wards to cherish and uphold,  
And cast their freedom in the mould  
Of Christian grace.  
And we may tread the sick-bed floors  
Where strong men pine,  
And, down the groaning corridors,  
Pour freely from our liberal stores  
The oil and wine.  
Who murmurs that in these dark days  
His lot is cast?  
God's hand within the shadow lays  
The stones whereon His gates of praise  
Shall rise at last.  
Turn and o'erturn, O outstretched Hand!  
Nor stint, nor stay;  
The years have never dropped their sand  
On mortal issue vast and grand  
As ours to-day.  
Already, on the sable ground  
Of man's despair  
Is Freedom's glorious picture found,  
With all its dusky hands unbound  
Upraised in prayer.  
Oh, small shall seem all sacrifice  
And pain and loss,  
When God shall wipe the weeping eyes,  
For suffering give the victor's prize,  
The crown for cross!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# April

'T is the noon of the spring-time, yet never a bird  
In the wind-shaken elm or the maple is heard;  
For green meadow-grasses wide levels of snow,  
And blowing of drifts where the crocus should blow;  
Where wind-flower and violet, amber and white,  
On south-sloping brooksides should smile in the light,  
O'er the cold winter-beds of their late-waking roots  
The frosty flake eddies, the ice-crystal shoots;  
And, longing for light, under wind-driven heaps,  
Round the boles of the pine-wood the ground-laurel creeps,  
Unkissed of the sunshine, unbaptized of showers,  
With buds scarcely swelled, which should burst into flowers  
We wait for thy coming, sweet wind of the south!  
For the touch of thy light wings, the kiss of thy mouth;  
For the yearly evangel thou bearest from God,  
Resurrection and life to the graves of the sod!  
Up our long river-valley, for days, have not ceased  
The wail and the shriek of the bitter northeast,  
Raw and chill, as if winnowed through ices and snow,  
All the way from the land of the wild Esquimau,  
Until all our dreams of the land of the blest,  
Like that red hunter's, turn to the sunny southwest.  
O soul of the spring-time, its light and its breath,  
Bring warmth to this coldness, bring life to this death;  
Renew the great miracle; let us behold  
The stone from the mouth of the sepulchre rolled,  
And Nature, like Lazarus, rise, as of old!  
Let our faith, which in darkness and coldness has lain,  
Revive with the warmth and the brightness again,  
And in blooming of flower and budding of tree  
The symbols and types of our destiny see;  
The life of the spring-time, the life of the whole,  
And, as sun to the sleeping earth, love to the soul!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Arisen At Last

I SAID I stood upon thy grave,  
My Mother State, when last the moon  
Of blossoms clomb the skies of June.  
And, scattering ashes on my head,  
I wore, undreaming of relief,  
The sackcloth of thy shame and grief.  
Again that moon of blossoms shines  
On leaf and flower and folded wing,  
And thou hast risen with the spring!  
Once more thy strong maternal arms  
Are round about thy children flung, —  
A lioness that guards her young!  
No threat is on thy closèd lips,  
But in thine eye a power to smite  
The mad wolf backward from its light.  
Southward the baffled robber's track  
Henceforth runs only; hereaway,  
The fell lycanthrope finds no prey.  
Henceforth, within thy sacred gates,  
His first low howl shall downward draw  
The thunder of thy righteous law.  
Not mindless of thy trade and gain,  
But, acting on the wiser plan,  
Thou 'rt grown conservative of man.  
So shalt thou clothe with life the hope,  
Dream-painted on the sightless eyes  
Of him who sang of Paradise, —  
The vision of a Christian man,  
In virtue, as in stature great  
Embodied in a Christian State.  
And thou, amidst thy sisterhood  
Forbearing long, yet standing fast,  
Shalt win their grateful thanks at last;  
When North and South shall strive no more,  
And all their feuds and fears be lost  
In Freedom's holy Pentecost.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Astraea

'Jove means to settle  
Astraea in her seat again,  
And let down his golden chain  
An age of better metal.'

Ben Johnson 1615

O POET rare and old!  
Thy words are prophecies;  
Forward the age of gold,  
The new Saturnian lies.

The universal prayer  
And hope are not in vain;  
Rise, brothers! and prepare  
The way for Saturn's reign.

Perish shall all which takes  
From labor's board and can;  
Perish shall all which makes  
A spaniel of the man!

Free from its bonds the mind,  
The body from the rod;  
Broken all chains that bind  
The image of our God.

Just men no longer pine  
Behind their prison-bars;  
Through the rent dungeon shine  
The free sun and the stars.

Earth own, at last, untrod  
By sect, or caste, or clan,  
The fatherhood of God,  
The brotherhood of man!

Fraud fail, craft perish, forth  
The money-changers driven,

And God's will done on earth,  
As now in heaven;

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Astræa At The Capitol

WHEN first I saw our banner wave  
Above the nation's council-hall,  
I heard beneath its marble wall  
The clanking fetters of the slave!

In the foul market-place I stood,  
And saw the Christian mother sold,  
And childhood with its locks of gold,  
Blue-eyed and fair with Saxon blood.

I shut my eyes, I held my breath,  
And, smothering down the wrath and shame  
That set my Northern blood aflame,  
Stood silent,--where to speak was death.

Beside me gloomed the prison-cell  
Where wasted one in slow decline  
For uttering simple words of mine,  
And loving freedom all too well.

The flag that floated from the dome  
Flapped menace in the morning air;  
I stood a perilled stranger where  
The human broker made his home.

For crime was virtue: Gown and Sword  
And Law their threefold sanction gave,  
And to the quarry of the slave  
Went hawking with our symbol-bird.

On the oppressor's side was power;  
And yet I knew that every wrong,  
However old, however strong,  
But waited God's avenging hour.

I knew that truth would crush the lie,  
Somehow, some time, the end would be;  
Yet scarcely dared I hope to see  
The triumph with my mortal eye.

But now I see it! In the sun  
A free flag floats from yonder dome,  
And at the nation's hearth and home  
The justice long delayed is done.

Not as we hoped, in calm of prayer,  
The message of deliverance comes,  
But heralded by roll of drums  
On waves of battle-troubled air!

Midst sounds that madden and appall,  
The song that Bethlehem's shepherds knew!  
The harp of David melting through  
The demon-agonies of Saul!

Not as we hoped; but what are we?  
Above our broken dreams and plans  
God lays, with wiser hand than man's,  
The corner-stones of liberty.

I cavil not with Him: the voice  
That freedom's blessed gospel tells  
Is sweet to me as silver bells,  
Rejoicing! yea, I will rejoice!

Dear friends still toiling in the sun;  
Ye dearer ones who, gone before,  
Are watching from the eternal shore  
The slow work by your hands begun,

Rejoice with me! The chastening rod  
Blossoms with love; the furnace heat  
Grows cool beneath His blessed feet  
Whose form is as the Son of God!

Rejoice! Our Marah's bitter springs  
Are sweetened; on our ground of grief  
Rise day by day in strong relief  
The prophecies of better things.

Rejoice in hope! The day and night

Are one with God, and one with them  
Who see by faith the cloudy hem  
Of Judgement fringed with Mercy's light

John Greenleaf Whittier

## At Eventide

Poor and inadequate the shadow-play  
Of gain and loss, of waking and of dream,  
Against life's solemn background needs must seem  
At this late hour. Yet, not unthankfully,  
I call to mind the fountains by the way,  
The breath of flowers, the bird-song on the spray,  
Dear friends, sweet human loves, the joy of giving  
And of receiving, the great boon of living  
In grand historic years when Liberty  
Had need of word and work, quick sympathies  
For all who fail and suffer, song's relief,  
Nature's uncloying loveliness; and chief,  
The kind restraining hand of Providence,  
The inward witness, the assuring sense  
Of an Eternal Good which overlies  
The sorrow of the world, Love which outlives  
All sin and wrong, Compassion which forgives  
To the uttermost, and Justice whose clear eyes  
Through lapse and failure look to the intent,  
And judge our frailty by the life we meant.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## At Last

When on my day of life the night is falling,  
And, in the winds from unsunned spaces blown,  
I hear far voices out of darkness calling  
My feet to paths unknown,

Thou who hast made my home of life so pleasant,  
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay;  
O Love Divine, O Helper ever present,  
Be Thou my strength and stay!

Be near me when all else is from me drifting  
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,  
And kindly faces to my own uplifting  
The love which answers mine.

I have but Thee, my Father! let Thy spirit  
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;  
No gate of pearl, no branch of palm I merit,  
Nor street of shining gold.

Suffice it if--my good and ill unreckoned,  
And both forgiven through Thy abounding grace--  
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned  
Unto my fitting place.

Some humble door among Thy many mansions,  
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,  
And flows forever through heaven's green expansions  
The river of Thy peace.

There, from the music round about me stealing,  
I fain would learn the new and holy song,  
And find at last, beneath Thy trees of healing,  
The life for which I long.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# At Port Royal

The tent-lights glimmer on the land,  
The ship-lights on the sea;  
The night-wind smooths with drifting sand  
Our track on lone Tybee.

At last our grating keels outslide,  
Our good boats forward swing;  
And while we ride the land-locked tide,  
Our negroes row and sing.

For dear the bondman holds his gifts  
Of music and of song:  
The gold that kindly Nature sifts  
Among his sands of wrong;

The power to make his toiling days  
And poor home-comforts please;  
The quaint relief of mirth that plays  
With sorrow's minor keys.

Another glow than sunset's fire  
Has filled the West with light,  
Where field and garner, barn and byre,  
Are blazing through the night.

The land is wild with fear and hate,  
The rout runs mad and fast;  
From hand to hand, from gate to gate,  
The flaming brand is passed.

The lurid glow falls strong across  
Dark faces broad with smiles;  
Not theirs the terror, hate, and loss  
That fire yon blazing piles.

With oar-strokes timing to their song,  
They weave in simple lays  
The pathos of remembered wrong,  
The hope of better days,—

The triumph-note that Miriam sung,  
The joy of uncaged birds:  
Softening with Afric's mellow tongue  
Their broken Saxon words.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# At School-Close

BOWDOIN STREET, BOSTON, 1877.

The end has come, as come it must  
To all things; in these sweet June days  
The teacher and the scholar trust  
Their parting feet to separate ways.

They part: but in the years to be  
Shall pleasant memories cling to each,  
As shells bear inland from the sea  
The murmur of the rhythmic beach.

One knew the joy the sculptor knows  
When, plastic to his lightest touch,  
His clay-wrought model slowly grows  
To that fine grace desired so much.

So daily grew before her eyes  
The living shapes whereon she wrought,  
Strong, tender, innocently wise,  
The child's heart with the woman's thought.

And one shall never quite forget  
The voice that called from dream and play,  
The firm but kindly hand that set  
Her feet in learning's pleasant way,--

The joy of Undine soul-possessed,  
The wakening sense, the strange delight  
That swelled the fabled statue's breast  
And filled its clouded eyes with sight.

O Youth and Beauty, loved of all!  
Ye pass from girlhood's gate of dreams;  
In broader ways your footsteps fall,  
Ye test the truth of all that seams.

Her little realm the teacher leaves,  
She breaks her wand of power apart,

While, for your love and trust, she gives  
The warm thanks of a grateful heart.

Hers is the sober summer noon  
Contrasted with your morn of spring,  
The waning with the waxing moon,  
The folded with the outspread wing.

Across the distance of the years  
She sends her God-speed back to you;  
She has no thought of doubts or fears  
Be but yourselves, be pure, be true,

And prompt in duty; heed the deep,  
Low voice of conscience; through the ill  
And discord round about you, keep  
Your faith in human nature still.

Be gentle: unto griefs and needs,  
Be pitiful as woman should,  
And, spite of all the lies of creeds,  
Hold fast the truth that God is good.

Give and receive; go forth and bless  
The world that needs the hand and heart  
Of Martha's helpful carefulness  
No less than Mary's better part.

So shall the stream of time flow by  
And leave each year a richer good,  
And matron loveliness outvie  
The nameless charm of maidenhood.

And, when the world shall link your names  
With gracious lives and manners fine,  
The teacher shall assert her claims,  
And proudly whisper, 'These were mine!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# At Washington

WITH a cold and wintry noon-light.  
On its roofs and steeples shed,  
Shadows weaving with the sunlight  
From the gray sky overhead,  
Broadly, vaguely, all around me, lies the half-built town outspread.  
Through this broad street, restless ever,  
Ebbs and flows a human tide,  
Wave on wave a living river;  
Wealth and fashion side by side;  
Toiler, idler, slave and master, in the same quick current glide.  
Underneath yon dome, whose coping  
Springs above them, vast and tall,  
Grave men in the dust are groping.  
For the largess, base and small,  
Which the hand of Power is scattering, crumbs which from its table fall.  
Base of heart! They vilely barter  
Honor's wealth for party's place;  
Step by step on Freedom's charter  
Leaving footprints of disgrace;  
For to-day's poor pittance turning from the great hope of their race.  
Yet, where festal lamps are throwing  
Glory round the dancer's hair,  
Gold-tressed, like an angel's, flowing  
Backward on the sunset air;  
And the low quick pulse of music beats its measure sweet and rare:  
There to-night shall woman's glances,  
Star-like, welcome give to them;  
Fawning fools with shy advances  
Seek to touch their garments' hem,  
With the tongue of flattery glozing deeds which God and Truth condemn.  
From this glittering lie my vision  
Takes a broader, sadder range,  
Full before me have arisen  
Other pictures dark and strange;  
From the parlor to the prison must the scene and witness change.  
Hark! the heavy gate is swinging  
On its hinges, harsh and slow;  
One pale prison lamp is flinging  
On a fearful group below

Such a light as leaves to terror whatsoever it does not show.  
Pitying God! Is that a woman  
On whose wrist the shackles clash?  
Is that shriek she utters human,  
Underneath the stinging lash?  
Are they men whose eyes of madness from that sad procession flash?  
Still the dance goes gayly onward!  
What is it to Wealth and Pride  
That without the stars are looking  
On a scene which earth should hide?  
That the slave-ship lies in waiting, rocking on Potomac's tide!  
Vainly to that mean Ambition  
Which, upon a rival's fall,  
Winds above its old condition,  
With a reptile's slimy crawl,  
Shall the pleading voice of sorrow, shall the slave in anguish call.  
Vainly to the child of Fashion,  
Giving to ideal woe  
Graceful luxury of compassion,  
Shall the stricken mourner go;  
Hateful seems the earnest sorrow, beautiful the hollow show!  
Nay, my words are all too sweeping:  
In this crowded human mart,  
Feeling is not dead, but sleeping;  
Man's strong will and woman's heart,  
In the coming strife for Freedom, yet shall bear their generous part.  
And from yonder sunny valleys,  
Southward in the distance lost,  
Freedom yet shall summon allies  
Worthier than the North can boast,  
With the Evil by their hearth-stones grappling at severer cost.  
Now, the soul alone is willing.  
Faint the heart and weak the knee;  
And as yet no lip is thrilling  
With the mighty words, 'Be Free!'  
Tarry long the land's Good Angel, but his advent is to be!  
Meanwhile, turning from the revel  
To the prison-cell my sight,  
For intenser hate of evil,  
For a keener sense of right,  
Shaking off thy dust, I thank thee, City of the Slaves, to-night!  
'To thy duty now and ever!

Dream no more of rest or stay:  
Give to Freedom's great endeavor  
All thou art and hast to-day:'  
Thus, above the city's murmur, saith a Voice, or seems to say.  
Ye with heart and vision gifted  
To discern and love the right,  
Whose worn faces have been lifted  
To the slowly-growing light,  
Where from Freedom's sunrise drifted slowly back the murk of night!  
Ye who through long years of trial  
Still have held your purpose fast,  
While a lengthening shade the dial  
From the westering sunshine cast,  
And of hope each hour's denial seemed an echo of the last!  
O my brothers! O my sisters!  
Would to God that ye were near,  
Gazing with me down the vistas  
Of a sorrow strange and drear;  
Would to God that ye were listeners to the Voice I seem to hear!  
With the storm above us driving,  
With the false earth mined below,  
Who shall marvel if thus striving  
We have counted friend as foe;  
Unto one another giving in the darkness blow for blow.  
Well it may be that our natures  
Have grown sterner and more hard,  
And the freshness of their features  
Somewhat harsh and battle-scarred,  
And their harmonies of feeling overtaken and rudely jarred.  
Be it so. It should not swerve us  
From a purpose true and brave;  
Dearer Freedom's rugged service  
Than the pastime of the slave;  
Better is the storm above it than the quiet of the grave.  
Let us then, uniting, bury  
All our idle feuds in dust,  
And to future conflicts carry  
Mutual faith and common trust;  
Always he who most forgiveth in his brother is most just.  
From the eternal shadow rounding  
All our sun and starlight here,  
Voices of our lost ones sounding

Bid us be of heart and cheer,  
Through the silence, down the spaces, falling on the inward ear.  
Know we not our dead are looking  
Downward with a sad surprise,  
All our strife of words rebuking  
With their mild and loving eyes?  
Shall we grieve the holy angels? Shall we cloud their blessed skies?  
Let us draw their mantles o'er us,  
Which have fallen in our way;  
Let us do the work before us,  
Cheerly, bravely, while we may,  
Ere the long night-silence cometh, and with us it is not day!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Autumn Thoughts

Gone hath the Spring, with all its flowers,  
And gone the Summer's pomp and show,  
And Autumn, in his leafless bowers,  
Is waiting for the Winter's snow.

I said to Earth, so cold and gray,  
'An emblem of myself thou art.'  
'Not so,' the Earth did seem to say,  
'For Spring shall warm my frozen heart.'  
I soothe my wintry sleep with dreams  
Of warmer sun and softer rain,  
And wait to hear the sound of streams  
And songs of merry birds again.

But thou, from whom the Spring hath gone,  
For whom the flowers no longer blow,  
Who standest blighted and forlorn,  
Like Autumn waiting for the snow;

No hope is thine of sunnier hours,  
Thy Winter shall no more depart;  
No Spring revive thy wasted flowers,  
Nor Summer warm thy frozen heart.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Banished From Massachusetts

Over the threshold of his pleasant home  
Set in green clearings passed the exiled Friend,  
In simple trust, misdoubting not the end.  
'Dear heart of mine!' he said, 'the time has come  
To trust the Lord for shelter.' One long gaze  
The goodwife turned on each familiar thing,-  
The lowing kine, the orchard blossoming,  
The open door that showed the hearth-fire's blaze,-  
And calmly answered, 'Yes, He will provide.'  
Silent and slow they crossed the homestead's bound,  
Lingering the longest by their child's grave-mound.  
'Move on, or stay and hang!' the sheriff cried.  
They left behind them more than home or land,  
And set sad faces to an alien strand.

Safer with winds and waves than human wrath,  
With ravening wolves than those whose zeal for God  
Was cruelty to man, the exiles trod  
Drear leagues of forest without guide or path,  
Or launching frail boats on the uncharted sea,  
Round storm-vexed capes, whose teeth of granite ground  
The waves to foam, their perilous way they wound,  
Enduring all things so their souls were free.  
Oh, true confessors, shaming them who did  
Anew the wrong their Pilgrim Fathers bore  
For you the Mayflower spread her sail once more,  
Freighted with souls, to all that duty bid  
Faithful as they who sought an unknown land,  
O'er wintry seas, from Holland's Hook of Sand!

So from his lost home to the darkening main,  
Bodeful of storm, stout Macy held his way,  
And, when the green shore blended with the gray,  
His poor wife moaned: 'Let us turn back again.'  
'Nay, woman, weak of faith, kneel down,' said he,  
And say thy prayers: the Lord himself will steer;  
And led by Him, nor man nor devils I fear!  
So the gray Southwicks, from a rainy sea,  
Saw, far and faint, the loom of land, and gave

With feeble voices thanks for friendly ground  
Whereon to rest their weary feet, and found  
A peaceful death-bed and a quiet grave  
Where, ocean-walled, and wiser than his age,  
The lord of Shelter scorned the bigot's rage.  
Aquidneck's isle, Nantucket's lonely shores,  
And Indian-haunted Narragansett saw  
The way-worn travellers round their camp-fire draw,  
Or heard the plashing of their weary oars.  
And every place whereon they rested grew  
Happier for pure and gracious womanhood,  
And men whose names for stainless honor stood,  
Founders of States and rulers wise and true.  
The Muse of history yet shall make amends  
To those who freedom, peace, and justice taught,  
Beyond their dark age led the van of thought,  
And left unforfeited the name of Friends.  
O mother State, how foiled was thy design  
The gain was theirs, the loss alone was thine.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Barbara Frietchie

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

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

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

Fair as the garden of the Lord  
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall  
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It shivered the window, pane and sash;  
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff  
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,  
And the Rebel rides on his raids nor more.

Honor to her! and let a tear  
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewalls' bier.

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

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

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

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Barclay Of Ury

Up the streets of Aberdeen,  
By the kirk and college green,  
Rode the Laird of Ury;  
Close behind him, close beside,  
Foul of mouth and evil-eyed,  
Pressed the mob in fury.

Flouted him the drunken churl,  
Jeered at him the serving-girl,  
Prompt to please her master;  
And the begging carlin, late  
Fed and clothed at Ury's gate,  
Cursed him as he passed her.

Yet, with calm and stately mien,  
Up the streets of Aberdeen  
Came he slowly riding;  
And, to all he saw and heard,  
Answering not with bitter word,  
Turning not for chiding.

Came a troop with broad swords swinging,  
Bits and bridles sharply ringing,  
Loose and free and forward;  
Quoth the foremost, 'Ride him down!  
Push him! prick him! through the town  
Drive the Quaker coward!'

But from out the thickening crowd  
Cried a sudden voice and loud:  
'Barclay! Ho! a Barclay!  
And the old man at his side  
Saw a comrade, battle tried,  
Scarred and sunburned darkly,

Who with ready weapon bare,  
Fronting to the troopers there,  
Cried aloud: 'God save us,  
Call ye coward him who stood

Ankle deep in Lutzen's blood,  
With the brave Gustavus?'

'Nay, I do not need thy sword,  
Comrade mine,' said Ury's lord.  
'Put it up, I pray thee:  
Passive to His holy will,  
Trust I in my Master still,  
Even though He slay me.

'Pledges of thy love and faith,  
Proved on many a field of death,  
Not by me are needed.'  
Marvelled much that henchman bold,  
That his laird, so stout of old,  
Now so meekly pleaded.

'Woe's the day!' he sadly said,  
With a slowly shaking head,  
And a look of pity;  
'Ury's honest lord reviled,  
Mock of knave and sport of child,  
In his own good city!

'Speak the word, and, master mine,  
As we charged on Tilly's line,  
And his Walloon lancers,  
Smiting through their midst we'll teach  
Civil look and decent speech  
To these boyish prancers!'

'Marvel not, mine ancient friend,  
Like beginning, like the end,'  
Quoth the Laird of Ury;  
'Is the sinful servant more  
Than his gracious Lord who bore  
Bonds and stripes in Jewry?

'Give me joy that in his name  
I can bear, with patient frame,  
All these vain ones offer;  
While for them He suffereth long,

Shall I answer wrong with wrong,  
Scoffing with the scoffer?

'Happier I, with loss of all,  
Hunted, outlawed, held in thrall,  
With few friends to greet me,  
Than when reeve and squire were seen,  
Riding our from Aberdeen,  
With bared heads to meet me.

'When each goodwife, o'er and o'er,  
Blessed me as I passed her door;  
And the snooded daughter,  
Through her casement glancing down,  
Smiled on him who bore renown  
From red fields of slaughter.

'Hard to feel the stranger's scoff,  
Hard the old friend's falling off,  
Hard to learn forgiving;  
But the Lord His own rewards,  
And His love with theirs accords,  
Warm and fresh and living.

'Through this dark and stormy night  
Faith beholds a feeble light  
Up the blackness streaking;  
Knowing God's own time is best,  
In a patient hope I rest  
For the full day-breaking!'

So the Laird of Ury said,  
Turning slow his horse's head  
Towards the Tolbooth prison,  
Where, through iron gates, he heard  
Poor disciples of thee Word  
Preach of Christ arisen!

Not in vain, Confessor old,  
Unto us the tale is told  
Of thy day of trial;  
Every age on him who strays

From its broad and beaten ways  
Pours its seven-fold vial.

Happy he whose inward ear  
Angel comfortings can hear,  
O'er the rabble's laughter;  
And while Hatred's fagots burn,  
Glimpses through the smoke discern  
Of the good hereafter.

Knowing this, that never yet  
Share of Truth was vainly set  
In the world's wide fallow;  
After hands shall sow the seed,  
After hands from hill and mead  
Reap the harvests yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the Seer,  
Must the moral pioneer  
From the Future borrow;  
Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,  
And, on midnight's sky of rain,  
Paint the golden morrow!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Bayard Taylor

## I.

'And where now, Bayard, will thy footsteps tend?'  
My sister asked our guest one winter's day.  
Smiling he answered in the Friends' sweet way  
Common to both: 'Wherever thou shall send!  
What wouldst thou have me see for thee?' She laughed,  
Her dark eyes dancing in the wood-fire's glow  
'Loffoden isles, the Kilpis, and the low,  
Unsetting sun on Finmark's fishing-craft.'  
'All these and more I soon shall see for thee!'  
He answered cheerily: and he kept his pledge  
On Lapland snows, the North Cape's windy wedge,  
And Tromso freezing in its winter sea.  
He went and came. But no man knows the track  
Of his last journey, and he comes not back!

## II.

He brought us wonders of the new and old;  
We shared all climes with him. The Arab's tent  
To him its story-telling secret lent.  
And, pleased, we listened to the tales he told.  
His task, beguiled with songs that shall endure,  
In manly, honest thoroughness he wrought;  
From humble home-lays to the heights of thought  
Slowly he climbed, but every step was sure.  
How, with the generous pride that friendship hath,  
We, who so loved him, saw at last the crown  
Of civic honor on his brows pressed down,  
Rejoiced, and knew not that the gift was death.  
And now for him, whose praise in deafened ears  
Two nations speak, we answer but with tears!

## III.

O Vale of Chester! trod by him so oft,  
Green as thy June turf keep his memory. Let  
Nor wood, nor dell, nor storied stream forget,  
Nor winds that blow round lonely Cedarcroft;  
Let the home voices greet him in the far,  
Strange land that holds him; let the messages

Of love pursue him o'er the chartless seas  
And unmapped vastness of his unknown star  
Love's language, heard beyond the loud discourse  
Of perishable fame, in every sphere  
Itself interprets; and its utterance here  
Somewhere in God's unfolding universe  
Shall reach our traveller, softening the surprise  
Of his rapt gaze on unfamiliar skies!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Benedicite

God's love and peace be with thee, where  
Soe'er this soft autumnal air  
Lifts the dark tresses of thy hair.

Whether through city casements comes  
Its kiss to thee, in crowded rooms,  
Or, out among the woodland blooms,

It freshens o'er thy thoughtful face,  
Imparting, in its glad embrace,  
Beauty to beauty, grace to grace!

Fair Nature's book together read,  
The old wood-paths that knew our tread,  
The maple shadows overhead,--

The hills we climbed, the river seen  
By gleams along its deep ravine,--  
All keep thy memory fresh and green.

Where'er I look, where'er I stray,  
Thy thought goes with me on my way,  
And hence the prayer I breathe to-day;

O'er lapse of time and change of scene,  
The weary waste which lies between  
Thyself and me, my heart I lean.

Thou lack'st not Friendship's spell-word, nor  
The half-unconscious power to draw  
All hearts to thine by Love's sweet law.

With these good gifts of God is cast  
Thy lot, and many a charm thou hast  
To hold the blessed angels fast.

If, then, a fervent wish for thee  
The gracious heavens will heed from me,  
What should, dear heart, its burden be?

The sighing of a shaken reed,--  
What can I more than meekly plead  
The greatness of our common need?

God's love,--unchanging, pure, and true,--  
The Paraclete white-shining through  
His peace,--the fall of Hermon's dew!

With such a prayer, on this sweet day,  
As thou mayst hear and I may say,  
I greet thee, dearest, far away!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Between The Gates

Between the gates of birth and death  
An old and saintly pilgrim passed,  
With look of one who witnesseth  
The long-sought goal at last.

O thou whose reverent feet have found  
The Master's footprints in thy way,  
And walked thereon as holy ground,  
A boon of thee I pray.

'My lack would borrow thy excess,  
My feeble faith the strength of thine;  
I need thy soul's white saintliness  
To hide the stains of mine.

'The grace and favor else denied  
May well be granted for thy sake.'  
So, tempted, doubting, sorely tried,  
A younger pilgrim spake.

'Thy prayer, my son, transcends my gift;  
No power is mine,' the sage replied,  
'The burden of a soul to lift  
Or stain of sin to hide.

'Howe'er the outward life may seem,  
For pardoning grace we all must pray;  
No man his brother can redeem  
Or a soul's ransom pay.

'Not always age is growth of good;  
Its years have losses with their gain;  
Against some evil youth withstood  
Weak hands may strive in vain.

'With deeper voice than any speech  
Of mortal lips from man to man,  
What earth's unwisdom may not teach  
The Spirit only can.

'Make thou that holy guide thine own,  
And following where it leads the way,  
The known shall lapse in the unknown  
As twilight into day.

'The best of earth shall still remain,  
And heaven's eternal years shall prove  
That life and death, and joy and pain,  
Are ministers of Love.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Birchbrook Mill

A NOTELESS stream, the Birchbrook runs  
Beneath its leaning trees;  
That low, soft ripple is its own,  
That dull roar is the sea's.

Of human signs it sees alone  
The distant church spire's tip,  
And, ghost-like, on a blank of gray,  
The white sail of a ship.

No more a toiler at the wheel,  
It wanders at its will;  
Nor dam nor pond is left to tell  
Where once was Birchbrook mill.

The timbers of that mill have fed  
Long since a farmer's fires;  
His doorsteps are the stones that ground  
The harvest of his sires.

Man trespassed here; but Nature lost  
No right of her domain;  
She waited, and she brought the old  
Wild beauty back again.

By day the sunlight through the leaves  
Falls on its moist, green sod,  
And wakes the violet bloom of spring  
And autumn's golden-rod.

Its birches whisper to the wind,  
The swallow dips her wings  
In the cool spray, and on its banks  
The gray song-sparrow sings.

But from it, when the dark night falls,  
The school-girl shrinks with dread;  
The farmer, home-bound from his fields,  
Goes by with quickened tread.

They dare not pause to hear the grind  
Of shadowy stone on stone;  
The plashing of a water-wheel  
Where wheel there now is none.

Has not a cry of pain been heard  
Above the clattering mill?  
The pawing of an unseen horse,  
Who waits his mistress still?

Yet never to the listener's eye  
Has sight confirmed the sound;  
A wavering birch line marks alone  
The vacant pasture ground.

No ghostly arms fling up to heaven  
The agony of prayer;  
No spectral steed impatient shakes  
His white mane on the air.

The meaning of that common dread  
No tongue has fitly told;  
The secret of the dark surmise  
The brook and birches hold.

What nameless horror of the past  
Broods here forevermore?  
What ghost his unforgiven sin  
Is grinding o'er and o'er?

Does, then, immortal memory play  
The actor's tragic part,  
Rehearsals of a mortal life  
And unveiled human heart?

God's pity spare a guilty soul  
That drama of its ill,  
And let the scenic curtain fall  
On Birchbrook's haunted mill



# Brown Of Ossawatomie

John Brown of Ossawatomie spake on his dying day:  
'I will not have to shrive my soul a priest in Slavery's pay.  
But let some poor slave-mother whom I have striven to free,  
With her children, from the gallows-stair put up a prayer for me!'

John Brown of Ossawatomie, they led him out to die;  
And lo! a poor slave-mother with her little child pressed nigh.  
Then the bold, blue eye grew tender, and the old harsh face grew mild,  
As he stooped between the jeering ranks and kissed the negro's child.

The shadows of his stormy life that moment fell apart;  
And they who blamed the bloody hand forgave the loving heart.  
That kiss from all its guilty means redeemed the good intent,  
And round the grisly fighter's hair the martyr's aureole bent!

Perish with him the folly that seeks through evil good  
Long live the generous purpose unstained with human blood!  
Not the raid of midnight terror, but the thought which underlies;  
Not the borderer's pride of daring, but the Christian's sacrifice.

Nevermore may yon Blue Ridges the Northern rifle hear,  
Nor see the light of blazing homes flash on the negro's spear.  
But let the free-winged angel Truth their guarded passes scale,  
To teach that right is more than might, and justice more than mail!

So vainly shall Virginia set her battle in array;  
In vain her trampling squadrons knead the winter snow with clay.  
She may strike the pouncing eagle, but she dares not harm the dove;  
And every gate she bars to Hate shall open wide to Love!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Bryant On His Birthday

We praise not now the poet's art,  
The rounded beauty of his song;  
Who weighs him from his life apart  
Must do his nobler nature wrong.

Not for the eye, familiar grown  
With charms to common sight denied,  
The marvellous gift he shares alone  
With him who walked on Rydal-side;

Not for rapt hymn nor woodland lay,  
Too grave for smiles, too sweet for tears;  
We speak his praise who wears to-day  
The glory of his seventy years.

When Peace brings Freedom in her train,  
Let happy lips his songs rehearse;  
His life is now his noblest strain,  
His manhood better than his verse!

Thank God! his hand on Nature's keys  
Its cunning keeps at life's full span;  
But, dimmed and dwarfed, in times like these,  
The poet seems beside the man!

So be it! let the garlands die,  
The singer's wreath, the painter's meed,  
Let our names perish, if thereby  
Our country may be saved and freed!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Burial Of Barber

BEAR him, comrades, to his grave;  
Never over one more brave  
Shall the prairie grasses weep,  
In the ages yet to come,  
When the millions in our room,  
What we sow in tears, shall reap.  
Bear him up the icy hill,  
With the Kansas, frozen still  
As his noble heart, below,  
And the land he came to till  
With a freeman's thews and will,  
And his poor hut roofed with snow!

One more look of that dead face,  
Of his murder's ghastly trace!  
One more kiss, O widowed one!  
Lay your left hands on his brow,  
Lift you right hands up and vow  
That his work shall yet be done.

Patience, friends! The eye of God  
Every path by Murder trod  
Watches, lidless, day and night;  
And the dead man in his shroud,  
And his widow weeping loud,  
And our hearts, are in his sight.

Every deadly threat that swells  
With the roar of gambling hells,  
Every brutal jest and jeer,  
Every wicked thought and plan  
Of the cruel heart of man,  
Though but whispered, He can hear!

We in suffering, they in crime,  
Wait the just award of time,  
Wait the vengeance that is due;  
Not in vain a heart shall break,  
Not a tear for Freedom's sake

Fall unheeded: God is true.

While the flag with stars bedecked  
Threatens where it should protect,  
And the Law shakes hands with Crime,  
What is left us but to wait,  
Match our patience to our fate,  
And abide the better time?

Patience, friends! The human heart  
Everywhere shall take our part,  
Everywhere for us shall pray;  
On our side are nature's laws,  
And God's life is in the cause  
That we suffer for to-day.

Well to suffer is divine;  
Pass the watchword down the line,  
Pass the countersign: 'Endure.'  
Not to him who rashly dares,  
But to him who nobly bears,  
Is the victor's garland sure.

Frozen earth to frozen breast,  
Lay our slain one down to rest;  
Lay him down in hope and faith,  
And above the broken sod,  
Once again, to Freedom's God,  
Pledge ourselves for life or death,

That the State whose walls we lay,  
In our blood and tears, to-day,  
Shall be free from bonds of shame,  
And our goodly land untrod  
By the feet of Slavery, shod  
With cursing as with flame!

Plant the Buckeye on his grave,  
For the hunter of the slave  
In its shadow cannot rest;  
And let martyr mound and tree  
Be our pledge and guaranty

Of the freedom of the West!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Burning Drift-Wood

Before my drift-wood fire I sit,  
And see, with every waif I burn,  
Old dreams and fancies coloring it,  
And folly's unlaid ghosts return.

O ships of mine, whose swift keels cleft  
The enchanted sea on which they sailed,  
Are these poor fragments only left  
Of vain desires and hopes that failed?

Did I not watch from them the light  
Of sunset on my towers in Spain,  
And see, far off, uploom in sight  
The Fortunate Isles I might not gain?

Did sudden lift of fog reveal  
Arcadia's vales of song and spring,  
And did I pass, with grazing keel,  
The rocks whereon the sirens sing?

Have I not drifted hard upon  
The unmapped regions lost to man,  
The cloud-pitched tents of Prester John,  
The palace domes of Kubla Khan?

Did land winds blow from jasmine flowers,  
Where Youth the ageless Fountain fills?  
Did Love make sign from rose blown bowers,  
And gold from Eldorado's hills?

Alas! the gallant ships, that sailed  
On blind Adventure's errand sent,  
Howe'er they laid their courses, failed  
To reach the haven of Content.

And of my ventures, those alone  
Which Love had freighted, safely sped,  
Seeking a good beyond my own,  
By clear-eyed Duty piloted.

O mariners, hoping still to meet  
The luck Arabian voyagers met,  
And find in Bagdad's moonlit street,  
Haroun al Raschid walking yet,

Take with you, on your Sea of Dreams,  
The fair, fond fancies dear to youth.  
I turn from all that only seems,  
And seek the sober grounds of truth.

What matter that it is not May,  
That birds have flown, and trees are bare,  
That darker grows the shortening day,  
And colder blows the wintry air!

The wrecks of passion and desire,  
The castles I no more rebuild,  
May fitly feed my drift-wood fire,  
And warm the hands that age has chilled.

Whatever perished with my ships,  
I only know the best remains;  
A song of praise is on my lips  
For losses which are now my gains.

Heap high my hearth! No worth is lost;  
No wisdom with the folly dies.  
Burn on, poor shreds, your holocaust  
Shall be my evening sacrifice!

Far more than all I dared to dream,  
Unsought before my door I see;  
On wings of fire and steeds of steam  
The world's great wonders come to me,

And holier signs, unmarked before,  
Of Love to seek and Power to save, --  
The righting of the wronged and poor,  
The man evolving from the slave;

And life, no longer chance or fate,

Safe in the gracious Fatherhood.  
I fold o'er-wearied hands and wait,  
In full assurance of the good.

And well the waiting time must be,  
Though brief or long its granted days,  
If Faith and Hope and Charity  
Sit by my evening hearth-fire's blaze.

And with them, friends whom Heaven has spared,  
Whose love my heart has comforted,  
And, sharing all my joys, has shared  
My tender memories of the dead, --

Dear souls who left us lonely here,  
Bound on their last, long voyage, to whom  
We, day by day, are drawing near,  
Where every bark has sailing room.

I know the solemn monotone  
Of waters calling unto me;  
I know from whence the airs have blown  
That whisper of the Eternal Sea.

As low my fires of drift-wood burn,  
I hear that sea's deep sounds increase,  
And, fair in sunset light, discern  
Its mirage-lifted Isles of Peace.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Burns

## ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER IN BLOSSOM.

No more these simple flowers belong  
To Scottish maid and lover;  
Sown in the common soil of song,  
They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,  
The minstrel and the heather,  
The deathless singer and the flowers  
He sang of live together.

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns  
The moorland flower and peasant!  
How, at their mention, memory turns  
Her pages old and pleasant!

The gray sky wears again its gold  
And purple of adorning,  
And manhood's noonday shadows hold  
The dews of boyhood's morning.

The dews that washed the dust and soil  
From off the wings of pleasure,  
The sky, that flecked the, ground of toil  
With golden threads of leisure.

I call to mind the summer day,  
The early harvest mowing,  
The sky with sun and clouds at play,  
And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn,  
The locust in the haying;  
And, like the fabled hunter's horn,  
Old tunes my heart is playing.

How oft that day, with fond delay,  
I sought the maple's shadow,

And sang with Burns the hours away,  
Forgetful of the meadow.

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead  
I heard the squirrels leaping,  
The good dog listened while I read,  
And wagged his tail in keeping.

I watched him while in sportive mood  
I read 'The Twa Dogs' story,  
And half believed he understood  
The poet's allegory.

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours  
Grew brighter for that singing,  
From brook and bird and meadow flowers  
A dearer welcome bringing.

New light on home-seen Nature beamed,  
New glory over Woman;  
And daily life and duty seemed  
No longer poor and common.

I woke to find the simple truth  
Of fact and feeling better  
Than all the dreams that held my youth  
A still repining debtor,

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,  
The themes of sweet discoursing;  
The tender idyls of the heart  
In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,  
Of loving knight and lady,  
When farmer boy and barefoot girl  
Were wandering there already?

I saw through all familiar things  
The romance underlying;  
The joys and griefs that plume the wings  
Of Fancy skyward flying.

I saw the same blithe day return,  
The same sweet fall of even,  
That rose on wooded Craigie-burn,  
And sank on crystal Devon.

I matched with Scotland's heathery hills  
The sweetbrier and the clover;  
With Ayr and Doon, my native rills,  
Their wood-hymns chanting over.

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,  
I saw the Man uprising;  
No longer common or unclean,  
The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth  
Of life among the lowly;  
The Bible at his Cotter's hearth  
Had made my own more holy.

And if at times an evil strain,  
To lawless love appealing,  
Broke in upon the sweet refrain  
Of pure and healthful feeling,

It died upon the eye and ear,  
No inward answer gaining;  
No heart had I to see or hear  
The discord and the staining.

Let those who never erred forget  
His worth, in vain bewailings;  
Sweet Soul of Song! I own my debt  
Uncancelled by his failings!

Lament who will the ribald line  
Which tells his lapse from duty,  
How kissed the maddening lips of wine  
Or wanton ones of beauty;

But think, while falls that shade between

The erring one and Heaven,  
That he who loved like Magdalen,  
Like her may be forgiven.

Not his the song whose thunderous chime  
Eternal echoes render;  
The mournful Tuscan's haunted rhyme,  
And Milton's starry splendor!

But who his human heart has laid  
To Nature's bosom nearer?  
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid  
To love a tribute dearer?

Through all his tuneful art, how strong  
The human feeling gushes  
The very moonlight of his song  
Is warm with smiles and blushes!

Give lettered pomp to teeth of Time,  
So 'Bonnie Doon' but tarry;  
Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,  
But spare his Highland Mary!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## By Their Works

Call him not heretic whose works attest  
His faith in goodness by no creed confessed.  
Whatever in love's name is truly done  
To free the bound and lift the fallen one  
Is done to Christ. Whoso in deed and word  
Is not against Him labours for our Lord.  
When he, who, sad and weary, longing sore  
For love's sweet service sought the sisters' door  
One saw the heavenly, one the human guest  
But who shall say which loved the master best?

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Calef In Boston, 1692

IN the solemn days of old,  
Two men met in Boston town,  
One a tradesman frank and bold,  
One a preacher of renown.  
Cried the last, in bitter tone:  
'Poisoner of the wells of truth!  
Satan's hireling, thou hast sown  
With his tares the heart of youth!'  
Spake the simple tradesman then,  
'God be judge 'twixt thee and me;  
All thou knowed of truth hath been  
Once a lie to men like thee.  
'Falsehoods which we spurn to-day  
Were the truths of long ago;  
Let the dead boughs fall away,  
Fresher shall the living grow.  
'God is good and God is light,  
In this faith I rest secure;  
Evil can but serve the right,  
Over all shall love endure.  
'Of your spectral puppet play  
I have traced the cunning wires;  
Come what will, I needs must say,  
God is true, and ye are liars.'  
When the thought of man is free,  
Error fears its lightest tones;  
So the priest cried, 'Sadducee!'  
And the people took up stones.  
In the ancient burying-ground,  
Side by side the twain now lie;  
One with humble grassy mound,  
One with marbles pale and high,  
But the Lord hath blest the seed  
Which that tradesman scattered then,  
And the preacher's spectral creed  
Chills no more the blood of men.  
Let us trust, to one is known  
Perfect love which casts out fear,  
While the other's joys atone

For the wrong he suffered here.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Cassandra Southwick

To the God of all sure mercies let my blessing rise today,  
From the scoffer and the cruel He hath plucked the spoil away;  
Yes, he who cooled the furnace around the faithful three,  
And tamed the Chaldean lions, hath set His handmaid free!

Last night I saw the sunset melt though my prison bars,  
Last night across my damp earth-floor fell the pale gleam of stars;  
In the coldness and the darkness all through the long night-time,  
My grated casement whitened with autumn's early rime.

Alone, in that dark sorrow, hour after hour crept by;  
Star after star looked palely in and sank adown the sky;  
No sound amid night's stillness, save that which seemed to be  
The dull and heavy beating of the pulses of the sea;

All night I sat unsleeping, for I knew that on the morrow  
The ruler said the cruel priest would mock me in my sorrow,  
Dragged to their place of market, and bargained for and sold,  
Like a lamb before the shambles, like a heifer from the fold!

Oh, the weakness of the flesh was there—the shrinking and the shame;  
And the low voice of the Tempter like whispers to me came,  
'Why sit'st thou thus forlornly,' the wicked murmur said,  
'Damp walls thy bower beauty, cold earth thy maiden bed?

'Where be the smiling faces, and voices soft and sweet,  
Seen in thy father's dwelling, hoard in the pleasant street?  
Where be the youths whose glances, the summer Sabbath through,  
Turned tenderly and timidly unto thy father's pew?

'Why sit'st thou here, Cassandra? Bethink thee with what mirth  
Thy happy schoolmates gather around the warm, dark hearth;  
How the crimson shadows tremble on foreheads white and fair,  
On eyes of merry girlhood, half hid in golden hair.

'Not for thee the hearth-fire brightens, not for thee kind words are spoken,  
Not for thee the nuts of Wenham woods by laughing boys are broken;  
No first-fruits of the orchard within thy lap are laid,  
For thee no flowers of autumn the youthful hunters braid.

'O weak, deluded maiden!—by crazy fancies led,  
With wild and raving railers an evil path to tread;  
To leave a wholesome worship, and teaching pure and sound,  
And mate with maniac women, loose-haired and sackcloth-bound,

'And scoffers of the priesthood, who mock at things divine,  
Who rail against thy pulpit, and holy bread and wine;  
Bore from their cart-tail scourgings, and from the pillory lame,  
Rejoicing in their wretchedness, and glorying in their shame.

'And what a fate awaits thee!—a sadly toiling slave,  
Dragging the slowly lengthening chain of bondage to the grave!  
Think of thy woman's nature, subdued in hopeless thrall,  
The easy prey of any, the scoff and scorn of all!'

Oh, ever as the Tempter spoke, and feeble Nature's fears  
Wrung drop by drop the scalding flow of unavailing tears,  
I wrestled down the evil thoughts, and strove in silent prayer  
To feel, O Helper of the weak! that Thou indeed wert there!

I thought of Paul and Silas, within Philippi's call,  
And how from Peter's sleeping limbs the prison shackles fell,  
Till I seemed to hear the trailing of an Angel's robe of white,  
And to feel a blessed presence invisible to sight.

Bless the Lord for all his mercies!—for the peace and love I felt,  
Like the dew of Hermon's holy hill, upon my spirit melt;  
When 'Get behind me, Satan! ' was the language of my heart,  
And I felt the Evil Tempter with all his doubts depart.

Slow broke the gray cold morning; again the sunshine fell,  
Flocked with the shade of bar and grate within my lonely cell;  
The hoar-frost melted on the wall, and upward from the street  
Came careless laugh and idle word, and tread of passing feet.

At length the heavy bolts fell back, my door was open cast,  
And slowly at the sheriff's side, up the long street I passed;  
I heard the murmur round me, and felt, but dared not see,  
How, from every door and window, the people gazed on me.

And doubt and fear fell on me, shame burned upon my cheek,

Swam earth and sky around me, my trembling limbs grew weak;  
'Oh Lord, support thy handmaid, and from her soul cast out  
The fear of men, which brings a snare, the weakness and the doubt.

Then the dreary shadows scattered, like a cloud in morning's breeze,  
And a low deep voice within me seemed whispering words like these:  
'Though thy earth be as the iron, and thy heaven a brazen wall,  
Trust still His loving-kindness whose power is over all.'

We paused at length, where at my feet the sunlit waters broke  
On glaring roach of shining beach, and shingly wall of rock;  
The merchant-ships lay idle there, in hard clear lines on high,  
Treeing with rope and slender spar their network on the sky.

And there were ancient citizens, cloak-wrapped and grave and cold,  
And grim and stout sea-captains with faces bronzed and old,  
And on his horse, with Rawson, his cruel clerk at hand,  
Sat dark and haughty Endicott, the ruler of the land.

And poisoning with his evil words the ruler's ready ear,  
The priest leaned over his saddle, with laugh and scoff and jeer;  
It stirred my soul, and from my lips the soul of silence broke,  
As if through woman's weakness a warning spirit spoke.

I cried 'The Lord rebuke thee, thou smiter of the meek,  
Thou robber of the righteous, thou trampler of the weak!  
Go light the cold, dark hearth-stones, go turn the prison lock  
Of the poor hearts though hast hunted, thou wolf amid the flock!'

Dark lowered the brows of Endicott, and with a deeper red  
O'er Rawson's wine-empurpled cheek the flash of anger spread;  
'Good people, ' quoth the white-lipped priest, 'heed not her words so wild,  
Her Master speaks within her — the Devil owns his child!'

But gray heads shook, and young brows knit, the while the sheriff read  
That law the wicked rulers against the poor have made,  
Who to their house of Rimmon and idol priesthood bring  
No bonded knee of worship, nor gainful offering.

Then to the stout sea-captains the sheriff, turning, said —  
'Wish of ye, worthy seamen, will take this Quaker maid?  
On the Isle of fair Barbados, or on Virginia's shore

You may hold her at a higher price than Indian girl or Moor!

Grim and silent stood the captains; and when again he cried,  
'Speak out my worthy seamen!' no voice, no sign replied;  
But I felt a hard hand press my own, and kind words met my ear,  
'God bless thee, and preserve thee, my gentle girl and dear!'

A weight seemed lifted from my heart, a pitying friend was nigh,  
I felt it in his hard, rough hand, and saw it in his eye;  
And when again the sheriff spoke, that voice, so kind to me,  
Growled back its stormy answer like the roaring of the sea.

'Pile my ship with bars of silver, pack with coins of Spanish gold  
From keel-piece up to deck-plank, the roomage of her hold,  
By the living God that made me! I would sooner in your bay  
Sink ship and crew and cargo, than bear this child away!'

'Well answered, worthy captain, shame on their cruel laws!  
Ran through the crowd in murmurs loud the people's just applause.  
'Like the herdsmen of Tekoa, In Israel of old,  
Shall we see the poor and righteous again for silver sold?'

I looked on haughty Endicott; with weapon half-way drawn,  
Swept around the throng his lion glare of bitter hate and scorn;  
Fiercely he drew his bridle-rein, and turned in silence back,  
And sneering priest and baffled clerk rode murmuring in his track.

Hard after them the sheriff looked, in bitterness of soul,  
Thrice smote his staff upon the ground, and crushed his parchment-roll.  
'Good friends,' he said, 'since both have fled, the ruler and the priest  
Judge ye, if from their further work I be not well released.'

Loud was the cheer which, full and clear, swept round the silent bay,  
As, with kind words and kinder looks, he bade me go my way;  
For he who turns the courses of the streamlet of the glen,  
And the river of great waters, had turned the hearts of men.

Oh, at that hour the very earth seemed changed beneath my eye,  
A holier wonder round no rose the blue walls of the sky,  
A lovelier light on rock and hill and stream and woodland lay,  
And softer lapsed on sunnier sands the waters of the bay.

Thanksgiving to the Lord of life! To him all praises be,  
Who from the hands of evil men hath set his handmaid free;  
All praise to Him before whose power the mighty are afraid,  
Who take the crafty in the snare which for the poor is laid!

Sing, O my soul, rejoicingly, on evening's twilight calm  
Uplift the loud thanksgiving, pour forth the grateful psalm;  
Let all dear hearts with me rejoice, as did the saints of old,  
When of the Lord's good angel the rescued Peter told.

And weep and howl, ye evil priests and mighty men of wrong,  
The lord shall smite the proud, and lay His hand upon the strong.  
Woe to the wicked rulers in his avenging hour!  
Woe to the wolves who seek the flocks to raven and devour!

But let the humble ones arise, the poor in heart be glad,  
And let the mourning ones again with robes of praise be clad,  
For he who cooled the furnace, and smoothed the stormy wave,  
And tamed the Chaldean lions, is mighty still to save!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Centennial Hymn

I.

Our fathers' God! from out whose hand  
The centuries fall like grains of sand,  
We meet to-day, united, free,  
And loyal to our land and Thee,  
To thank Thee for the era done,  
And trust Thee for the opening one.

II.

Here, where of old, by Thy design,  
The fathers spake that word of Thine  
Whose echo is the glad refrain  
Of rended bolt and falling chain,  
To grace our festal time, from all  
The zones of earth our guests we call.

III.

Be with us while the New World greets  
The Old World thronging all its streets,  
Unveiling all the triumphs won  
By art or toil beneath the sun;  
And unto common good ordain  
This rivalry of hand and brain.

IV.

Thou, who hast here in concord furled  
The war flags of a gathered world,  
Beneath our Western skies fulfil  
The Orient's mission of good-will,  
And, freighted with love's Golden Fleece,  
Send back its Argonauts of peace.

V.

For art and labor met in truce,  
For beauty made the bride of use,  
We thank Thee; but, withal, we crave  
The austere virtues strong to save,  
The honor proof to place or gold,  
The manhood never bought nor sold.

VI.

Oh make Thou us, through centuries long,  
In peace secure, in justice strong;  
Around our gift of freedom draw  
The safeguards of Thy righteous law  
And, cast in some diviner mould,  
Let the new cycle shame the old!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Chalkey Hall

How bland and sweet the greeting of this breeze  
To him who flies  
From crowded street and red wall's weary gleam,  
Till far behind him like a hideous dream  
The close dark city lies  
Here, while the market murmurs, while men throng  
The marble floor  
Of Mammon's altar, from the crush and din  
Of the world's madness let me gather in  
My better thoughts once more.

Oh, once again revive, while on my ear  
The cry of Gain  
And low hoarse hum of Traffic die away,  
Ye blessed memories of my early day  
Like sere grass wet with rain!

Once more let God's green earth and sunset air  
Old feelings waken;  
Through weary years of toil and strife and ill,  
Oh, let me feel that my good angel still  
Hath not his trust forsaken.

And well do time and place befit my mood  
Beneath the arms  
Of this embracing wood, a good man made  
His home, like Abraham resting in the shade  
Of Mamre's lonely palms.

Here, rich with autumn gifts of countless years,  
The virgin soil  
Turned from the share he guided, and in rain  
And summer sunshine throve the fruits and grain  
Which blessed his honest toil.

Here, from his voyages on the stormy seas,  
Weary and worn,  
He came to meet his children and to bless  
The Giver of all good in thankfulness

And praise for his return.

And here his neighbors gathered in to greet  
Their friend again,  
Safe from the wave and the destroying gales,  
Which reap untimely green Bermuda's vales,  
And vex the Carib main.

To hear the good man tell of simple truth,  
Sown in an hour  
Of weakness in some far-off Indian isle,  
From the parched bosom of a barren soil,  
Raised up in life and power.

How at those gatherings in Barbadian vales,  
A tendering love  
Came o'er him, like the gentle rain from heaven,  
And words of fitness to his lips were given,  
And strength as from above.

How the sad captive listened to the Word,  
Until his chain  
Grew lighter, and his wounded spirit felt  
The healing balm of consolation melt  
Upon its life-long pain

How the armed warrior sat him down to hear  
Of Peace and Truth,  
And the proud ruler and his Creole dame,  
Jewelled and gorgeous in her beauty came,  
And fair and bright-eyed youth.

Oh, far away beneath New England's sky,  
Even when a boy,  
Following my plough by Merrimac's green shore,  
His simple record I have pondered o'er  
With deep and quiet joy.

And hence this scene, in sunset glory warm,--  
Its woods around,  
Its still stream winding on in light and shade,  
Its soft, green meadows and its upland glade,--

To me is holy ground.

And dearer far than haunts where Genius keeps  
His vigils still;  
Than that where Avon's son of song is laid,  
Or Vaucuse hallowed by its Petrarch's shade,  
Or Virgil's laurelled hill.

To the gray walls of fallen Paraclete,  
To Juliet's urn,  
Fair Arno and Sorrento's orange-grove,  
Where Tasso sang, let young Romance and Love  
Like brother pilgrims turn.

But here a deeper and serener charm  
To all is given;  
And blessed memories of the faithful dead  
O'er wood and vale and meadow-stream have shed  
The holy hues of Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Channing

Not vainly did old poets tell,  
Nor vainly did old genius paint  
God's great and crowning miracle,  
The hero and the saint!

For even in a faithless day  
Can we our sainted ones discern;  
And feel, while with them on the way,  
Our hearts within us burn.

And thus the common tongue and pen  
Which, world-wide, echo Channing's fame,  
As one of Heaven's anointed men,  
Have sanctified his name.

In vain shall Rome her portals bar,  
And shut from him her saintly prize,  
Whom, in the world's great calendar,  
All men shall canonize.

By Narragansett's sunny bay,  
Beneath his green embowering wood,  
To me it seems but yesterday  
Since at his side I stood.

The slopes lay green with summer rains,  
The western wind blew fresh and free,  
And glimmered down the orchard lanes  
The white surf of the sea.

With us was one, who, calm and true,  
Life's highest purpose understood,  
And, like his blessed Master, knew  
The joy of doing good.

Unlearned, unknown to lettered fame,  
Yet on the lips of England's poor  
And toiling millions dwelt his name,  
With blessings evermore.

Unknown to power or place, yet where  
The sun looks o'er the Carib sea,  
It blended with the freeman's prayer  
And song of jubilee.

He told of England's sin and wrong,  
The ills her suffering children know,  
The squalor of the city's throng,  
The green field's want and woe.

O'er Channing's face the tenderness  
Of sympathetic sorrow stole,  
Like a still shadow, passionless,  
The sorrow of the soul.

But when the generous Briton told  
How hearts were answering to his own,  
And Freedom's rising murmur rolled  
Up to the dull-eared throne,

I saw, methought, a glad surprise  
Thrill through that frail and pain-worn frame,  
And, kindling in those deep, calm eyes,  
A still and earnest flame.

His few, brief words were such as move  
The human heart,--the Faith-sown seeds  
Which ripen in the soil of love  
To high heroic deeds.

No bars of sect or clime were felt,  
The Babel strife of tongues had ceased,  
And at one common altar knelt  
The Quaker and the priest.

And not in vain: with strength renewed,  
And zeal refreshed, and hope less dim,  
For that brief meeting, each pursued  
The path allotted him.

How echoes yet each Western hill

And vale with Channing's dying word!  
How are the hearts of freemen still  
By that great warning stirred.

The stranger treads his native soil,  
And pleads, with zeal unfelt before,  
The honest right of British toil,  
The claim of England's poor.

Before him time-wrought barriers fall,  
Old fears subside, old hatreds melt,  
And, stretching o'er the sea's blue wall,  
The Saxon greets the Celt.

The yeoman on the Scottish lines,  
The Sheffield grinder, worn and grim,  
The delver in the Cornwall mines,  
Look up with hope to him.

Swart smiters of the glowing steel,  
Dark feeders of the forge's flame,  
Pale watchers at the loom and wheel,  
Repeat his honored name.

And thus the influence of that hour  
Of converse on Rhode Island's strand  
Lives in the calm, resistless power  
Which moves our fatherland.

God blesses still the generous thought,  
And still the fitting word He speeds  
And Truth, at His requiring taught,  
He quickens into deeds.

Where is the victory of the grave?  
What dust upon the spirit lies?  
God keeps the sacred life he gave,--  
The prophet never dies!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Chicago

Men said at vespers: 'All is well!'  
In one wild night the city fell;  
Fell shrines of prayer and marts of gain  
Before the fiery hurricane.

On threescore spires had sunset shone,  
Where ghastly sunrise looked on none.  
Men clasped each other's hands, and said  
'The City of the West is dead!'

Brave hearts who fought, in slow retreat,  
The fiends of fire from street to street,  
Turned, powerless, to the blinding glare,  
The dumb defiance of despair.

A sudden impulse thrilled each wire  
That signalled round that sea of fire;  
Swift words of cheer, warm heart-throbs came;  
In tears of pity died the flame!

From East, from West, from South and North,  
The messages of hope shot forth,  
And, underneath the severing wave,  
The world, full-handed, reached to save.

Fair seemed the old; but fairer still  
The new, the dreary void shall fill  
With dearer homes than those o'erthrown,  
For love shall lay each corner-stone.

Rise, stricken city! from thee throw  
The ashen sackcloth of thy woe;  
And build, as to Amphion's strain,  
To songs of cheer thy walls again!

How shrivelled in thy hot distress  
The primal sin of selfishness!  
How instant rose, to take thy part,  
The angel in the human heart!

Ah! not in vain the flames that tossed  
Above thy dreadful holocaust;  
The Christ again has preached through thee  
The Gospel of Humanity!

Then lift once more thy towers on high,  
And fret with spires the western sky,  
To tell that God is yet with us,  
And love is still miraculous!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Child-Songs

Still linger in our noon of time  
And on our Saxon tongue  
The echoes of the home-born hymns  
The Aryan mothers sung.

And childhood had its litanies  
In every age and clime;  
The earliest cradles of the race  
Were rocked to poet's rhyme.

Nor sky, nor wave, nor tree, nor flower,  
Nor green earth's virgin sod,  
So moved the singer's heart of old  
As these small ones of God.

The mystery of unfolding life  
Was more than dawning morn,  
Than opening flower or crescent moon  
The human soul new-born.

And still to childhood's sweet appeal  
The heart of genius turns,  
And more than all the sages teach  
From lisping voices learns,--

The voices loved of him who sang,  
Where Tweed and Teviot glide,  
That sound to-day on all the winds  
That blow from Rydal-side,--

Heard in the Teuton's household songs,  
And folk-lore of the Finn,  
Where'er to holy Christmas hearths  
The Christ-child enters in!

Before life's sweetest mystery still  
The heart in reverence kneels;  
The wonder of the primal birth  
The latest mother feels.

We need love's tender lessons taught  
As only weakness can;  
God hath His small interpreters;  
The child must teach the man.

We wander wide through evil years,  
Our eyes of faith grow dim;  
But he is freshest from His hands  
And nearest unto Him!

And haply, pleading long with Him  
For sin-sick hearts and cold,  
The angels of our childhood still  
The Father's face behold.

Of such the kingdom!--Teach Thou us,  
O-Master most divine,  
To feel the deep significance  
Of these wise words of Thine!

The haughty eye shall seek in vain  
What innocence beholds;  
No cunning finds the key of heaven,  
No strength its gate unfolds.

Alone to guilelessness and love  
That gate shall open fall;  
The mind of pride is nothingness,  
The childlike heart is all!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Clerical Oppressors

JUST God! and these are they  
Who minister at thine altar, God of Right!  
Men who their hands with prayer and blessing lay  
On Israel's Ark of light!  
What! preach, and kidnap men?  
Give thanks, and rob thy own afflicted poor?  
Talk of thy glorious liberty, and then  
Bolt hard the captive's door?  
What! servants of thy own  
Merciful Son, who came to seek and save  
The homeless and the outcast, fettering down  
The tasked and plundered slave!  
Pilate and Herod, friends!  
Chief priests and rulers, as of old, combine!  
Just God and holy! is that church, which lends  
Strength to the spoiler, thine?  
Paid hypocrites, who turn  
Judgment aside, and rob the Holy Book  
Of those high words of truth which search and burn  
In warning and rebuke;  
Feed fat, ye locusts, feed!  
And, in your tasselled pulpits, thank the Lord  
That, from the toiling bondman's utter need,  
Ye pile your own full board.  
How long, O Lord! how long  
Shall such a priesthood barter truth away,  
And in Thy name, for robbery and wrong  
At Thy own altars pray?  
Is not Thy hand stretched forth  
Visibly in the heavens, to awe and smite?  
Shall not the living God of all the earth,  
And heaven above, do right?  
Woe, then, to all who grind  
Their brethren of a common Father down!  
To all who plunder from the immortal mind  
Its bright and glorious crown!  
Woe to the priesthood! woe  
To those whose hire is with the price of blood;  
Perverting, darkening, changing, as they go,

The searching truths of God!  
Their glory and their might.  
Shall perish; and their very names shall be  
Vile before all the people, in the light  
Of a world's liberty.  
Oh, speed the moment on  
When Wrong shall cease, and Liberty and Love  
And Truth and Right throughout the earth be known  
As in their home above.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Cobbler Keezar's Vision

The beaver cut his timber  
With patient teeth that day,  
The minks were fish-wards, and the crows  
Surveyors of highway,-

When Keezar sat on the hillside  
Upon his cobbler's form,  
With a pan of coals on either hand  
To keep his waxed-ends warm.

And there, in the golden weather,  
He stitched and hammered and sung;  
In the brook he moistened his leather,  
In the pewter mug his tongue.

Well knew the tough old Teuton  
Who brewed the stoutest ale,  
And he paid the goodwife's reckoning  
In the coin of song and tale.

The songs they still are singing  
Who dress the hills of vine,  
The tales that haunt the Brocken  
And whisper down the Rhine.

Woodsy and wild and lonesome,  
The swift stream wound away,  
Through birches and scarlet maples  
Flashing in foam and spray,-

Down on the sharp-horned ledges  
Plunging in steep cascade,  
Tossing its white-maned waters  
Against the hemlock's shade.

Woodsy and wild and lonesome,  
East and west and north and south;  
Only the village of fishers  
Down at the river's mouth;

Only here and there a clearing,  
With its farm-house rude and new,  
And tree-stumps, swart as Indians,  
Where the scanty harvest grew.

No shout of home-bound reapers,  
No vintage-song he heard,  
And on the green no dancing feet  
The merry violin stirred.

'Why should folk be glum,' said Keezar,  
'When Nature herself is glad,  
And the painted woods are laughing  
At the faces so sour and sad?'

Small heed had the careless cobbler  
What sorrow of heart was theirs  
Who travailed in pain with the births of God,  
And planted a state with prayers,-

Hunting of witches and warlocks,  
Smiting the heathen horde,-  
One hand on the mason's trowel,  
And one on the soldier's sword.

But give him his ale and cider,  
Give him his pipe and song,  
Little he cared for Church or State,  
Or the balance of right and wrong.

'T is work, work, work,' he muttered,-  
'And for rest a snuffle of psalms!'  
He smote on his leathern apron  
With his brown and waxen palms.

'Oh for the purple harvests  
Of the days when I was young  
For the merry grape-stained maidens,  
And the pleasant songs they sung!

'Oh for the breath of vineyards,

Of apples and nuts and wine  
For an oar to row and a breeze to blow  
Down the grand old river Rhine!

A tear in his blue eye glistened,  
And dropped on his beard so gray.  
'Old, old am I,' said Keezar,  
'And the Rhine flows far away!'

But a cunning man was the cobbler;  
He could call the birds from the trees,  
Charm the black snake out of the ledges,  
And bring back the swarming bees.

All the virtues of herbs and metals,  
All the lore of the woods, he knew,  
And the arts of the Old World mingle  
With the marvels of the New.

Well he knew the tricks of magic,  
And the lapstone on his knee  
Had the gift of the Mormon's goggles  
Or the stone of Doctor Dee.

For the mighty master Agrippa  
Wrought it with spell and rhyme  
From a fragment of mystic moonstone  
In the tower of Nettesheim.

To a cobbler Minnesinger  
The marvellous stone gave he,-  
And he gave it, in turn, to Keezar,  
Who brought it over the sea.

He held up that mystic lapstone,  
He held it up like a lens,  
And he counted the long years coming  
Ey twenties and by tens.

'One hundred years,' quoth Keezar,  
'And fifty have I told  
Now open the new before me,

And shut me out the old!

Like a cloud of mist, the blackness  
Rolled from the magic stone,  
And a marvellous picture mingled  
The unknown and the known.

Still ran the stream to the river,  
And river and ocean joined;  
And there were the bluffs and the blue sea-line,  
And cold north hills behind.

But-the mighty forest was broken  
By many a steepled town,  
By many a white-walled farm-house,  
And many a garner brown.

Turning a score of mill-wheels,  
The stream no more ran free;  
White sails on the winding river,  
White sails on the far-off sea.

Below in the noisy village  
The flags were floating gay,  
And shone on a thousand faces  
The light of a holiday.

Swiftly the rival ploughmen  
Turned the brown earth from their shares;  
Here were the farmer's treasures,  
There were the craftsman's wares.

Golden the goodwife's butter,  
Ruby her currant-wine;  
Grand were the strutting turkeys,  
Fat were the beeves and swine.

Yellow and red were the apples,  
And the ripe pears russet-brown,  
And the peaches had stolen blushes  
From the girls who shook them down.

And with blooms of hill and wildwood,  
That shame the toil of art,  
Mingled the gorgeous blossoms  
Of the garden's tropic heart.

'What is it I see?' said Keezar  
'Am I here, or ant I there?  
Is it a fete at Bingen?  
Do I look on Frankfort fair?

'But where are the clowns and puppets,  
And imps with horns and tail?  
And where are the Rhenish flagons?  
And where is the foaming ale?

'Strange things, I know, will happen,-  
Strange things the Lord permits;  
But that droughty folk should be jolly  
Puzzles my poor old wits.

'Here are smiling manly faces,  
And the maiden's step is gay;  
Nor sad by thinking, nor mad by drinking,  
Nor mopes, nor fools, are they.

'Here's pleasure without regretting,  
And good without abuse,  
The holiday and the bridal  
Of beauty and of use.

'Here's a priest and there is a Quaker,  
Do the cat and dog agree?  
Have they burned the stocks for ovenwood?  
Have they cut down the gallows-tree?

'Would the old folk know their children?  
Would they own the graceless town,  
With never a ranter to worry  
And never a witch to drown?'

Loud laughed the cobbler Keezar,

Laughed like a school-boy gay;  
Tossing his arms above him,  
The lapstone rolled away.

It rolled down the rugged hillside,  
It spun like a wheel bewitched,  
It plunged through the leaning willows,  
And into the river pitched.

There, in the deep, dark water,  
The magic stone lies still,  
Under the leaning willows  
In the shadow of the hill.

But oft the idle fisher  
Sits on the shadowy bank,  
And his dreams make marvellous pictures  
Where the wizard's lapstone sank.

And still, in the summer twilights,  
When the river seems to run  
Out from the inner glory,  
Warm with the melted sun,

The weary mill-girl lingers  
Beside the charmed stream,  
And the sky and the golden water  
Shape and color her dream.

Air wave the sunset gardens,  
The rosy signals fly;  
Her homestead beckons from the cloud,  
And love goes sailing by.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Conduct

From the Mahabharata.

Heed how thou livest. Do no act by day  
Which from the night shall drive thy peace away.  
In months of sun so live that months of rain  
Shall still be happy. Evermore restrain  
Evil and cherish good, so shall there be  
Another and a happier life for thee.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Conductor Bradley

A railway conductor who lost his life in an accident on a Connecticut railway, May 9, 1873.

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

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

Men stooped above him; women dropped their tears  
On that poor wreck beyond all hopes or fears,  
Lost in the strength and glory of his years.

What heard they? Lo! the ghastly lips of pain,  
Dead to all thought save duty's, moved again  
'Put out the signals for the other train!'

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

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

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

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

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

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

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Daniel Neall

I.

FRIEND of the Slave, and yet the friend of all;  
Lover of peace, yet ever foremost when  
The need of battling Freedom called for men  
To plant the banner on the outer wall;  
Gentle and kindly, ever at distress  
Melted to more than woman's tenderness,  
Yet firm and steadfast, at his duty's post  
Fronting the violence of a maddened host,  
Like some-gray rock from which the waves are tossed!  
Knowing his deeds of love, men questioned not  
The faith of one whose walk and word were right;  
Who tranquilly in Life's great task-field wrought,  
And, side by side with evil, scarcely caught  
A stain upon his pilgrim garb of white:  
Prompt to redress another's wrong, his own  
Leaving to Time and Truth and Penitence alone.

II.

Such was our friend. Formed on the good old plan,  
A true and brave and downright honest man!  
He blew no trumpet in the market-place,  
Nor in the church with hypocritic face  
Supplied with cant the lack of Christian grace;  
Loathing pretence, he did with cheerful will  
What others talked of while their hands were still;  
And, while 'Lord, Lord!' the pious tyrants cried,  
Who, in the poor, their Master crucified,  
His daily prayer, far better understood.  
In acts than words, was simply doing good.  
So calm, so constant was his rectitude,  
That by his loss alone we know its worth,  
And feel how true a man has walked with us on earth.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Daniel Wheeler

O Dearly loved!  
And worthy of our love! No more  
Thy aged form shall rise before  
The bushed and waiting worshiper,  
In meek obedience utterance giving  
To words of truth, so fresh and living,  
That, even to the inward sense,  
They bore unquestioned evidence  
Of an anointed Messenger!  
Or, bowing down thy silver hair  
In reverent awfulness of prayer,  
The world, its time and sense, shut out  
The brightness of Faith's holy trance  
Gathered upon thy countenance,  
As if each lingering cloud of doubt,  
The cold, dark shadows resting here  
In Time's unluminous atmosphere,  
Were lifted by an angel's hand,  
And through them on thy spiritual eye  
Shone down the blessedness on high,  
The glory of the Better Land!

The oak has fallen!  
While, meet for no good work, the vine  
May yet its worthless branches twine,  
Who knoweth not that with thee fell  
A great man in our Israel?  
Fallen, while thy loins were girded still,  
Thy feet with Zion's dews still wet,  
And in thy hand retaining yet  
The pilgrim's staff and scallop-shell  
Unharm'd and safe, where, wild and free,  
Across the Neva's cold morass  
The breezes from the Frozen Sea  
With winter's arrowy keenness pass;  
Or where the unwarning tropic gale  
Smote to the waves thy tattered sail,  
Or where the noon-hour's fervid heat  
Against Tahiti's mountains beat;

The same mysterious Hand which gave  
Deliverance upon land and wave,  
Tempered for thee the blasts which blew  
Ladaga's frozen surface o'er,  
And blessed for thee the baleful dew  
Of evening upon Eimeo's shore,  
Beneath this sunny heaven of ours,  
Midst our soft airs and opening flowers  
Hath given thee a grave!

His will be done,  
Who seeth not as man, whose way  
Is not as ours! 'T is well with thee!  
Nor anxious doubt nor dark dismay  
Disquieted thy closing day,  
But, evermore, thy soul could say,  
'My Father careth still for me!'  
Called from thy hearth and home,--from her,  
The last bud on thy household tree,  
The last dear one to minister  
In duty and in love to thee,  
From all which nature holdeth dear,  
Feeble with years and worn with pain,  
To seek our distant land again,  
Bound in the spirit, yet unknowing  
The things which should befall thee here,  
Whether for labor or for death,  
In childlike trust serenely going  
To that last trial of thy faith!  
Oh, far away,  
Where never shines our Northern star  
On that dark waste which Balboa saw  
From Darien's mountains stretching far,  
So strange, heaven-broad, and lone, that there,  
With forehead to its damp wind bare,  
He bent his mailed knee in awe;  
In many an isle whose coral feet  
The surges of that ocean beat,  
In thy palm shadows, Oahu,  
And Honolulu's silver bay,  
Amidst Owyhee's hills of blue,  
And taro-plains of Tooboona,

Are gentle hearts, which long shall be  
Sad as our own at thought of thee,  
Worn sowers of Truth's holy seed,  
Whose souls in weariness and need  
Were strengthened and refreshed by thine.  
For blessed by our Father's hand  
Was thy deep love and tender care,  
Thy ministry and fervent prayer,--  
Grateful as Eshcol's clustered vine  
To Israel in a weary land.

And they who drew  
By thousands round thee, in the hour  
Of prayerful waiting, hushed and deep,  
That He who bade the islands keep  
Silence before Him, might renew  
Their strength with His unslumbering power,  
They too shall mourn that thou art gone,  
That nevermore thy aged lip  
Shall soothe the weak, the erring warn,  
Of those who first, rejoicing, heard  
Through thee the Gospel's glorious word,--  
Seals of thy true apostleship.  
And, if the brightest diadem,  
Whose gems of glory purely burn  
Around the ransomed ones in bliss,  
Be evermore reserved for them  
Who here, through toil and sorrow, turn  
Many to righteousness,  
May we not think of thee as wearing  
That star-like crown of light, and bearing,  
Amidst Heaven's white and blissful band,  
Th' unfading palm-branch in thy hand;  
And joining with a seraph's tongue  
In that new song the elders sung,  
Ascribing to its blessed Giver  
Thanksgiving, love, and praise forever!

Farewell!

And though the ways of Zion mourn  
When her strong ones are called away,  
Who like thyself have calmly borne

The heat and burden of the day,  
Yet He who slumbereth not nor sleepeth  
His ancient watch around us keepeth;  
Still, sent from His creating hand,  
New witnesses for Truth shall stand,  
New instruments to sound abroad  
The Gospel of a risen Lord;  
To gather to the fold once more  
The desolate and gone astray,  
The scattered of a cloudy day,  
And Zion's broken walls restore;  
And, through the travail and the toil  
Of true obedience, minister  
Beauty for ashes, and the oil  
Of joy for mourning, unto her!  
So shall her holy bounds increase  
With walls of praise and gates of peace  
So shall the Vine, which martyr tears  
And blood sustained in other years,  
With fresher life be clothed upon;  
And to the world in beauty show  
Like the rose-plant of Jericho,  
And glorious as Lebanon!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Dedication - Songs Of Labor

I WOULD the gift I offer here  
Might graces from thy favor take,  
And, seen through Friendship's atmosphere,  
On softened lines and coloring, wear  
The unaccustomed light of beauty, for thy sake.  
Few leaves of Fancy's spring remain:  
But what I have I give to thee,  
The o'er-sunned bloom of summer's plain,  
And paler flowers, the latter rain  
Calls from the westering slope of life's autumnal lea.  
Above the fallen groves of green,  
Where youth's enchanted forest stood,  
Dry root and moss'd trunk between,  
A sober after-growth is seen,  
As springs the pine where falls the gay-leafed maple wood!  
Yet birds will sing, and breezes play  
Their leaf-harps in the sombre tree;  
And through the bleak and wintry day  
It keeps its steady green away, —  
So, even my after-thoughts may have a charm for thee.  
Art's perfect forms no moral need,  
And beauty is its own excuse;  
But for the dull and flowerless weed  
Some healing virtue still must plead,  
And the rough ore must find its honors in its use.  
So haply these, my simple lays  
Of homely toil, may serve to show  
The orchard bloom and tasselled maize  
That skirt and gladden duty's ways,  
The unsung beauty hid life's common things below.  
Haply from them the toiler, bent  
Above his forge or plough, may gain,  
A manlier spirit of content,  
And feel that life is wisest spent  
Where the strong working hand makes strong the working brain.  
The doom which to the guilty pair  
Without the walls of Eden came,  
Transforming sinless ease to care  
And rugged toil, no more shall bear

The burden of old crime, or mark of primal shame.  
A blessing now, a curse no more;  
Since He, whose name we breathe with awe,  
The coarse mechanic vesture wore,  
A poor man toiling with the poor,  
In labor, as in prayer, fulfilling the same law.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Democracy

BEARER of Freedom's holy light,  
Breaker of Slavery's chain and rod,  
The foe of all which pains the sight,  
Or wounds the generous ear of God!  
Beautiful yet thy temples rise,  
Though there profaning gifts are thrown;  
And fires unkindled of the skies  
Are glaring round thy altar-stone.  
Still sacred, though thy name be breathed  
By those whose hearts thy truth deride;  
And garlands, plucked from thee, are wreathed  
Around the haughty brows of Pride.  
Oh, ideal of my boyhood's time!  
The faith in which my father stood,  
Even when the sons of Lust and Crime  
Had stained thy peaceful courts with blood!  
Still to those courts my footsteps turn,  
For through the mists which darken there,  
I see the flame of Freedom burn, —  
The Kebla of the patriot's prayer!  
The generous feeling, pure and warm,  
Which owns the right of all divine;  
The pitying heart, the helping arm,  
The prompt self-sacrifice, are thine.  
Beneath thy broad, impartial eye,  
How fade the lines of caste and birth!  
How equal in their suffering lie  
The groaning multitudes of earth!  
Still to a stricken brother true,  
Whatever clime hath nurtured him;  
As stooped to heal the wounded Jew  
The worshipper of Gerizim.  
By misery unrepelled, unawed  
By pomp or power, thou seest a Man  
In prince or peasant, slave or lord,  
Pale priest, or swarthy artisan.  
Through all disguise, form, place, or name,  
Beneath the flaunting robes of sin,  
Through poverty and squalid shame,

Thou lookest on the man within.  
On man, as man, retaining yet,  
Howe'er debased, and soiled, and dim,  
The crown upon his forehead set,  
The immortal gift of God to him.  
And there is reverence in thy look;  
For that frail form which mortals wear  
The Spirit of the Holiest took,  
And veiled His perfect brightness there.  
Not from the shallow babbling fount  
Of vain philosophy thou art;  
He who of old on Syria's Mount  
Thrilled, warmed, by turns, the listener's heart,  
In holy words which cannot die,  
In thoughts which angels leaned to know,  
Proclaimed thy message from on high,  
Thy mission to a world of woe.  
That voice's echo hath not died!  
From the blue lake of Galilee,  
And Tabor's lonely mountain-side,  
It calls a struggling world to thee.  
Thy name and watchword o'er this land  
I hear in every breeze that stirs,  
And round a thousand altars stand  
Thy banded party worshippers.  
Not to these altars of a day,  
At party's call, my gift I bring;  
But on thy olden shrine I lay  
A freeman's dearest offering:  
The voiceless utterance of his will, —  
His pledge to Freedom and to Truth,  
That manhood's heart remembers still  
The homage of his generous youth.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Derne

NIGHT on the city of the Moor!  
On mosque and tomb, and white-walled shore,  
On sea-waves, to whose ceaseless knock  
The narrow harbor gates unlock,  
On corsair's galley, carack tall,  
And plundered Christian caraval!  
The sounds of Moslem life are still;  
No mule-bell tinkles down the hill;  
Stretched in the broad court of the khan,  
The dusty Bornou caravan  
Lies heaped in slumber, beast and man;  
The Sheik is dreaming in his tent,  
His noisy Arab tongue o'erspent;  
The kiosk's glimmering lights are gone,  
The merchant with his wares withdrawn;  
Rough pillowed on some pirate breast,  
The dancing-girl has sunk to rest;  
And, save where measured footsteps fall  
Along the Bashaw's guarded wall,  
Or where, like some bad dream, the Jew  
Creeps stealthily his quarter through,  
Or counts with fear his golden heaps,  
The City of the Corsair sleeps!  
But where yon prison long and low  
Stands black against the pale star-glow,  
Chafed by the ceaseless wash of waves,  
There watch and pine the Christian slaves;  
Rough-bearded men, whose far-off wives  
Wear out with grief their lonely lives;  
And youth, still flashing from his eyes  
The clear blue of New England skies,  
A treasured lock of whose soft hair  
Now wakes some sorrowing mother's prayer;  
Or, worn upon some maiden breast,  
Stirs with the loving heart's unrest!  
A bitter cup each life must drain,  
The groaning earth is cursed with pain,  
And, like the scroll the angel bore  
The shuddering Hebrew seer before,

O'erwrit alike, without, within,  
With all the woes which follow sin;  
But, bitterest of the ills beneath  
Whose load man totters down to death,  
Is that which plucks the regal crown  
Of Freedom from his forehead down,  
And snatches from his powerless hand  
The sceptred sign of self-command,  
Effacing with the chain and rod  
The image and the seal of God;  
Till from his nature, day by day,  
The manly virtues fall away,  
And leave him naked, blind and mute,  
The godlike merging in the brute!  
Why mourn the quiet ones who die  
Beneath affection's tender eye,  
Unto their household and their kin  
Like ripened corn-sheaves gathered in?  
O weeper, from that tranquil sod,  
That holy harvest-home of God,  
Turn to the quick and suffering, shed  
Thy tears upon the living dead!  
Thank God above thy dear ones' graves,  
They sleep with Him, they are not slaves.  
What dark mass, down the mountain-sides  
Swift-pouring, like a stream divides?  
A long, loose, straggling caravan,  
Camel and horse and arméd man.  
The moon's low crescent, glimmering o'er  
Its grave of waters to the shore,  
Lights up that mountain cavalcade,  
And gleams from gun and spear and blade  
Near and more near! now o'er them falls  
The shadow of the city walls.  
Hark to the sentry's challenge, drowned  
In the fierce trumpet's charging sound!  
The rush of men, the musket's peal,  
The short, sharp clang of meeting steel!  
Vain, Moslem, vain thy lifeblood poured  
So freely on thy foeman's sword!  
Not to the swift nor to the strong  
The battles of the right belong;

For he who strikes for Freedom wears  
The armor of the captive's prayers,  
And Nature proffers to his cause  
The strength of her eternal laws;  
While he whose arm essays to bind  
And herd with common brutes his kind  
Strives evermore at fearful odds  
With Nature and the jealous gods,  
And dares the dread recoil which late  
Or soon their right shall vindicate.  
'T is done, the horned crescent falls!  
The star-flag flouts the broken walls!  
Joy to the captive husband! joy  
To thy sick heart, O brown-locked boy!  
In sullen wrath the conquered Moor  
Wide open flings your dungeon-door,  
And leaves ye free from cell and chain,  
The owners of yourselves again.  
Dark as his allies desert-born,  
Soiled with the battle's stain, and worn  
With the long marches of his band  
Through hottest wastes of rock and sand,  
Scorched by the sun and furnace-breath  
Of the red desert's wind of death,  
With welcome words and grasping hands,  
The victor and deliverer stands!  
The tale is one of distant skies;  
The dust of half a century lies  
Upon it; yet its hero's name  
Still lingers on the lips of Fame.  
Men speak the praise of him who gave  
Deliverance to the Moorman's slave,  
Yet dare to brand with shame and crime  
The heroes of our land and time, —  
The self-forgetful ones, who stake  
Home, name, and life for Freedom's sake.  
God mend his heart who cannot feel  
The impulse of a holy zeal,  
And sees not, with his sordid eyes,  
The beauty of self-sacrifice!  
Though in the sacred place he stands,  
Uplifting consecrated hands,

Unworthy are his lips to tell  
Of Jesus' martyr-miracle,  
Or name aright that dread embrace  
Of suffering for a fallen race!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Disarmament

"Put up the sword!" The voice of Christ once more  
Speaks, in the pauses of the cannon's roar,  
O'er fields of corn by fiery sickles reaped  
And left dry ashes; over trenches heaped  
With nameless dead; o'er cities starving slow  
Under a rain of fire; through wards of woe  
Down which a groaning diapason runs  
From tortured brothers, husbands, lovers, sons  
Of desolate women in their far-off homes  
Waiting to hear the step that never comes!  
O men and brothers! let that voice be heard.  
War fails, try peace; put up the useless sword!

Fear not the end. There is a story told  
In Eastern tents, when autumn nights grow cold,  
And round the fire the Mongol shepherds sit  
With grave responses listening unto it:  
Once, on the errands of his mercy bent,  
Buddha, the holy and benevolent,  
Met a fell monster, huge and fierce of look,  
Whose awful voice the hills and forests shook,  
"O son of peace!" the giant cried, "thy fate  
Is sealed at last, and love shall yield to hate."  
The unarmed Buddha looking, with no trace  
Of fear and anger, in the monster's face,  
In pity said, "Poor fiend, even thee I love."  
Lo! as he spake the sky-tall terror sank  
To hand-breadth size; the huge abhorrence shrank  
Into the form and fashion of a dove  
And where the thunder of its rage was heard,  
Circling above him sweetly sang the bird:  
"Hate hath no harm for love," so ran the song,  
"And peace unweaponed conquers every wrong!"

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Divine Compassion

Long since, a dream of heaven I had,  
And still the vision haunts me oft;  
I see the saints in white robes clad,  
The martyrs with their palms aloft;  
But hearing still, in middle song,  
The ceaseless dissonance of wrong;  
And shrinking, with hid faces, from the strain  
Of sad, beseeching eyes, full of remorse and pain.

The glad song falters to a wail,  
The harping sinks to low lament;  
Before the still unlifted veil  
I see the crowned foreheads bent,  
Making more sweet the heavenly air,  
With breathings of unselfish prayer;  
And a Voice saith: 'O Pity which is pain,  
O Love that weeps, fill up my sufferings which remain!

'Shall souls redeemed by me refuse  
To share my sorrow in their turn?  
Or, sin-forgiven, my gift abuse  
Of peace with selfish unconcern?  
Has saintly ease no pitying care?  
Has faith no work, and love no prayer?  
While sin remains, and souls in darkness dwell,  
Can heaven itself be heaven, and look unmoved on hell?'

Then through the Gates of Pain, I dream,  
A wind of heaven blows coolly in;  
Fainter the awful discords seem,  
The smoke of torment grows more thin,  
Tears quench the burning soil, and thence  
Spring sweet, pale flowers of penitence  
And through the dreary realm of man's despair,  
Star-crowned an angel walks, and to! God's hope is there!

Is it a dream? Is heaven so high  
That pity cannot breathe its air?  
Its happy eyes forever dry,

Its holy lips without a prayer!  
My God! my God! if thither led  
By Thy free grace unmerited,  
No crown nor palm be mine, but let me keep  
A heart that still can feel, and eyes that still can weep.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Ego

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF A FRIEND.

On page of thine I cannot trace  
The cold and heartless commonplace,  
A statue's fixed and marble grace.

For ever as these lines I penned,  
Still with the thought of thee will blend  
That of some loved and common friend,

Who in life's desert track has made  
His pilgrim tent with mine, or strayed  
Beneath the same remembered shade.

And hence my pen unfettered moves  
In freedom which the heart approves,  
The negligence which friendship loves.

And wilt thou prize my poor gift less  
For simple air and rustic dress,  
And sign of haste and carelessness?

Oh, more than specious counterfeit  
Of sentiment or studied wit,  
A heart like thine should value it.

Yet half I fear my gift will be  
Unto thy book, if not to thee,  
Of more than doubtful courtesy.

A banished name from Fashion's sphere,  
A lay unheard of Beauty's ear,  
Forbid, disowned,--what do they here?

Upon my ear not all in vain  
Came the sad captive's clanking chain,  
The groaning from his bed of pain.

And sadder still, I saw the woe

Which only wounded spirits know  
When Pride's strong footsteps o'er them go.

Spurned not alone in walks abroad,  
But from the temples of the Lord  
Thrust out apart, like things abhorred.

Deep as I felt, and stern and strong,  
In words which Prudence smothered long,  
My soul spoke out against the wrong;

Not mine alone the task to speak  
Of comfort to the poor and weak,  
And dry the tear on Sorrow's cheek;

But, mingled in the conflict warm,  
To pour the fiery breath of storm  
Through the harsh trumpet of Reform;

To brave Opinion's settled frown,  
From ermined robe and saintly gown,  
While wrestling revered Error down.

Founts gushed beside my pilgrim way,  
Cool shadows on the greensward lay,  
Flowers swung upon the bending spray.

And, broad and bright, on either hand,  
Stretched the green slopes of Fairy-land,  
With Hope's eternal sunbow spanned;

Whence voices called me like the flow,  
Which on the listener's ear will grow,  
Of forest streamlets soft and low.

And gentle eyes, which still retain  
Their picture on the heart and brain,  
Smiled, beckoning from that path of pain.

In vain! nor dream, nor rest, nor pause  
Remain for him who round him draws  
The battered mail of Freedom's cause.

From youthful hopes, from each green spot  
Of young Romance, and gentle Thought,  
Where storm and tumult enter not;

From each fair altar, where belong  
The offerings Love requires of Song  
In homage to her bright-eyed throng;

With soul and strength, with heart and hand,  
I turned to Freedom's struggling band,  
To the sad Helots of our land.

What marvel then that Fame should turn  
Her notes of praise to those of scorn;  
Her gifts reclaimed, her smiles withdrawn?

What matters it? a few years more,  
Life's surge so restless heretofore  
Shall break upon the unknown shore!

In that far land shall disappear  
The shadows which we follow here,  
The mist-wreaths of our atmosphere!

Before no work of mortal hand,  
Of human will or strength expand  
The pearl gates of the Better Land;

Alone in that great love which gave  
Life to the sleeper of the grave,  
Resteth the power to seek and save.

Yet, if the spirit gazing through  
The vista of the past can view  
One deed to Heaven and virtue true;

If through the wreck of wasted powers,  
Of garlands wreathed from Folly's bowers,  
Of idle aims and misspent hours,

The eye can note one sacred spot

By Pride and Self profaned not,  
A green place in the waste of thought,

Where deed or word hath rendered less  
The sum of human wretchedness,  
And Gratitude looks forth to bless;

The simple burst of tenderest feeling  
From sad hearts worn by evil-dealing,  
For blessing on the hand of healing;

Better than Glory's pomp will be  
That green and blessed spot to me,  
A palm-shade in Eternity!

Something of Time which may invite  
The purified and spiritual sight  
To rest on with a calm delight.

And when the summer winds shall sweep  
With their light wings my place of sleep,  
And mosses round my headstone creep;

If still, as Freedom's rallying sign,  
Upon the young heart's altars shine  
The very fires they caught from mine;

If words my lips once uttered still,  
In the calm faith and steadfast will  
Of other hearts, their work fulfil;

Perchance with joy the soul may learn  
These tokens, and its eye discern  
The fires which on those altars burn;

A marvellous joy that even then,  
The spirit hath its life again,  
In the strong hearts of mortal men.

Take, lady, then, the gift I bring,  
No gay and graceful offering,  
No flower-smile of the laughing spring.

Midst the green buds of Youth's fresh May,  
With Fancy's leaf-enwoven bay,  
My sad and sombre gift I lay.

And if it deepens in thy mind  
A sense of suffering human-kind,--  
The outcast and the spirit-blind;

Oppressed and spoiled on every side,  
By Prejudice, and Scorn, and Pride,  
Life's common courtesies denied;

Sad mothers mourning o'er their trust,  
Children by want and misery nursed,  
Tasting life's bitter cup at first;

If to their strong appeals which come  
From fireless hearth, and crowded room,  
And the close alley's noisome gloom,--

Though dark the hands upraised to thee  
In mute beseeching agony,  
Thou lend'st thy woman's sympathy;

Not vainly on thy gentle shrine,  
Where Love, and Mirth, and Friendship twine  
Their varied gifts, I offer mine.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Elliott

Hands off! thou tithe-fat plunderer! play  
No trick of priestcraft here!  
Back, puny lordling! darest thou lay  
A hand on Elliott's bier?  
Alive, your rank and pomp, as dust,  
Beneath his feet he trod.

He knew the locust swarm that cursed  
The harvest-fields of God.  
On these pale lips, the smothered thought  
Which England's millions feel,  
A fierce and fearful splendor caught,  
As from his forge the steel.  
Strong-armed as Thor, a shower of fire  
His smitten anvil flung;  
God's curse, Earth's wrong, dumb Hunger's ire,  
He gave them all a tongue!

Then let the poor man's horny hands  
Bear up the mighty dead,  
And labor's swart and stalwart bands  
Behind as mourners tread.  
Leave cant and craft their baptized bounds,  
Leave rank its minster floor;  
Give England's green and daisied grounds  
The poet of the poor!

Lay down upon his Sheaf's green verge  
That brave old heart of oak,  
With fitting dirge from sounding forge,  
And pall of furnace smoke!  
Where whirls the stone its dizzy rounds,  
And axe and sledge are swung,  
And, timing to their stormy sounds,  
His stormy lays are sung.

There let the peasant's step be heard,  
The grinder chant his rhyme,  
Nor patron's praise nor dainty word

Befits the man or time.  
No soft lament nor dreamer's sigh  
For him whose words were bread;  
The Runic rhyme and spell whereby  
The foodless poor were fed!

Pile up the tombs of rank and pride,  
O England, as thou wilt!  
With pomp to nameless worth denied,  
Emblazon titled guilt!  
No part or lot in these we claim;  
But, o'er the sounding wave,  
A common right to Elliott's name,  
A freehold in his grave!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Eva

Dry the tears for holy Eva,  
With the blessed angels leave her;  
Of the form so soft and fair  
Give to earth the tender care.

For the golden locks of Eva  
Let the sunny south-land give her  
Flowery pillow of repose,  
Orange-bloom and budding rose.

In the better home of Eva  
Let the shining ones receive her,  
With the welcome-voiced psalm,  
Harp of gold and waving palm,

All is light and peace with Eva;  
There the darkness cometh never;  
Tears are wiped, and fetters fall.  
And the Lord is all in all.

Weep no more for happy Eva,  
Wrong and sin no more shall grieve her;  
Care and pain and weariness  
Lost in love so measureless.

Gentle Eva, loving Eva,  
Child confessor, true believer,  
Listener at the Master's knee,  
'Suffer such to come to me.'

Oh, for faith like thine, sweet Eva,  
Lighting all the solemn river,  
And the blessings of the poor  
Wafting to the heavenly shore!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Expostulation

OUR fellow-countrymen in chains!  
Slaves, in a land of light and law!  
Slaves, crouching on the very plains  
Where rolled the storm of Freedom's war!  
A groan from Eutaw's haunted wood,  
A wail where Camden's martyrs fell,  
By every shrine of patriot blood,  
From Moultrie's wall and Jasper's well!

By storied hill and hallowed grot,  
By mossy wood and marshy glen,  
Whence rang of old the rifle-shot,  
And hurrying shout of Marion's men!  
The groan of breaking hearts is there,  
The falling lash, the fetter's clank!  
Slaves, slaves are breathing in that air  
Which old De Kalb and Sumter drank!

What, ho! our countrymen in chains!  
The whip on woman's shrinking flesh!  
Our soil yet reddening with the stains  
Caught from her scourging, warm and fresh!  
What! mothers from their children riven!  
What! God's own image bought and sold!  
Americans to market driven,  
And bartered as the brute for gold!

Speak! shall their agony of prayer  
Come thrilling to our hearts in vain?  
To us whose fathers scorned to bear  
The paltry menace of a chain;  
To us, whose boast is loud and long  
Of holy Liberty and Light;  
Say, shall these writhing slaves of Wrong  
Plead vainly for their plundered Right?

What! shall we send, with lavish breath,  
Our sympathies across the wave,  
Where Manhood, on the field of death,

Strikes for his freedom or a grave?  
Shall prayers go up, and hymns be sung  
For Greece, the Moslem fetter spurning,  
And millions hail with pen and tongue  
Our light on all her altars burning?

Shall Belgium feel, and gallant France,  
By Vendome's pile and Schoenbrun's wall,  
And Poland, gasping on her lance,  
The impulse of our cheering call?  
And shall the slave, beneath our eye,  
Clank o'er our fields his hateful chain?  
And toss his fettered arms on high,  
And groan for Freedom's gift, in vain?

Oh, say, shall Prussia's banner be  
A refuge for the stricken slave?  
And shall the Russian serf go free  
By Baikal's lake and Neva's wave?  
And shall the wintry-bosomed Dane  
Relax the iron hand of pride,  
And bid his bondmen cast the chain  
From fettered soul and limb aside?

Shall every flap of England's flag  
Proclaim that all around are free,  
From farthest Ind to each blue crag  
That beetles o'er the Western Sea?  
And shall we scoff at Europe's kings,  
When Freedom's fire is dim with us,  
And round our country's altar clings  
The damning shade of Slavery's curse?

Go, let us ask of Constantine  
To loose his grasp on Poland's throat;  
And beg the lord of Mahmoud's line  
To spare the struggling Suliote;  
Will not the scorching answer come  
From turbaned Turk, and scornful Russ  
'Go, loose your fettered slaves at home,  
Then turn, and ask the like of us!'

Just God! and shall we calmly rest,  
The Christian's scorn, the heathen's mirth,  
Content to live the lingering jest  
And by-word of a mocking Earth?  
Shall our own glorious land retain  
That curse which Europe scorns to bear?  
Shall our own brethren drag the chain  
Which not even Russia's menials wear?

Up, then, in Freedom's manly part,  
From graybeard eld to fiery youth,  
And on the nation's naked heart  
Scatter the living coals of Truth!  
Up! while ye slumber, deeper yet  
The shadow of our fame is growing!  
Up! while ye pause, our sun may set  
In blood, around our altars flowing!

Oh! rouse ye, ere the storm comes forth,  
The gathered wrath of God and man,  
Like that which wasted Egypt's earth,  
When hail and fire above it ran.  
Hear ye no warnings in the air?  
Feel ye no earthquake underneath?  
Up, up! why will ye slumber where  
The sleeper only wakes in death?

Rise now for Freedom! not in strife  
Like that your sterner fathers saw,  
The awful waste of human life,  
The glory and the guilt of war:  
But break the chain, the yoke remove,  
And smite to earth Oppression's rod,  
With those mild arms of Truth and Love,  
Made mighty through the living God!

Down let the shrine of Moloch sink,  
And leave no traces where it stood;  
Nor longer let its idol drink  
His daily cup of human blood;  
But rear another altar there,  
To Truth and Love and Mercy given,

And Freedom's gift, and Freedom's prayer,  
Shall call an answer down from Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Extract From

How has New England's romance fled,  
Even as a vision of the morning!  
Its rites foredone, its guardians dead,  
Its priestesses, bereft of dread,  
Waking the veriest urchin's scorning!  
Gone like the Indian wizard's yell  
And fire-dance round the magic rock,  
Forgotten like the Druid's spell  
At moonrise by his holy oak!  
No more along the shadowy glen  
Glide the dim ghosts of murdered men;  
No more the unquiet churchyard dead  
Glimpse upward from their turfy bed,  
Startling the traveller, late and lone;  
As, on some night of starless weather,  
They silently commune together,  
Each sitting on his own head-stone  
The roofless house, decayed, deserted,  
Its living tenants all departed,  
No longer rings with midnight revel  
Of witch, or ghost, or goblin evil;  
No pale blue flame sends out its flashes  
Through creviced roof and shattered sashes!  
The witch-grass round the hazel spring  
May sharply to the night-air sing,  
But there no more shall withered hags  
Refresh at ease their broomstick nags,  
Or taste those hazel-shadowed waters  
As beverage meet for Satan's daughters;  
No more their mimic tones be heard,  
The mew of cat, the chirp of bird,  
Shrill blending with the hoarser laughter  
Of the fell demon following after!  
The cautious goodman nails no more  
A horseshoe on his outer door,  
Lest some unseemly hag should fit  
To his own mouth her bridle-bit;  
The goodwife's churn no more refuses  
Its wonted culinary uses

Until, with heated needle burned,  
The witch has to her place returned!  
Our witches are no longer old  
And wrinkled beldames, Satan-sold,  
But young and gay and laughing creatures,  
With the heart's sunshine on their features;  
Their sorcery--the light which dances  
Where the raised lid unveils its glances;  
Or that low-breathed and gentle tone,  
The music of Love's twilight hours,  
Soft, dream-like, as a fairy's moan  
Above her nightly closing flowers,  
Sweeter than that which sighed of yore  
Along the charmed Ausonian shore!  
Even she, our own weird heroine,  
Sole Pythoness of ancient Lynn,  
Sleeps calmly where the living laid her;  
And the wide realm of sorcery,  
Left by its latest mistress free,  
Hath found no gray and skilled invader.  
So--perished Albion's 'glammarye,'  
With him in Melrose Abbey sleeping,  
His charmed torch beside his knee,  
That even the dead himself might see  
The magic scroll within his keeping.  
And now our modern Yankee sees  
Nor omens, spells, nor mysteries;  
And naught above, below, around,  
Of life or death, of sight or sound,  
Whate'er its nature, form, or look,  
Excites his terror or surprise,  
All seeming to his knowing eyes  
Familiar as his 'catechise,'  
Or 'Webster's Spelling-Book.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Ezekiel

They hear Thee not, O God! nor see;  
Beneath Thy rod they mock at Thee;  
The princes of our ancient line  
Lie drunken with Assyrian wine;  
The priests around Thy altar speak  
The false words which their hearers seek;  
And hymns which Chaldea's wanton maids  
Have sung in Dura's idol-shades  
Are with the Levites' chant ascending,  
With Zion's holiest anthems blending!

On Israel's bleeding bosom set,  
The heathen heel is crushing yet;  
The towers upon our holy hill  
Echo Chaldean footsteps still.  
Our wasted shrines,--who weeps for them?  
Who mourneth for Jerusalem?  
Who turneth from his gains away?  
Whose knee with mine is bowed to pray?  
Who, leaving feast and purpling cup,  
Takes Zion's lamentation up?

A sad and thoughtful youth, I went  
With Israel's early banishment;  
And where the sullen Chebar crept,  
The ritual of my fathers kept.  
The water for the trench I drew,  
The firstling of the flock I slew,  
And, standing at the altar's side,  
I shared the Levites' lingering pride,  
That still, amidst her mocking foes,  
The smoke of Zion's offering rose.

In sudden whirlwind, cloud and flame,  
The Spirit of the Highest came!  
Before mine eyes a vision passed,  
A glory terrible and vast;  
With dreadful eyes of living things,  
And sounding sweep of angel wings,

With circling light and sapphire throne,  
And flame-like form of One thereon,  
And voice of that dread Likeness sent  
Down from the crystal firmament!

The burden of a prophet's power  
Fell on me in that fearful hour;  
From off unutterable woes  
The curtain of the future rose;  
I saw far down the coming time  
The fiery chastisement of crime;  
With noise of mingling hosts, and jar  
Of falling towers and shouts of war,  
I saw the nations rise and fall,  
Like fire-gleams on my tent's white wall.

In dream and trance, I--saw the slain  
Of Egypt heaped like harvest grain.  
I saw the walls of sea-born Tyre  
Swept over by the spoiler's fire;  
And heard the low, expiring moan  
Of Edom on his rocky throne;  
And, woe is me! the wild lament  
From Zion's desolation sent;  
And felt within my heart each blow  
Which laid her holy places low.

In bonds and sorrow, day by day,  
Before the pictured tile I lay;  
And there, as in a mirror, saw  
The coming of Assyria's war;  
Her swarthy lines of spearmen pass  
Like locusts through Bethhoron's grass;  
I saw them draw their stormy hem  
Of battle round Jerusalem;  
And, listening, heard the Hebrew wail!

Blend with the victor-trump of Baal!  
Who trembled at my warning word?  
Who owned the prophet of the Lord?  
How mocked the rude, how scoffed the vile,  
How stung the Levites' scornful smile,

As o'er my spirit, dark and slow,  
The shadow crept of Israel's woe  
As if the angel's mournful roll  
Had left its record on my soul,  
And traced in lines of darkness there  
The picture of its great despair!

Yet ever at the hour I feel  
My lips in prophecy unseal.  
Prince, priest, and Levite gather near,  
And Salem's daughters haste to hear,  
On Chebar's waste and alien shore,  
The harp of Judah swept once more.  
They listen, as in Babel's throng  
The Chaldeans to the dancer's song,  
Or wild sabbeka's nightly play,--  
As careless and as vain as they.

. . . . .

And thus, O Prophet-bard of old,  
Hast thou thy tale of sorrow told  
The same which earth's unwelcome seers  
Have felt in all succeeding years.  
Sport of the changeful multitude,  
Nor calmly heard nor understood,  
Their song has seemed a trick of art,  
Their warnings but, the actor's part.  
With bonds, and scorn, and evil will,  
The world requites its prophets still.

So was it when the Holy One  
The garments of the flesh put on  
Men followed where the Highest led  
For common gifts of daily bread,  
And gross of ear, of vision dim,  
Owned not the Godlike power of Him.  
Vain as a dreamer's words to them  
His wail above Jerusalem,  
And meaningless the watch He kept  
Through which His weak disciples slept.

Yet shrink not thou, whoe'er thou art,  
For God's great purpose set apart,  
Before whose far-discerning eyes,  
The Future as the Present lies!  
Beyond a narrow-bounded age  
Stretches thy prophet-heritage,  
Through Heaven's vast spaces angel-trod,  
And through the eternal years of God  
Thy audience, worlds!--all things to be  
The witness of the Truth in thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# First-Day Thoughts

In calm and cool and silence, once again  
I find my old accustomed place among  
My brethren, where, perchance, no human tongue  
Shall utter words; where never hymn is sung,  
Nor deep-toned organ blown, nor censer swung,  
Nor dim light falling through the pictured pane!  
There, syllabled by silence, let me hear  
The still small voice which reached the prophet's ear;  
Read in my heart a still diviner law  
Than Israel's leader on his tables saw!  
There let me strive with each besetting sin,  
Recall my wandering fancies, and restrain  
The sore disquiet of a restless brain;  
And, as the path of duty is made plain,  
May grace be given that I may walk therein,  
Not like the hireling, for his selfish gain,  
With backward glances and reluctant tread,  
Making a merit of his coward dread,  
But, cheerful, in the light around me thrown,  
Walking as one to pleasant service led;  
Doing God's will as if it were my own,  
Yet trusting not in mine, but in His strength alone!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Fitz-Greene Halleck

AT THE UNVEILING OF HIS STATUE.

Among their graven shapes to whom  
Thy civic wreaths belong,  
O city of his love, make room  
For one whose gift was song.

Not his the soldier's sword to wield,  
Nor his the helm of state,  
Nor glory of the stricken field,  
Nor triumph of debate.

In common ways, with common men,  
He served his race and time  
As well as if his clerkly pen  
Had never danced to rhyme.

If, in the thronged and noisy mart,  
The Muses found their son,  
Could any say his tuneful art  
A duty left undone?

He toiled and sang; and year by year  
Men found their homes more sweet,  
And through a tenderer atmosphere  
Looked down the brick-walled street.

The Greek's wild onset gall Street knew;  
The Red King walked Broadway;  
And Alwick Castle's roses blew  
From Palisades to Bay.

Fair City by the Sea! upraise  
His veil with reverent hands;  
And mingle with thy own the praise  
And pride of other lands.

Let Greece his fiery lyric breathe  
Above her hero-urns;

And Scotland, with her holly, wreath  
The flower he culled for Burns.

Oh, stately stand thy palace walls,  
Thy tall ships ride the seas;  
To-day thy poet's name recalls  
A prouder thought than these.

Not less thy pulse of trade shall beat,  
Nor less thy tall fleets swim,  
That shaded square and dusty street  
Are classic ground through him.

Alive, he loved, like all who sing,  
The echoes of his song;  
Too late the tardy meed we bring,  
The praise delayed so long.

Too late, alas! Of all who knew  
The living man, to-day  
Before his unveiled face, how few  
Make bare their locks of gray!

Our lips of praise must soon be dumb,  
Our grateful eyes be dim;  
O brothers of the days to come,  
Take tender charge of him!

New hands the wires of song may sweep,  
New voices challenge fame;  
But let no moss of years o'ercreep  
The lines of Halleck's name.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Flowers In Winter

How strange to greet, this frosty morn,  
In graceful counterfeit of flower,  
These children of the meadows, born  
Of sunshine and of showers!

How well the conscious wood retains  
The pictures of its flower-sown home,  
The lights and shades, the purple stains,  
And golden hues of bloom!

It was a happy thought to bring  
To the dark season's frost and rime  
This painted memory of spring,  
This dream of summertime.

Our hearts are lighter for its sake,  
Our fancy's age renews its youth,  
And dim-remembered fictions take  
The guise of present truth.

A wizard of the Merrimac, -  
So old ancestral legends say, -  
Could call green leaf and blossom back  
To frosted stem and spray.

The dry logs of the cottage wall,  
Beneath his touch, put out their leaves;  
The clay-bound swallow, at his call,  
Played round the icy eaves.

The settler saw his oaken flail  
Take bud, and bloom before his eyes;  
From frozen pools he saw the pale  
Sweet summer lilies rise.

To their old homes, by man profaned  
Came the sad dryads, exiled long,  
And through their leafy tongues complained  
Of household use and wrong.

The beechen platter sprouted wild,  
The pipkin wore its old-time green,  
The cradle o'er the sleeping child  
Became a leafy screen.

Haply our gentle friend hath met,  
While wandering in her sylvan quest,  
Haunting his native woodlands yet,  
That Druid of the West;

And while the dew on leaf and flower  
Glistened in the moonlight clear and still,  
Learned the dusk wizard's spell of power,  
And caught his trick of skill.

But welcome, be it new or old,  
The gift which makes the day more bright,  
And paints, upon the ground of cold  
And darkness, warmth and light!

Without is neither gold nor green;  
Within, for birds, the birch-logs sing;  
Yet, summer-like, we sit between  
The autumn and the spring.

The one, with bridal blush of rose,  
And sweetest breath of woodland balm,  
And one whose matron lips unclosed  
In smiles of saintly calm.

Fill soft and deep, O winter snow!  
The sweet azalea's oaken dells,  
And hide the banks where roses blow  
And swing the azure bells!

O'erlay the amber violet's leaves,  
The purple aster's brookside home,  
Guard all the flowers her pencil gives  
A life beyond their bloom.

And she, when spring comes round again,

By greening slope and singing flood  
Shall wander, seeking, not in vain  
Her darlings of the wood.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# For An Autumn Festival

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

But beauty hath its homage still,  
And nature holds us still in debt;  
And woman's grace and household skill,  
And manhood's toil, are honored yet.

And we, to-day, amidst our flowers  
And fruits, have come to own again  
The blessings of the summer hours,  
The early and the latter rain;

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

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

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

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

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

God gives us with our rugged soil  
The power to make it Eden-fair,  
And richer fruits to crown our toil  
Than summer-wedded islands bear.

Who murmurs at his lot to-day?  
Who scorns his native fruit and bloom?  
Or sighs for dainties far away,  
Beside the bounteous board of home?

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

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

John Greenleaf Whittier

## For Righteousness' Sake

THE age is dull and mean. Men creep,  
Not walk; with blood too pale and tame  
To pay the debt they owe to shame;  
Buy cheap, sell dear; eat, drink, and sleep  
Down-pillowed, deaf to moaning want;  
Pay tithes for soul-insurance; keep  
Six days to Mammon, one to Cant.  
In such a time, give thanks to God,  
That somewhat of the holy rage  
With which the prophets in their age  
On all its decent seemings trod,  
Has set your feet upon the lie,  
That man and ox and soul and clod  
Are market stock to sell and buy!  
The hot words from your lips, my own,  
To caution trained, might not repeat;  
But if some tares among the wheat  
Of generous thought and deed were sown,  
No common wrong provoked your zeal;  
The silken gauntlet that is thrown  
In such a quarrel rings like steel.  
The brave old strife the fathers saw  
For freedom calls for men again  
Like those who battled not in vain  
For England's Charter, Alfred's law;  
And right of speech and trial just  
Wage in your name their ancient war  
With venal courts and perjured trust.  
God's ways seem dark, but, soon or late,  
They touch the shining hills of day;  
The evil cannot brook delay,  
The good can well afford to wait.  
Give ermined knaves their hour of crime;  
Ye have the future grand and great,  
The safe appeal of Truth to Time!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Forgiveness

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been  
Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong;  
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,  
One summer Sabbath day I strolled among  
The green mounds of the village burial-place;  
Where, pondering how all human love and hate  
Find one sad level; and how, soon or late,  
Wronged and wrongdoer, each with meekened face,  
And cold hands folded over a still heart,  
Pass the green threshold of our common grave,  
Whither all footsteps tend, whence none depart,  
Awed for myself, and pitying my race,  
Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave,  
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I forgave!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Freedom In Brazil

WITH clearer light, Cross of the South, shine forth  
In blue Brazilian skies;  
And thou, O river, cleaving half the earth  
From sunset to sunrise,  
From the great mountains to the Atlantic waves  
Thy joy's long anthem pour.  
Yet a few years (God make them less!) and slaves  
Shall shame thy pride no more,  
No fettereel feet thy shaded margins press;  
But all men shall walk free  
Where thou, the high-priest of the wilderness,  
Hast wedded sea to sea.  
And thou, great-hearted ruler, through whose mouth  
The word of God is said,  
Once more, 'Let there be light!' — Son of the South,  
Lift up thy honored head,  
Wear unashamed a crown by thy desert  
More than by birth thy own,  
Careless of watch and ward; thou art begirt  
By grateful hearts alone.  
The moaned wall and battle-ship may fail,  
But safe shall justice prove;  
Stronger than greaves of brass or iron mail  
The panoply of love.  
Crowned doubly by man's blessing and God's grace,  
Thy future is secure;  
Who frees a people makes his statue's place  
In Time's Valhalla sure.  
Lo! from his Neva's banks the Scythian Czar  
Stretches to thee his hand,  
Who, with the pencil of the Northern star,  
Wrote freedom on his land.  
And he whose grave is holy by our calm  
And prairied Sangamon,  
From his gaunt hand shall drop the martyr's palm  
To greet thee with 'Well done!'  
And thou, O Earth, with smiles thy face make sweet,  
And let thy wail be stilled,  
To hear the Muse of prophecy repeat

Her promise half fulfilled.  
The Voice that spake at Nazareth speaks still,  
No sound thereof hath died;  
Alike thy hope and Heaven's eternal will  
Shall yet be satisfied.  
The years are slow, the vision tarrieth long,  
And far the end may be;  
But, one by one, the fiends of ancient wrong  
Go out and leave thee free.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## From "Snow-Bound," 11:1-40, 116-154

The sun that brief December day  
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,  
And, darkly circled, gave at noon  
A sadder light than waning moon.  
Slow tracing down the thickening sky  
Its mute and ominous prophecy,  
A portent seeming less than threat,  
It sank from sight before it set.  
A chill no coat, however stout,  
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,  
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,  
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race  
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,  
The coming of the snow-storm told.  
The wind blew east: we heard the roar  
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,  
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there  
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.  
Meanwhile we did your nightly chores,--  
Brought in the wood from out of doors,  
Littered the stalls, and from the mows  
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows;  
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;  
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,  
Impatient down the stanchion rows  
The cattle shake their walnut bows;  
While, peering from his early perch  
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,  
The cock his crested helmet bent  
And down his querulous challenge sent.

Unwarmed by any sunset light  
The gray day darkened into night,  
A night made hoary with the swarm  
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,  
As zigzag, wavering to and fro  
Crossed and recrossed the winged snow:  
And ere the early bed-time came  
The white drift piled the window-frame,

And through the glass the clothes-line posts  
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

\*

□

As night drew on, and, from the crest  
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,  
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank  
From sight beneath the smothering bank,  
We piled, with care, our nightly stack  
Of wood against the chimney-back,--  
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,  
And on its top the stout back-stick;  
The knotty forestick laid apart,  
And filled between with curious art  
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,  
We watched the first red blaze appear,  
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam  
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,  
Until the old, rude-furnished room  
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;  
While radiant with a mimic flame  
Outside the sparkling drift became,  
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree  
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.  
The crane and pendent trammels showed,  
The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;  
While childish fancy, prompt to tell  
The meaning of the miracle,  
Whispered the old rhyme: "Under the tree,  
When fire outdoors burns merrily,  
There the witches are making tea."  
The moon above the eastern wood  
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood  
Transfigured in the silver flood,  
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,  
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine  
Took shadow, or the somber green  
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black  
Against the whiteness at their back.  
For such a world and such a night  
Most fitting that unwarming light,

Which only seemed where'er it fell  
To make the coldness visible.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## From Perugia

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S Letters from Italy.

THE tall, sallow guardsmen their horsetails have spread,  
Flaming out in their violet, yellow, and red;  
And behind go the lackeys in crimson and buff,  
And the chamberlains gorgeous in velvet and ruff;  
Next, in red-legged pomp, come the cardinals forth,  
Each a lord of the church and a prince of the earth.  
What's this squeak of the fife, and this batter of drum?  
Lo! the Swiss of the Church from Perugia come;  
The militant angels, whose sabres drive home  
To the hearts of the malcontents, cursed and abhorred,  
The good Father's missives, and 'Thus saith the Lord!'  
And lend to his logic the point of the sword!  
O maids of Etruria, gazing forlorn  
O'er dark Thrasymenus, dishevelled and torn!  
O fathers, who pluck at your gray beards for shame!  
O mothers, struck dumb by a woe without name!  
Well ye know how the Holy Church hireling behaves,  
And his tender compassion of prisons and graves!  
There they stand, the hired stabbers, the bloodstains yet fresh,  
That splashed like red wine from the vintage of flesh;  
Grim instruments, careless as pincers and rack  
How the joints tear apart, and the strained sinews crack;  
But the hate that glares on them is sharp as their swords,  
And the sneer and the scowl print the air with fierce words!  
Off with hats, down with knees, shout your vivas like mad!  
Here's the Pope in his holiday righteousness clad,  
From shorn crown to toe-nail, kiss-worn to the quick,  
Of sainthood in purple the pattern and pick,  
Who the rôle of the priest and the soldier unites,  
And, praying like Aaron, like Joshua fights!  
Is this Pio Nono the gracious, for whom  
We sang our hosannas and lighted all Rome;  
With whose advent we dreamed the new era began  
When the priest should be human, the monk be a man?  
Ah, the wolf's with the sheep, and the fox with the fowl,  
When freedom we trust to the crosier and cowl!  
Stand aside, men of Rome! Here's a hangman-faced Swiss —  
(A blessing for him surely can't go amiss) —

Would kneel down the sanctified slipper to kiss.  
Short shrift will suffice him, —he's blest beyond doubt;  
But there's blood on his hands which would scarcely wash out,  
Though Peter himself held the baptismal spout!  
Make way for the next! Here's another sweet son!  
What's this mastiff-jawed rascal in epaulets done?  
He did, whispers rumor, (its truth God forbid!)  
At Perugia what Herod at Bethlehem did.  
And the mothers? Don't name them! these humors of war  
They who keep him in service must pardon him for.  
Hist! here's the arch-knave in a cardinal's hat,  
With the heart of a wolf, and the stealth of a cat  
(As if Judas and Herod together were rolled),  
Who keeps, all as one, the Pope's conscience and gold,  
Mounts guard on the altar, and pilfers from thence,  
And flatters St. Peter while stealing his pence!  
Who doubts Antonelli? Have miracles ceased  
When robbers say mass, and Barabbas is priest?  
When the Church eats and drinks, at its mystical board,  
The true flesh and blood carved and shed by its sword,  
When its martyr, unsinged, claps the crown on his head,  
And roasts, as his proxy, his neighbor instead!  
There! the bells jow and jangle the same blessed way  
That they did when they rang for Bartholomew's day.  
Hark! the tallow-faced monsters, nor women nor boys,  
Vex the air with a shrill, sexless horror of noise.  
Te Deum laudamus! All round without stint  
The incense-pot swings with a taint of blood in't!  
And now for the blessing! Of little account,  
You know, is the old one they heard on the Mount.  
Its giver was landless, His raiment was poor,  
No jewelled tiara His fishermen wore;  
No incense, no lackeys, no riches, no home,  
No Swiss guards! We order things better at Rome.  
So bless us the strong hand, and curse us the weak;  
Let Austria's vulture have food for her beak;  
Let the wolf-whelp of Naples play Bomba again,  
With his death-cap of silence, and halter, and chain;  
Put reason, and justice, and truth under ban;  
For the sin unforgiven is freedom for man!



# Funeral Tree Of The Sokokis

Around Sebago's lonely lake  
There lingers not a breeze to break  
The mirror which its waters make.

The solemn pines along its shore,  
The firs which hang its gray rocks o'er,  
Are painted on its glassy floor.

The sun looks o'er, with hazy eye,  
The snowy mountain-tops which lie  
Piled coldly up against the sky.

Dazzling and white! save where the bleak,  
Wild winds have bared some splintering peak,  
Or snow-slide left its dusky streak.

Yet green are Saco's banks below,  
And belts of spruce and cedar show,  
Dark fringing round those cones of snow.

The earth hath felt the breath of spring,  
Though yet on her deliverer's wing  
The lingering frosts of winter cling.

Fresh grasses fringe the meadow-brooks,  
And mildly from its sunny nooks  
The blue eye of the violet looks.

And odors from the springing grass,  
The sweet birch and the sassafras,  
Upon the scarce-felt breezes pass.

Her tokens of renewing care  
Hath Nature scattered everywhere,  
In bud and flower, and warmer air.

But in their hour of bitterness,  
What reek the broken Sokokis,  
Beside their slaughtered chief, of this?

The turf's red stain is yet undried,  
Scarce have the death-shot echoes died  
Along Sebago's wooded side;

And silent now the hunters stand,  
Grouped darkly, where a swell of land  
Slopes upward from the lake's white sand.

Fire and the axe have swept it bare,  
Save one lone beech, unclosing there  
Its light leaves in the vernal air.

With grave, cold looks, all sternly mute,  
They break the damp turf at its foot,  
And bare its coiled and twisted root.

They heave the stubborn trunk aside,  
The firm roots from the earth divide,--  
The rent beneath yawns dark and wide.

And there the fallen chief is laid,  
In tasselled garb of skins arrayed,  
And girded with his wampum-braid.

The silver cross he loved is pressed  
Beneath the heavy arms, which rest  
Upon his scarred and naked breast.

'T is done: the roots are backward sent,  
The beechen-tree stands up unbent,  
The Indian's fitting monument!

When of that sleeper's broken race  
Their green and pleasant dwelling-place,  
Which knew them once, retains no trace;

Oh, long may sunset's light be shed  
As now upon that beech's head,  
A green memorial of the dead!

There shall his fitting requiem be,

In northern winds, that, cold and free,  
Howl nightly in that funeral tree.

To their wild wail the waves which break  
Forever round that lonely lake  
A solemn undertone shall make!

And who shall deem the spot unblest,  
Where Nature's younger children rest,  
Lulled on their sorrowing mother's breast?

Deem ye that mother loveth less  
These bronzed forms of the wilderness  
She foldeth in her long caress?

As sweet o'er them her wild-flowers blow,  
As if with fairer hair and brow  
The blue-eyed Saxon slept below.

What though the places of their rest  
No priestly knee hath ever pressed,--  
No funeral rite nor prayer hath blessed?

What though the bigot's ban be there,  
And thoughts of wailing and despair,  
And cursing in the place of prayer.

Yet Heaven hath angels watching round  
The Indian's lowliest forest-mound,--  
And they have made it holy ground.

There ceases man's frail judgment; all  
His powerless bolts of cursing fall  
Unheeded on that grassy pall.

O peeled and hunted and reviled,  
Sleep on, dark tenant of the wild!  
Great Nature owns her simple child!

And Nature's God, to whom alone  
The secret of the heart is known,--  
The hidden language traced thereon;

Who from its many cumberings  
Of form and creed, and outward things,  
To light the naked spirit brings;

Not with our partial eye shall scan,  
Not with our pride and scorn shall ban,  
The spirit of our brother man!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Garden

O painter of the fruits and flowers,  
We own wise design,  
Where these human hands of ours  
May share work of Thine!

Apart from Thee we plant in vain  
The root and sow the seed;  
Thy early and Thy later rain,  
Thy sun and dew we need.

Our toil is sweet with thankfulness,  
Our burden is our boon;  
The curse of Earth's gray morning is  
The blessing of its noon.

Why search the wide world everywhere  
For Eden's unknown ground?  
That garden of the primal pair  
May nevermore be found.

But, blest by Thee, our patient toil  
May right the ancient wrong,  
And give to every clime and soil  
The beauty lost so long.

Our homestead flowers and fruited trees  
May Eden's orchard shame;  
We taste the tempting sweets of these  
Like Eve, without her blame.

And, North and South and East and West,  
The pride of every zone,  
The fairest, rarest, and the best  
May all be made our own.

Its earliest shrines the young world sought  
In hill-groves and in bowers,  
The fittest offerings thither brought  
Were Thy own fruits and flowers.

And still with reverent hands we cull  
Thy gifts each year renewed;  
The good is always beautiful,  
The beautiful is good.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Garibaldi

In trance and dream of old, God's prophet saw  
The casting down of thrones. Thou, watching lone  
The hot Sardinian coast-line, hazy-hilled,  
Where, fringing round Caprera's rocky zone  
With foam, the slow waves gather and withdraw,  
Behold'st the vision of the seer fulfilled,  
And hear'st the sea-winds burdened with a sound  
Of falling chains, as, one by one, unbound,  
The nations lift their right hands up and swear  
Their oath of freedom. From the chalk-white wall  
Of England, from the black Carpathian range,  
Along the Danube and the Theiss, through all  
The passes of the Spanish Pyrenees,  
And from the Seine's thronged banks, a murmur strange  
And glad floats to thee o'er thy summer seas  
On the salt wind that stirs thy whitening hair,--  
The song of freedom's bloodless victories!  
Rejoice, O Garibaldi! Though thy sword  
Failed at Rome's gates, and blood seemed vainly poured  
Where, in Christ's name, the crowned infidel  
Of France wrought murder with the arms of hell  
On that sad mountain slope whose ghostly dead,  
Unmindful of the gray exorcist's ban,  
Walk, unappeased, the chambered Vatican,  
And draw the curtains of Napoleon's bed!  
God's providence is not blind, but, full of eyes,  
It searches all the refuges of lies;  
And in His time and way, the accursed things  
Before whose evil feet thy battle-gage  
Has clashed defiance from hot youth to age  
Shall perish. All men shall be priests and kings,  
One royal brotherhood, one church made free  
By love, which is the law of liberty

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Garrison

THE storm and peril overpast,  
The hounding hatred shamed and still,  
Go, soul of freedom! take at last  
The place which thou alone canst fill.  
Confirm the lesson taught of old —  
Life saved for self is lost, while they  
Who lose it in His service hold  
The lease of God's eternal day.  
Not for thyself, but for the slave  
Thy words of thunder shook the world;  
No selfish griefs or hatred gave  
The strength wherewith thy bolts were hurled.  
From lips that Sinai's trumpet blew  
We heard a tender under song;  
Thy very wrath from pity grew,  
From love of man thy hate of wrong.  
Now past and present are as one;  
The life below is life above;  
Thy mortal years have but begun  
Thy immortality of love.  
With somewhat of thy lofty faith  
We lay thy outworn garment by,  
Give death but what belongs to death,  
And life the life that cannot die!  
Not for a soul like thine the calm  
Of selfish ease and joys of sense;  
But duty, more than crown or palm,  
Its own exceeding recompense.  
Go up and on! thy day well done,  
Its morning promise well fulfilled,  
Arise to triumphs yet unwon,  
To holier tasks that God has willed.  
Go, leave behind thee all that mars  
The work below of man for man;  
With the white legions of the stars  
Do service such as angels can.  
Wherever wrong shall right deny  
Or suffering spirits urge their plea,  
Be thine a voice to smite the lie,

A hand to set the captive free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## George L. Stearns

He has done the work of a true man,--  
Crown him, honor him, love him.  
Weep, over him, tears of woman,  
Stoop manliest brows above him!

O dusky mothers and daughters,  
Vigils of mourning keep for him!  
Up in the mountains, and down by the waters,  
Lift up your voices and weep for him,

For the warmest of hearts is frozen,  
The freest of hands is still;  
And the gap in our picked and chosen  
The long years may not fill.

No duty could overtask him,  
No need his will outrun;  
Or ever our lips could ask him,  
His hands the work had done.

He forgot his own soul for others,  
Himself to his neighbor lending;  
He found the Lord in his suffering brothers,  
And not in the clouds descending.

So the bed was sweet to die on,  
Whence he saw the doors wide swung  
Against whose bolted iron  
The strength of his life was flung.

And he saw ere his eye was darkened  
The sheaves of the harvest-bringing,  
And knew while his ear yet hearkened  
The voice of the reapers singing.

Ah, well! The world is discreet;  
There are plenty to pause and wait;  
But here was a man who set his feet  
Sometimes in advance of fate;

Plucked off the old bark when the inner  
Was slow to renew it,  
And put to the Lord's work the sinner  
When saints failed to do it.

Never rode to the wrong's redressing  
A worthier paladin.  
Shall he not hear the blessing,  
'Good and faithful, enter in!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Giving And Taking

Who gives and hides the giving hand,  
Nor counts on favor, fame, or praise,  
Shall find his smallest gift outweighs  
The burden of the sea and land.

Who gives to whom hath naught been given,  
His gift in need, though small indeed  
As is the grass-blade's wind-blown seed,  
Is large as earth and rich as heaven.

Forget it not, O man, to whom  
A gift shall fall, while yet on earth;  
Yea, even to thy seven-fold birth  
Recall it in the lives to come.

Who broods above a wrong in thought  
Sins much; but greater sin is his  
Who, fed and clothed with kindnesses,  
Shall count the holy alms as nought.

Who dares to curse the hands that bless  
Shall know of sin the deadliest cost;  
The patience of the heavens is lost  
Beholding man's unthankfulness.

For he who breaks all laws may still  
In Sivam's mercy be forgiven;  
But none can save, in earth or heaven,  
The wretch who answers good with ill.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Godspeed

Outbound, your bark awaits you. Were I one  
Whose prayer availeth much, my wish should be  
Your favoring trad-wind and consenting sea.  
By sail or steed was never love outrun,  
And, here or there, love follows her in whom  
All graces and sweet charities unite,  
The old Greek beauty set in holier light;  
And her for whom New England's byways bloom,  
Who walks among us welcome as the Spring,  
Calling up blossoms where her light feet stray.  
God keep you both, make beautiful your way,  
Comfort, console, and bless; and safely bring,  
Ere yet I make upon a vaster sea  
The unreturning voyage, my friends to me.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Gone

Another hand is beckoning us,  
Another call is given;  
And glows once more with Angel-steps  
The path which reaches Heaven.

Our young and gentle friend, whose smile  
Made brighter summer hours,  
Amid the frosts of autumn time  
Has left us with the flowers.

No paling of the cheek of bloom  
Forewarned us of decay;  
No shadow from the Silent Land  
Fell round our sister's way.

The light of her young life went down,  
As sinks behind the hill  
The glory of a setting star,  
Clear, suddenly, and still.

As pure and sweet, her fair brow seemed  
Eternal as the sky;  
And like the brook's low song, her voice,--  
A sound which could not die.

And half we deemed she needed not  
The changing of her sphere,  
To give to Heaven a Shining One,  
Who walked an Angel here.

The blessing of her quiet life  
Fell on us like the dew;  
And good thoughts where her footsteps pressed  
Like fairy blossoms grew.

Sweet promptings unto kindest deeds  
Were in her very look;  
We read her face, as one who reads  
A true and holy book,

The measure of a blessed hymn,  
To which our hearts could move;  
The breathing of an inward psalm,  
A canticle of love.

We miss her in the place of prayer,  
And by the hearth-fire's light;  
We pause beside her door to hear  
Once more her sweet 'Good-night!'

There seems a shadow on the day,  
Her smile no longer cheers;  
A dimness on the stars of night,  
Like eyes that look through tears.

Alone unto our Father's will  
One thought hath reconciled;  
That He whose love exceedeth ours  
Hath taken home His child.

Fold her, O Father! in Thine arms,  
And let her henceforth be  
A messenger of love between  
Our human hearts and Thee.

Still let her mild rebuking stand  
Between us and the wrong,  
And her dear memory serve to make  
Our faith in Goodness strong.

And grant that she who, trembling, here  
Distrusted all her powers,  
May welcome to her holier home  
The well-beloved of ours.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Greeting

I spread a scanty board too late;  
The old-time guests for whom I wait  
Come few and slow, methinks, to-day.  
Ah! who could hear my messages  
Across the dim unsounded seas  
On which so many have sailed away!

Come, then, old friends, who linger yet,  
And let us meet, as we have met,  
Once more beneath this low sunshine;  
And grateful for the good we 've known,  
The riddles solved, the ills outgrown,  
Shake hands upon the border line.

The favor, asked too oft before,  
From your indulgent ears, once more  
I crave, and, if belated lays  
To slower, feebler measures move,  
The silent, sympathy of love  
To me is dearer now than praise.

And ye, O younger friends, for whom  
My hearth and heart keep open room,  
Come smiling through the shadows long,  
Be with me while the sun goes down,  
And with your cheerful voices drown  
The minor of my even-song.

For, equal through the day and night,  
The wise Eternal oversight  
And love and power and righteous will  
Remain: the law of destiny  
The best for each and all must be,  
And life its promise shall fulfil.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hampton Beach

THE SUNLIGHT glitters keen and bright,  
Where, miles away,  
Lies stretching to my dazzled sight  
A luminous belt, a misty light,  
Beyond the dark pine bluffs and wastes of sandy gray.  
The tremulous shadow of the Sea!  
Against its ground  
Of silvery light, rock, hill, and tree,  
Still as a picture, clear and free,  
With varying outline mark the coast for miles around.

On—on—we tread with loose-flung rein  
Our seaward way,  
Through dark-green fields and blossoming grain,  
Where the wild brier-rose skirts the lane,  
And bends above our heads the flowering locust spray.

Ha! like a kind hand on my brow  
Comes this fresh breeze,  
Cooling its dull and feverish glow,  
While through my being seems to flow  
The breath of a new life, the healing of the seas!

Now rest we, where this grassy mound  
His feet hath set  
In the great waters, which have bound  
His granite ankles greenly round  
With long and tangled moss, and weeds with cool spray wet.

Good-by to Pain and Care! I take  
Mine ease to-day  
Here where these sunny waters break,  
And ripples this keen breeze, I shake  
All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away.

I draw a freer breath, I seem  
Like all I see—  
Waves in the sun—the white-winged gleam—  
Of sea-birds in the slanting beam—

And far-off sails which flit before the south-wind free.

So when Time's veil shall fall asunder,  
The soul may know  
No fearful change, nor sudden wonder,  
Nor sink the weight of mystery under,  
But with the upward rise, and with the vastness grow.

And all we shrink from now may seem  
No new revealing;  
Familiar as our childhood's stream,  
Or pleasant memory of a dream  
The loved and cherished Past upon the new life stealing.

Serene and mild the untried light  
May have its dawning;  
And, as in summer's northern night  
The evening and the dawn unite,  
The sunset hues of Time blend with the soul's new morning.

I sit alone; in foam and spray  
Wave after wave  
Breaks on the rocks which, stern and gray,  
Shoulder the broken tide away,  
Or murmurs hoarse and strong through mossy cleft and cave.

What heed I of the dusty land  
And noisy town?  
I see the mighty deep expand  
From its white line of glimmering sand  
To where the blue of heaven on bluer waves shuts down!

In listless quietude of mind,  
I yield to all  
The change of cloud and wave and wind  
And passive on the flood reclined,  
I wander with the waves, and with them rise and fall.

But look, thou dreamer! —wave and shore  
In shadow lie;  
The night-wind warns me back once more  
To where, my native hill-tops o'er,

Bends like an arch of fire the glowing sunset sky.

So then, beach, bluff, and wave, farewell!

I bear with me

No token stone nor glittering shell,

But long and oft shall Memory tell

Of this brief thoughtful hour of musing by the Sea.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Haverhill

1640-1890.

O river winding to the sea!  
We call the old time back to thee;  
From forest paths and water-ways  
The century-woven veil we raise.

The voices of to-day are dumb,  
Unheard its sounds that go and come;  
We listen, through long-lapsing years,  
To footsteps of the pioneers.

Gone steeped town and cultured plain,  
The wilderness returns again,  
The drear, untrodden solitude,  
The gloom and mystery of the wood!

Once more the bear and panther prowl,  
The wolf repeats his hungry howl,  
And, peering through his leafy screen,  
The Indian's copper face is seen.

We see, their rude-built huts beside,  
Grave men and women anxious-eyed,  
And wistful youth remembering still  
Dear homes in England's Haverhill.

We summon forth to mortal view  
Dark Passaquo and Saggahew,--  
Wild chiefs, who owned the mighty sway  
Of wizard Passaconaway.

Weird memories of the border town,  
By old tradition handed down,  
In chance and change before us pass  
Like pictures in a magic glass,--

The terrors of the midnight raid,  
The-death-concealing ambushade,

The winter march, through deserts wild,  
Of captive mother, wife, and child.

Ah! bleeding hands alone subdued  
And tamed the savage habitude  
Of forests hiding beasts of prey,  
And human shapes as fierce as they.

Slow from the plough the woods withdrew,  
Slowly each year the corn-lands grew;  
Nor fire, nor frost, nor foe could kill  
The Saxon energy of will.

And never in the hamlet's bound  
Was lack of sturdy manhood found,  
And never failed the kindred good  
Of brave and helpful womanhood.

That hamlet now a city is,  
Its log-built huts are palaces;  
The wood-path of the settler's cow  
Is Traffic's crowded highway now.

And far and wide it stretches still,  
Along its southward sloping hill,  
And overlooks on either hand  
A rich and many-watered land.

And, gladdening all the landscape, fair  
As Pison was to Eden's pair,  
Our river to its valley brings  
The blessing of its mountain springs.

And Nature holds with narrowing space,  
From mart and crowd, her old-time grace,  
And guards with fondly jealous arms  
The wild growths of outlying farms.

Her sunsets on Kenoza fall,  
Her autumn leaves by Saltonstall;  
No lavished gold can richer make  
Her opulence of hill and lake.

Wise was the choice which led out sires  
To kindle here their household fires,  
And share the large content of all  
Whose lines in pleasant places fall.

More dear, as years on years advance,  
We prize the old inheritance,  
And feel, as far and wide we roam,  
That all we seek we leave at home.

Our palms are pines, our oranges  
Are apples on our orchard trees;  
Our thrushes are our nightingales,  
Our larks the blackbirds of our vales.

No incense which the Orient burns  
Is sweeter than our hillside ferns;  
What tropic splendor can outvie  
Our autumn woods, our sunset sky?

If, where the slow years came and went,  
And left not affluence, but content,  
Now flashes in our dazzled eyes  
The electric light of enterprise;

And if the old idyllic ease  
Seems lost in keen activities,  
And crowded workshops now replace  
The hearth's and farm-field's rustic grace;

No dull, mechanic round of toil  
Life's morning charm can quite despoil;  
And youth and beauty, hand in hand,  
Will always find enchanted land.

No task is ill where hand and brain  
And skill and strength have equal gain,  
And each shall each in honor hold,  
And simple manhood outweigh gold.

Earth shall be near to Heaven when all  
That severs man from man shall fall,  
For, here or there, salvation's plan  
Alone is love of God and man.

O dwellers by the Merrimac,  
The heirs of centuries at your back,  
Still reaping where you have not sown,  
A broader field is now your own.

Hold fast your Puritan heritage,  
But let the free thought of the age  
Its light and hope and sweetness add  
To the stern faith the fathers had.

Adrift on Time's returnless tide,  
As waves that follow waves, we glide.  
God grant we leave upon the shore  
Some waif of good it lacked before;

Some seed, or flower, or plant of worth,  
Some added beauty to the earth;  
Some larger hope, some thought to make  
The sad world happier for its sake.

As tenants of uncertain stay,  
So may we live our little day  
That only grateful hearts shall fill  
The homes we leave in Haverhill.

The singer of a farewell rhyme,  
Upon whose outmost verge of time  
The shades of night are falling down,  
I pray, God bless the good old town!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hazel Blossoms

THE SUMMER warmth has left the sky,  
The summer songs have died away;  
And, withered, in the footpaths lie  
The fallen leaves, but yesterday  
With ruby and with topaz gay.

The grass is browning on the hills;  
No pale, belated flowers recall  
The astral fringes of the rills,  
And drearily the dead vines fall,  
Frost-blackened, from the roadside wall.

Yet through the gray and sombre wood,  
Against the dusk of fir and pine,  
Last of their floral sisterhood,  
The hazel's yellow blossoms shine,  
The tawny gold of Afric's mine!

Small beauty hath my unsung flower,  
For spring to own or summer hail;  
But, in the season's saddest hour,  
To skies that weep and winds that wail  
Its glad surprisals never fail.

O days grown cold! O life grown old  
No rose of June may bloom again;  
But, like the hazel's twisted gold,  
Through early frost and latter rain  
Shall hints of summer-time remain.

And as within the hazel's bough  
A gift of mystic virtue dwells,  
That points to golden ores below,  
And in dry desert places tells  
Where flow unseen the cool, sweet wells,

So, in the wise Diviner's hand,  
Be mine the hazel's grateful part  
To feel, beneath a thirsty land,

The living waters thrill and start,  
The beating of the rivulet's heart!

Sufficeth me the gift to light  
With latest bloom the dark, cold days;  
To call some hidden spring to sight  
That, in these dry and dusty ways,  
Shall sing its pleasant song of praise.

O Love! the hazel-wand may fail,  
But thou canst lend the surer spell,  
That, passing over Baca's vale,  
Repeats the old-time miracle,  
And makes the desert-land a well.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Help

Dream not, O Soul, that easy is the task  
Thus set before thee. If it proves at length,  
As well it may, beyond thy natural strength,  
Faint not, despair not. As a child may ask  
A father, pray the Everlasting Good  
For light and guidance midst the subtle snares  
Of sin thick planted in life's thoroughfares,  
For spiritual strength and moral hardihood;  
Still listening, through the noise of time and sense,  
To the still whisper of the Inward Word;  
Bitter in blame, sweet in approval heard,  
Itself its own confirming evidence  
To health of soul a voice to cheer and please,  
To guilt the wrath of the Eumenides.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# How Mary Grew

With wisdom far beyond her years,  
And graver than her wondering peers,  
So strong, so mild, combining still  
The tender heart and queenly will,  
To conscience and to duty true,  
So, up from childhood, Mary Grew!

Then in her gracious womanhood  
She gave her days to doing good.  
She dared the scornful laugh of men,  
The hounding mob, the slanderer's pen.  
She did the work she found to do,--  
A Christian heroine, Mary Grew!

The freed slave thanks her; blessing comes  
To her from women's weary homes;  
The wronged and erring find in her  
Their censor mild and comforter.  
The world were safe if but a few  
Could grow in grace as Mary Grew!

So, New Year's Eve, I sit and say,  
By this low wood-fire, ashen gray;  
Just wishing, as the night shuts down,  
That I could hear in Boston town,  
In pleasant Chestnut Avenue,  
From her own lips, how Mary Grew!

And hear her graceful hostess tell  
The silver-voiced oracle  
Who lately through her parlors spoke  
As through Dodona's sacred oak,  
A wiser truth than any told  
By Sappho's lips of ruddy gold,--  
The way to make the world anew,  
Is just to grow--as Mary Grew

John Greenleaf Whittier

# How The Robin Came

AN ALGONQUIN LEGEND.

HAPPY young friends, sit by me,  
Under May's blown apple-tree,  
While these home-birds in and out  
Through the blossoms flit about.  
Hear a story, strange and old,  
By the wild red Indians told,  
How the robin came to be:

Once a great chief left his son,--  
Well-beloved, his only one,--  
When the boy was well-nigh grown,  
In the trial-lodge alone.  
Left for tortures long and slow  
Youths like him must undergo,  
Who their pride of manhood test,  
Lacking water, food, and rest.

Seven days the fast he kept,  
Seven nights he never slept.  
Then the young boy, wrung with pain,  
Weak from nature's overstrain,  
Faltering, moaned a low complaint  
'Spare me, father, for I faint!'  
But the chieftain, haughty-eyed,  
Hid his pity in his pride.  
'You shall be a hunter good,  
Knowing never lack of food;  
You shall be a warrior great,  
Wise as fox and strong as bear;  
Many scalps your belt shall wear,  
If with patient heart you wait  
Bravely till your task is done.  
Better you should starving die  
Than that boy and squaw should cry  
Shame upon your father's son!'

When next morn the sun's first rays

Glistened on the hemlock sprays,  
Straight that lodge the old chief sought,  
And boiled saine and moose meat brought.  
'Rise and eat, my son!' he said.  
Lo, he found the poor boy dead!

As with grief his grave they made,  
And his bow beside him laid,  
Pipe, and knife, and wampum-braid,  
On the lodge-top overhead,  
Preening smooth its breast of red  
And the brown coat that it wore,  
Sat a bird, unknown before.  
And as if with human tongue,  
'Mourn me not,' it said, or sung;  
'I, a bird, am still your son,  
Happier than if hunter fleet,  
Or a brave, before your feet  
Laying scalps in battle won.  
Friend of man, my song shall cheer  
Lodge and corn-land; hovering near,  
To each wigwam I shall bring  
Tidings of the coming spring;  
Every child my voice shall know  
In the moon of melting snow,  
When the maple's red bud swells,  
And the wind-flower lifts its bells.  
As their fond companion  
Men shall henceforth own your son,  
And my song shall testify  
That of human kin am I.'

Thus the Indian legend saith  
How, at first, the robin came  
With a sweeter life from death,  
Bird for boy, and still the same.  
If my young friends doubt that this  
Is the robin's genesis,  
Not in vain is still the myth  
If a truth be found therewith  
Unto gentleness belong  
Gifts unknown to pride and wrong;

Happier far than hate is praise,--  
He who sings than he who slays.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# How The Women Went From Dover

THE tossing spray of Coheco's fall  
Hardened to ice on its rocky wall,  
As through Dover town in the chill, gray dawn,  
Three women passed, at the cart-tail drawn!

Bared to the waist, for the north wind's grip  
And keener sting of the constable's whip,  
The blood that followed each hissing blow  
Froze as it sprinkled the winter snow.

Priest and ruler, boy and maid  
Followed the dismal cavalcade;  
And from door and window, open thrown,  
Looked and wondered gaffer and crone.

'God is our witness,' the victims cried,  
We suffer for Him who for all men died;  
The wrong ye do has been done before,  
We bear the stripes that the Master bore!

And thou, O Richard Waldron, for whom  
We hear the feet of a coming doom,  
On thy cruel heart and thy hand of wrong  
Vengeance is sure, though it tarry long.

'In the light of the Lord, a flame we see  
Climb and kindle a proud roof-tree;  
And beneath it an old man lying dead,  
With stains of blood on his hoary head.'

'Smite, Goodman Hate-Evil!--harder still!  
The magistrate cried, 'lay on with a will!  
Drive out of their bodies the Father of Lies,  
Who through them preaches and prophesies!'

So into the forest they held their way,  
By winding river and frost-rimmed bay,  
Over wind-swept hills that felt the beat  
Of the winter sea at their icy feet.

The Indian hunter, searching his traps,  
Peered stealthily through the forest gaps;  
And the outlying settler shook his head,--  
'They're witches going to jail,' he said.

At last a meeting-house came in view;  
A blast on his horn the constable blew;  
And the boys of Hampton cried up and down,  
'The Quakers have come!' to the wondering town.

From barn and woodpile the goodman came;  
The goodwife quitted her quilting frame,  
With her child at her breast; and, hobbling slow,  
The grandam followed to see the show.

Once more the torturing whip was swung,  
Once more keen lashes the bare flesh stung.  
'Oh, spare! they are bleeding!' a little maid cried,  
And covered her face the sight to hide.

A murmur ran round the crowd: 'Good folks,'  
Quoth the constable, busy counting the strokes,  
'No pity to wretches like these is due,  
They have beaten the gospel black and blue!'

Then a pallid woman, in wild-eyed fear,  
With her wooden noggin of milk drew near.  
'Drink, poor hearts!' a rude hand smote  
Her draught away from a parching throat.

'Take heed,' one whispered, 'they'll take your cow  
For fines, as they took your horse and plough,  
And the bed from under you.' 'Even so,'  
She said; 'they are cruel as death, I know.'

Then on they passed, in the waning day,  
Through Seabrook woods, a weariful way;  
By great salt meadows and sand-hills bare,  
And glimpses of blue sea here and there.

By the meeting-house in Salisbury town,

The sufferers stood, in the red sundown,  
Bare for the lash! O pitying Night,  
Drop swift thy curtain and hide the sight.

With shame in his eye and wrath on his lip  
The Salisbury constable dropped his whip.  
'This warrant means murder foul and red;  
Cursed is he who serves it,' he said.

'Show me the order, and meanwhile strike  
A blow at your peril!' said Justice Pike.  
Of all the rulers the land possessed,  
Wisest and boldest was he and best.

He scoffed at witchcraft; the priest he met  
As man meets man; his feet he set  
Beyond his dark age, standing upright,  
Soul-free, with his face to the morning light.

He read the warrant: 'These convey  
From our precincts; at every town on the way  
Give each ten lashes.' 'God judge the brute!  
I tread his order under my foot!

'Cut loose these poor ones and let them go;  
Come what will of it, all men shall know  
No warrant is good, though backed by the Crown,  
For whipping women in Salisbury town!'

The hearts of the villagers, half released  
From creed of terror and rule of priest,  
By a primal instinct owned the right  
Of human pity in law's despite.

For ruth and chivalry only slept,  
His Saxon manhood the yeoman kept;  
Quicker or slower, the same blood ran  
In the Cavalier and the Puritan.

The Quakers sank on their knees in praise  
And thanks. A last, low sunset blaze  
Flashed out from under a cloud, and shed

A golden glory on each bowed head.

The tale is one of an evil time,  
When souls were fettered and thought was crime,  
And heresy's whisper above its breath  
Meant shameful scourging and bonds and death!

What marvel, that hunted and sorely tried,  
Even woman rebuked and prophesied,  
And soft words rarely answered back  
The grim persuasion of whip and rack.

If her cry from the whipping-post and jail  
Pierced sharp as the Kenite's driven nail,  
O woman, at ease in these happier days,  
Forbear to judge of thy sister's ways!

How much thy beautiful life may owe  
To her faith and courage thou canst not know,  
Nor how from the paths of thy calm retreat  
She smoothed the thorns with her bleeding feet.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Howard At Atlanta

RIGHT in the track where Sherman  
Ploughed his red furrow,  
Out of the narrow cabin,  
Up from the cellar's burrow,  
Gathered the little black people,  
With freedom newly dowered,  
Where, beside their Northern teacher,  
Stood the soldier, Howard.  
He listened and heard the children  
Of the poor and long-enslavèd  
Reading the words of Jesus,  
Singing the songs of David.  
Behold! —the dumb lips speaking,  
The blind eyes seeing!  
Bones of the Prophet's vision  
Warmed into being!  
Transformed he saw them passing  
Their new life's portal!  
Almost it seemed the mortal  
Put on the immortal.  
No more with the beasts of burden,  
No more with stone and clod,  
But crowned with glory and honor  
In the image of God!  
There was the human chattel  
Its manhood taking;  
There, in each dark, brown statue,  
A soul was waking!  
The man of many battles,  
With tears his eyelids pressing,  
Stretched over those dusky foreheads  
His one-armed blessing.  
And he said: 'Who hears can never  
Fear for or doubt you;  
What shall I tell the children  
Up North about you?'  
Then ran round a whisper, a murmur,  
Some answer devising;  
And a little boy stood up: 'General,

Tell'em we're rising!  
O black boy of Atlanta!  
But half was spoken:  
The slave's chain and the master's  
Alike are broken.  
The one curse of the races  
Held both in tether:  
They are rising, — all are rising,  
The black and white together!  
O brave men and fair women!  
Ill comes of hate and scorning:  
Shall the dark faces only  
Be turned to morning? —  
Make Time your sole avenger,  
All-healing, all-redressing;  
Meet Fate half-way, and make it  
A joy and blessing!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn For The Celebration Of Emancipation At Newburyport

NOT unto us who did but seek  
The word that burned within to speak,  
Not unto us this day belong  
The triumph and exultant song.  
Upon us fell in early youth  
The burden of unwelcome truth,  
And left us, weak and frail and few,  
The censor's painful work to do.  
Thenceforth our life a fight became,  
The air we breathed was hot with blame;  
For not with gauged and softened tone  
We made the bondman's cause our own.  
We bore, as Freedom's hope forlorn,  
The private hate, the public scorn;  
Yet held through all the paths we trod  
Our faith in man and trust in God.  
We prayed and hoped; but still, with awe,  
The coming of the sword we saw;  
We heard the nearing steps of doom,  
We saw the shade of things to come.  
In grief which they alone can feel  
Who from a mother's wrong appeal,  
With blended lines of fear and hope  
We cast our country's horoscope.  
For still within her house of life  
We marked the lurid sign of strife,  
And, poisoning and imbittering all,  
We saw the star of Wormwood fall.  
Deep as our love for her became  
Our hate of all that wrought her shame,  
And if, thereby, with tongue and pen  
We erred, — we were but mortal men.  
We hoped for peace; our eyes survey  
The blood-red dawn of Freedom's day:  
We prayed for love to loose the chain;  
'T is shorn by battle's axe in twain!  
Nor skill nor strength nor zeal of ours

Has mined and heaved the hostile towers;  
Not by our hands is turned the key  
That sets the sighing captives free.  
A redder sea than Egypt's wave  
Is piled and parted for the slave;  
A darker cloud moves on in light;  
A fiercer fire is guide by night!  
The praise, O Lord! is Thine alone,  
In Thy own way Thy work is done!  
Our poor gifts at Thy feet we cast,  
To whom be glory, first and last!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn For The House Of Worship At Georgetown, Erected In Memory Of A Mother

Thou dwellest not, O Lord of all  
In temples which thy children raise;  
Our work to thine is mean and small,  
And brief to thy eternal days.

Forgive the weakness and the pride,  
If marred thereby our gift may be,  
For love, at least, has sanctified  
The altar that we rear to thee.

The heart and not the hand has wrought  
From sunken base to tower above  
The image of a tender thought,  
The memory of a deathless love!

And though should never sound of speech  
Or organ echo from its wall,  
Its stones would pious lessons teach,  
Its shade in benedictions fall.

Here should the dove of peace be found,  
And blessings and not curses given;  
Nor strife profane, nor hatred wound,  
The mingled loves of earth and heaven.

Thou, who didst soothe with dying breath  
The dear one watching by Thy cross,  
Forgetful of the pains of death  
In sorrow for her mighty loss,

In memory of that tender claim,  
O Mother-born, the offering take,  
And make it worthy of Thy name,  
And bless it for a mother's sake!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn For The Opening Of Plymouth Church, St. Paul, Minnesota

All things are Thine: no gift have we,  
Lord of all gifts, to offer Thee;  
And hence with grateful hearts to-day,  
Thy own before Thy feet we lay.

Thy will was in the builders' thought;  
Thy hand unseen amidst us wrought;  
Through mortal motive, scheme and plan,  
Thy wise eternal purpose ran.

No lack Thy perfect fulness knew;  
For human needs and longings grew  
This house of prayer, this home of rest,  
In the fair garden of the West.

In weakness and in want we call  
On Thee for whom the heavens are small;  
Thy glory is Thy children's good,  
Thy joy Thy tender Fatherhood.

O Father! deign these walls to bless,  
Fill with Thy love their emptiness,  
And let their door a gateway be  
To lead us from ourselves to Thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn For The Opening Of Thomas Starr King's House Of Worship, 1864

Amidst these glorious works of Thine,  
The solemn minarets of the pine,  
And awful Shasta's icy shrine,--

Where swell Thy hymns from wave and gale,  
And organ-thunders never fail,  
Behind the cataract's silver veil,

Our puny walls to Thee we raise,  
Our poor reed-music sounds Thy praise:  
Forgive, O Lord, our childish ways!

For, kneeling on these altar-stairs,  
We urge Thee not with selfish prayers,  
Nor murmur at our daily cares.

Before Thee, in an evil day,  
Our country's bleeding heart we lay,  
And dare not ask Thy hand to stay;

But, through the war-cloud, pray to Thee  
For union, but a union free,  
With peace that comes of purity!

That Thou wilt bare Thy arm to, save  
And, smiting through this Red Sea wave,  
Make broad a pathway for the slave!

For us, confessing all our need,  
We trust nor rite nor word nor deed,  
Nor yet the broken staff of creed.

Assured alone that Thou art good  
To each, as to the multitude,  
Eternal Love and Fatherhood,--

Weak, sinful, blind, to Thee we kneel,

Stretch dumbly forth our hands, and feel  
Our weakness is our strong appeal.

So, by these Western gates of Even  
We wait to see with Thy forgiven  
The opening Golden Gate of Heaven!

Suffice it now. In time to be  
Shall holier altars rise to Thee,--  
Thy Church our broad humanity

White flowers of love its walls shall climb,  
Soft bells of peace shall ring its chime,  
Its days shall all be holy time.

A sweeter song shall then be heard,--  
The music of the world's accord  
Confessing Christ, the Inward Word!

That song shall swell from shore to shore,  
One hope, one faith, one love, restore  
The seamless robe that Jesus wore.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn I

O THOU, whose presence went before  
Our fathers in their weary way,  
As with Thy chosen moved of yore  
The fire by night, the cloud by day!  
When from each temple of the free,  
A nation's song ascends to Heaven,  
Most Holy Father! unto Thee  
May not our humble prayer be given?  
Thy children all, though hue and form  
Are varied in Thine own good will,  
With Thy own holy breathings warm,  
And fashioned in Thine image still.  
We thank Thee, Father! hill and plain  
Around us wave their fruits once more,  
And clustered vine, and blossomed grain,  
Are bending round each cottage door.  
And peace is here; and hope and love  
Are round us as a mantle thrown,  
And unto Thee, supreme above,  
The knee of prayer is bowed alone.  
But oh, for those this day can bring,  
As unto us, no joyful thrill;  
For those who, under Freedom's wing,  
Are bound in Slavery's fetters still:  
For those to whom Thy written word  
Of light and love is never given;  
For those whose ears have never heard  
The promise and the hope of heaven!  
For broken heart, and clouded mind,  
Whereon no human mercies fall;  
Oh, be Thy gracious love inclined,  
Who, as a Father, pitiest all!  
And grant, O Father! that the time  
Of Earth's deliverance may be near,  
When every land and tongue and clime  
The message of Thy love shall hear;  
When, smitten as with fire from heaven,  
The captive's chain shall sink in dust,  
And to his fettered soul be given

The glorious freedom of the just!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Hymn II

O HOLY FATHER! just and true  
Are all Thy works and words and ways,  
And unto Thee alone are due  
Thanksgiving and eternal praise!  
As children of Thy gracious care,  
We veil the eye, we bend the knee,  
With broken words of praise and prayer,  
Father and God, we come to Thee.  
For Thou hast heard, O God of Right,  
The sighing of the island slave;  
And stretched for him the arm of might,  
Not shortened that it could not save.  
The laborer sits beneath his vine,  
The shackled soul and hand are free;  
Thanksgiving! for the work is Thine!  
Praise! for the blessing is of Thee!  
And oh, we feel Thy presence here,  
Thy awful arm in judgment bare!  
Thine eye hath seen the bondman's tear;  
Thine ear hath heard the bondman's prayer.  
Praise! for the pride of man is low,  
The counsels of the wise are naught,  
The fountains of repentance flow;  
What hath our God in mercy wrought?  
Speed on Thy work, Lord God of Hosts!  
And when the bondman's chain is riven,  
And swells from all our guilty coasts  
The anthem of the free to Heaven,  
Oh, not to those whom Thou hast led,  
As with Thy cloud and fire before,  
But. unto Thee, in fear and dread,  
Be praise and glory evermore.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn Of The Children

Thine are all the gifts, O God!  
Thine the broken bread;  
Let the naked feet be shod,  
And the starving fed.

Let Thy children, by Thy grace,  
Give as they abound,  
Till the poor have breathing-space,  
And the lost are found.

Wiser than the miser's hoards  
Is the giver's choice;  
Sweeter than the song of birds  
Is the thankful voice.

Welcome smiles on faces sad  
As the flowers of spring;  
Let the tender hearts be glad  
With the joy they bring.

Happier for their pity's sake  
Make their sports and plays,  
And from lips of childhood take  
Thy perfected praise!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn Of The Dunkers

KLOSTER KEDAR, EPHRATA, PENNSYLVANIA (1738)

SISTER MARIA CHRISTINA sings

Wake, sisters, wake! the day-star shines;  
Above Ephrata's eastern pines  
The dawn is breaking, cool and calm.  
Wake, sisters, wake to prayer and psalm!

Praised be the Lord for shade and light,  
For toil by day, for rest by night!  
Praised be His name who deigns to bless  
Our Kedar of the wilderness!

Our refuge when the spoiler's hand  
Was heavy on our native land;  
And freedom, to her children due,  
The wolf and vulture only knew.

We praised Him when to prison led,  
We owned Him when the stake blazed red;  
We knew, whatever might befall,  
His love and power were over all.

He heard our prayers; with outstretched arm  
He led us forth from cruel harm;  
Still, wheresoe'er our steps were bent,  
His cloud and fire before us went!

The watch of faith and prayer He set,  
We kept it then, we keep it yet.  
At midnight, crow of cock, or noon,  
He cometh sure, He cometh soon.

He comes to chasten, not destroy,  
To purge the earth from sin's alloy.  
At last, at last shall all confess  
His mercy as His righteousness.

The dead shall live, the sick be whole,  
The scarlet sin be white as wool;  
No discord mar below, above,  
The music of eternal love!

Sound, welcome trump, the last alarm!  
Lord God of hosts, make bare thine arm,  
Fulfil this day our long desire,  
Make sweet and clean the world with fire!

Sweep, flaming besom, sweep from sight  
The lies of time; be swift to smite,  
Sharp sword of God, all idols down,  
Genevan creed and Roman crown.

Quake, earth, through all thy zones, till all  
The fanes of pride and priestcraft fall;  
And lift thou up in place of them  
Thy gates of pearl, Jerusalem!

Lo! rising from baptismal flame,  
Transfigured, glorious, yet the same,  
Within the heavenly city's bound  
Our Kloster Kedar shall be found.

He cometh soon! at dawn or noon  
Or set of sun, He cometh soon.  
Our prayers shall meet Him on His way;  
Wake, sisters, wake! arise and pray!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymn, Sung At Christmas By The Scholars Of St. Helena's Island, S.C.

OH, none in all the world before  
Were ever glad as we!  
We're free on Carolina's shore,  
We're all at home and free.  
Thou Friend and Helper of the poor,  
Who suffered for our sake,  
To open every prison door,  
And every yoke to break!  
Bend low Thy pitying face and mild,  
And help us sing and pray;  
The hand that blessed the little child,  
Upon our foreheads lay.  
We hear no more the driver's horn,  
No more the whip we fear,  
This holy day that saw Thee born  
Was never half so dear.  
The very oaks are greener clad,  
The waters brighter smile;  
Oh, never shone a day so glad  
On sweet St. Helen's Isle.  
We praise Thee in our songs to-day,  
To Thee in prayer we call,  
Make swift the feet and straight the way  
Of freedom unto all.  
Come once again, O blessed Lord!  
Come walking on the sea!  
And let the mainlands hear the word  
That sets the islands free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymns From The French Of Lamartine

I.

'Encore un hymne, O ma lyre  
Un hymn pour le Seigneur,  
Un hymne dans mon delire,  
Un hymne dans mon bonheur.'

One hymn more, O my lyre!  
Praise to the God above,  
Of joy and life and love,  
Sweeping its strings of fire!

Oh, who the speed of bird and wind  
And sunbeam's glance will lend to me,  
That, soaring upward, I may find  
My resting-place and home in Thee?  
Thou, whom my soul, midst doubt and gloom,  
Adoreth with a fervent flame,--  
Mysterious spirit! unto whom  
Pertain nor sign nor name!

Swiftly my lyre's soft murmurs go,  
Up from the cold and joyless earth,  
Back to the God who bade them flow,  
Whose moving spirit sent them forth.  
But as for me, O God! for me,  
The lowly creature of Thy will,  
Lingering and sad, I sigh to Thee,  
An earth-bound pilgrim still!

Was not my spirit born to shine  
Where yonder stars and suns are glowing?  
To breathe with them the light divine  
From God's own holy altar flowing?  
To be, indeed, whate'er the soul  
In dreams hath thirsted for so long,--  
A portion of heaven's glorious whole  
Of loveliness and song?

Oh, watchers of the stars at night,  
Who breathe their fire, as we the air,--  
Suns, thunders, stars, and rays of light,  
Oh, say, is He, the Eternal, there?  
Bend there around His awful throne  
The seraph's glance, the angel's knee?  
Or are thy inmost depths His own,  
O wild and mighty sea?

Thoughts of my soul, how swift ye go!  
Swift as the eagle's glance of fire,  
Or arrows from the archer's bow,  
To the far aim of your desire!  
Thought after thought, ye thronging rise,  
Like spring-doves from the startled wood,  
Bearing like them your sacrifice  
Of music unto God!

And shall these thoughts of joy and love  
Come back again no more to me?  
Returning like the patriarch's dove  
Wing-weary from the eternal sea,  
To bear within my longing arms  
The promise-bough of kindlier skies,  
Plucked from the green, immortal palms  
Which shadow Paradise?

All-moving spirit! freely forth  
At Thy command the strong wind goes  
Its errand to the passive earth,  
Nor art can stay, nor strength oppose,  
Until it folds its weary wing  
Once more within the hand divine;  
So, weary from its wandering,  
My spirit turns to Thine!

Child of the sea, the mountain stream,  
From its dark caverns, hurries on,  
Ceaseless, by night and morning's beam,  
By evening's star and noontide's sun,  
Until at last it sinks to rest,  
O'erwearied, in the waiting sea,

And moans upon its mother's breast,--  
So turns my soul to Thee!

O Thou who bidst the torrent flow,  
Who lendest wings unto the wind,--  
Mover of all things! where art Thou?  
Oh, whither shall I go to find  
The secret of Thy resting-place?  
Is there no holy wing for me,  
That, soaring, I may search the space  
Of highest heaven for Thee?

Oh, would I were as free to rise  
As leaves on autumn's whirlwind borne,--  
The arrowy light of sunset skies,  
Or sound, or ray, or star of morn,  
Which melts in heaven at twilight's close,  
Or aught which soars unchecked and free  
Through earth and heaven; that I might lose  
Myself in finding Thee!

II.

LE CRI DE L'AME.

'Quand le souffle divin qui flotte sur le monde.'

When the breath divine is flowing,  
Zephyr-like o'er all things going,  
And, as the touch of viewless fingers,  
Softly on my soul it lingers,  
Open to a breath the lightest,  
Conscious of a touch the slightest,--  
As some calm, still lake, whereon  
Sinks the snowy-bosomed swan,  
And the glistening water-rings  
Circle round her moving wings  
When my upward gaze is turning  
Where the stars of heaven are burning  
Through the deep and dark abyss,  
Flowers of midnight's wilderness,  
Blowing with the evening's breath

Sweetly in their Maker's path  
When the breaking day is flushing  
All the east, and light is gushing  
Upward through the horizon's haze,  
Sheaf-like, with its thousand rays,  
Spreading, until all above  
Overflows with joy and love,  
And below, on earth's green bosom,  
All is changed to light and blossom:

When my waking fancies over  
Forms of brightness flit and hover  
Holy as the seraphs are,  
Who by Zion's fountains wear  
On their foreheads, white and broad,  
'Holiness unto the Lord!'  
When, inspired with rapture high,  
It would seem a single sigh  
Could a world of love create;  
That my life could know no date,  
And my eager thoughts could fill  
Heaven and Earth, o'erflowing still!

Then, O Father! Thou alone,  
From the shadow of Thy throne,  
To the sighing of my breast  
And its rapture answerest.  
All my thoughts, which, upward winging,  
Bathe where Thy own light is springing,--  
All my yearnings to be free  
Are at echoes answering Thee!

Seldom upon lips of mine,  
Father! rests that name of Thine;  
Deep within my inmost breast,  
In the secret place of mind,  
Like an awful presence shrined,  
Doth the dread idea rest  
Hushed and holy dwells it there,  
Prompter of the silent prayer,  
Lifting up my spirit's eye  
And its faint, but earnest cry,

From its dark and cold abode,  
Unto Thee, my Guide and God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Hymns Of The Brahma Somaj

I.

The mercy, O Eternal One!  
By man unmeasured yet,  
In joy or grief, in shade or sun,  
I never will forget.  
I give the whole, and not a part,  
Of all Thou gayest me;  
My goods, my life, my soul and heart,  
I yield them all to Thee!

II.

We fast and plead, we weep and pray,  
From morning until even;  
We feel to find the holy way,  
We knock at the gate of heaven  
And when in silent awe we wait,  
And word and sign forbear,  
The hinges of the golden gate  
Move, soundless, to our prayer!  
Who hears the eternal harmonies  
Can heed no outward word;  
Blind to all else is he who sees  
The vision of the Lord!

III.

O soul, be patient, restrain thy tears,  
Have hope, and not despair;  
As a tender mother heareth her child  
God hears the penitent prayer.  
And not forever shall grief be thine;  
On the Heavenly Mother's breast,  
Washed clean and white in the waters of joy  
Shall His seeking child find rest.  
Console thyself with His word of grace,  
And cease thy wail of woe,  
For His mercy never an equal hath,  
And His love no bounds can know.  
Lean close unto Him in faith and hope;  
How many like thee have found

In Him a shelter and home of peace,  
By His mercy compassed round!  
There, safe from sin and the sorrow it brings,  
They sing their grateful psalms,  
And rest, at noon, by the wells of God,  
In the shade of His holy palms!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# I Was A Stranger, And Ye Took Me In

'Neath skies that winter never knew  
The air was full of light and balm,  
And warm and soft the Gulf wind blew  
Through orange bloom and groves of palm.

A stranger from the frozen North,  
Who sought the fount of health in vain,  
Sank homeless on the alien earth,  
And breathed the languid air with pain.

God's angel came! The tender shade  
Of pity made her blue eye dim;  
Against her woman's breast she laid  
The drooping, fainting head of him.

She bore him to a pleasant room,  
Flower-sweet and cool with salt sea air,  
And watched beside his bed, for whom  
His far-off sisters might not care.

She fanned his feverish brow and smoothed  
Its lines of pain with tenderest touch.  
With holy hymn and prayer she soothed  
The trembling soul that feared so much.

Through her the peace that passeth sight  
Came to him, as he lapsed away  
As one whose troubled dreams of night  
Slide slowly into tranquil day.

The sweetness of the Land of Flowers  
Upon his lonely grave she laid  
The jasmine dropped its golden showers,  
The orange lent its bloom and shade.

And something whispered in her thought,  
More sweet than mortal voices be  
'The service thou for him hast wrought  
O daughter! hath been done for me.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Ichabod

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

Revile him not, the Tempter hath  
A snare for all;  
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,  
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,  
When he who might  
Have lighted up and led his age,  
Falls back in night.

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

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

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

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

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

Then, pay the reverence of old days  
To his dead fame;  
Walk backward, with averted gaze,  
And hide the shame!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# If Thou Of Fortune Be Bereft

If thou of fortune be bereft,  
and in thy store there be but left  
two loaves, sell one, and with the  
dole, buy hyacinths to feed thy soul.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Immortal Love, Forever Full

Immortal love, forever full,  
Forever flowing free,  
Forever shared, forever whole,  
A never ebbing sea!

Our outward lips confess the name  
All other names above;  
Love only knoweth whence it came,  
And comprehendeth love.

Blow, winds of God, awake and blow  
The mists of earth away:  
Shine out, O Light divine, and show  
How wide and far we stray.

We may not climb the heavenly steeps  
To bring the Lord Christ down;  
In vain we search the lowest deeps,  
For Him no depths can drown.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet,  
A present help is He;  
And faith still has its Olivet,  
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch Him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

Through Him the first fond prayers are said  
Our lips of childhood frame,  
The last low whispers of our dead  
Are burdened with His Name.

O Lord and Master of us all,  
Whate'er our name or sign,  
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,  
We test our lives by Thine.

The letter fails, the systems fall,  
And every symbol wanes;  
The Spirit over brooding all,  
Eternal Love remains.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## In Memory: James T. Fields

As a guest who may not stay  
Long and sad farewells to say  
Glides with smiling face away,

Of the sweetness and the zest  
Of thy happy life possessed  
Thou hast left us at thy best.

Warm of heart and clear of brain,  
Of thy sun-bright spirit's wane  
Thou hast spared us all the pain.

Now that thou hast gone away,  
What is left of one to say  
Who was open as the day?

What is there to gloss or shun?  
Save with kindly voices none  
Speak thy name beneath the sun.

Safe thou art on every side,  
Friendship nothing finds to hide,  
Love's demand is satisfied.

Over manly strength and worth,  
At thy desk of toil, or hearth,  
Played the lambent light of mirth,--

Mirth that lit, but never burned;  
All thy blame to pity turned;  
Hatred thou hadst never learned.

Every harsh and vexing thing  
At thy home-fire lost its sting;  
Where thou wast was always spring.

And thy perfect trust in good,  
Faith in man and womanhood,  
Chance and change and time, withstood.

Small respect for cant and whine,  
Bigot's zeal and hate malign,  
Had that sunny soul of thine.

But to thee was duty's claim  
Sacred, and thy lips became  
Reverent with one holy Name.

Therefore, on thy unknown way,  
Go in God's peace! We who stay  
But a little while delay.

Keep for us, O friend, where'er  
Thou art waiting, all that here  
Made thy earthly presence dear;

Something of thy pleasant past  
On a ground of wonder cast,  
In the stiller waters glassed!

Keep the human heart of thee;  
Let the mortal only be  
Clothed in immortality.

And when fall our feet as fell  
Thine upon the asphodel,  
Let thy old smile greet us well;

Proving in a world of bliss  
What we fondly dream in this,--  
Love is one with holiness!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# In Peace

A track of moonlight on a quiet lake,  
Whose small waves on a silver-sanded shore  
Whisper of peace, and with the low winds make  
Such harmonies as keep the woods awake,  
And listening all night long for their sweet sake  
A green-waved slope of meadow, hovered o'er  
By angel-troops of lilies, swaying light  
On viewless stems, with folded wings of white;  
A slumberous stretch of mountain-land, far seen  
Where the low westering day, with gold and green,  
Purple and amber, softly blended, fills  
The wooded vales, and melts among the hills;  
A vine-fringed river, winding to its rest  
On the calm bosom of a stormless sea,  
Bearing alike upon its placid breast,  
With earthly flowers and heavenly' stars impressed,  
The hues of time and of eternity  
Such are the pictures which the thought of thee,  
O friend, awakeneth,--charming the keen pain  
Of thy departure, and our sense of loss  
Requiting with the fullness of thy gain.  
Lo! on the quiet grave thy life-borne cross,  
Dropped only at its side, methinks doth shine,  
Of thy beatitude the radiant sign!  
No sob of grief, no wild lament be there,  
To break the Sabbath of the holy air;  
But, in their stead, the silent-breathing prayer  
Of hearts still waiting for a rest like thine.  
O spirit redeemed! Forgive us, if henceforth,  
With sweet and pure similitudes of earth,  
We keep thy pleasant memory freshly green,  
Of love's inheritance a priceless part,  
Which Fancy's self, in reverent awe, is seen  
To paint, forgetful of the tricks of art,  
With pencil dipped alone in colors of the heart.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## In Quest

Have I not voyaged, friend beloved, with thee  
On the great waters of the unsounded sea,  
Momently listening with suspended oar  
For the low rote of waves upon a shore  
Changeless as heaven, where never fog-cloud drifts  
Over its windless wood, nor mirage lifts  
The steadfast hills; where never birds of doubt  
Sing to mislead, and every dream dies out,  
And the dark riddles which perplex us here  
In the sharp solvent of its light are clear?  
Thou knowest how vain our quest; how, soon or late,  
The baffling tides and circles of debate  
Swept back our bark unto its starting-place,  
Where, looking forth upon the blank, gray space,  
And round about us seeing, with sad eyes,  
The same old difficult hills and cloud-cold skies,  
We said: 'This outward search availeth not  
To find Him. He is farther than we thought,  
Or, haply, nearer. To this very spot  
Whereon we wait, this commonplace of home,  
As to the well of Jacob, He may come  
And tell us all things.' As I listened there,  
Through the expectant silences of prayer,  
Somewhat I seemed to hear, which hath to me  
Been hope, strength, comfort, and I give it thee.

'The riddle of the world is understood  
Only by him who feels that God is good,  
As only he can feel who makes his love  
The ladder of his faith, and climbs above  
On th' rounds of his best instincts; draws no line  
Between mere human goodness and divine,  
But, judging God by what in him is best,  
With a child's trust leans on a Father's breast,  
And hears unmoved the old creeds babble still  
Of kingly power and dread caprice of will,  
Chary of blessing, prodigal of curse,  
The pitiless doomsman of the universe.  
Can Hatred ask for love? Can Selfishness

Invite to self-denial? Is He less  
Than man in kindly dealing? Can He break  
His own great law of fatherhood, forsake  
And curse His children? Not for earth and heaven  
Can separate tables of the law be given.  
No rule can bind which He himself denies;  
The truths of time are not eternal lies.'

So heard I; and the chaos round me spread  
To light and order grew; and, 'Lord,' I said,  
'Our sins are our tormentors, worst of all  
Felt in distrustful shame that dares not call  
Upon Thee as our Father. We have set  
A strange god up, but Thou remainest yet.  
All that I feel of pity Thou hast known  
Before I was; my best is all Thy own.  
From Thy great heart of goodness mine but drew  
Wishes and prayers; but Thou, O Lord, wilt do,  
In Thy own time, by ways I cannot see,  
All that I feel when I am nearest Thee!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# In Remembrance Of Joseph Sturge

In the fair land o'erwatched by Ischia's mountains,  
Across the charmed bay  
Whose blue waves keep with Capri's silver fountains  
Perpetual holiday,

A king lies dead, his wafer duly eaten,  
His gold-bought masses given;  
And Rome's great altar smokes with gums to sweeten  
Her foulest gift to Heaven.

And while all Naples thrills with mute thanksgiving,  
The court of England's queen  
For the dead monster so abhorred while living  
In mourning garb is seen.

With a true sorrow God rebukes that feigning;  
By lone Edgbaston's side  
Stands a great city in the sky's sad raining,  
Bareheaded and wet-eyed!

Silent for once the restless hive of labor,  
Save the low funeral tread,  
Or voice of craftsman whispering to his neighbor  
The good deeds of the dead.

For him no minster's chant of the immortals  
Rose from the lips of sin;  
No mitred priest swung back the heavenly portals  
To let the white soul in.

But Age and Sickness framed their tearful faces  
In the low hovel's door,  
And prayers went up from all the dark by-places  
And Ghettos of the poor.

The pallid toiler and the negro chattel,  
The vagrant of the street,  
The human dice wherewith in games of battle  
The lords of earth compete,

Touched with a grief that needs no outward draping,  
All swelled the long lament,  
Of grateful hearts, instead of marble, shaping  
His viewless monument!

For never yet, with ritual pomp and splendor,  
In the long heretofore,  
A heart more loyal, warm, and true, and tender,  
Has England's turf closed o'er.

And if there fell from out her grand old steeples  
No crash of brazen wail,  
The murmurous woe of kindreds, tongues, and peoples  
Swept in on every gale.

It came from Holstein's birchen-belted meadows,  
And from the tropic calms  
Of Indian islands in the sunlit shadows  
Of Occidental palms;

From the locked roadsteads of the Bothniaii peasants,  
And harbors of the Finn,  
Where war's worn victims saw his gentle presence  
Come sailing, Christ-like, in,

To seek the lost, to build the old waste places,  
To link the hostile shores  
Of severing seas, and sow with England's daisies  
The moss of Finland's moors.

Thanks for the good man's beautiful example,  
Who in the vilest saw  
Some sacred crypt or altar of a temple  
Still vocal with God's law;

And heard with tender ear the spirit sighing  
As from its prison cell,  
Praying for pity, like the mournful crying  
Of Jonah out of hell.

Not his the golden pen's or lip's persuasion,

But a fine sense of right,  
And Truth's directness, meeting each occasion  
Straight as a line of light.

His faith and works, like streams that intermingle,  
In the same channel ran  
The crystal clearness of an eye kept single  
Shamed all the frauds of man.

The very gentlest of all human natures  
He joined to courage strong,  
And love outreaching unto all God's creatures  
With sturdy hate of wrong.

Tender as woman, manliness and meekness  
In him were so allied  
That they who judged him by his strength or weakness  
Saw but a single side.

Men failed, betrayed him, but his zeal seemed nourished  
By failure and by fall;  
Still a large faith in human-kind he cherished,  
And in God's love for all.

And now he rests: his greatness and his sweetness  
No more shall seem at strife,  
And death has moulded into calm completeness  
The statue of his life.

Where the dews glisten and the songbirds warble,  
His dust to dust is laid,  
In Nature's keeping, with no pomp of marble  
To shame his modest shade.

The forges glow, the hammers all are ringing;  
Beneath its smoky vale,  
Hard by, the city of his love is swinging  
Its clamorous iron flail.

But round his grave are quietude and beauty,  
And the sweet heaven above,--

The fitting symbols of a life of duty  
Transfigured into love!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## In School-Days

Still sits the school-house by the road,  
A ragged beggar sleeping;  
Around it still the sumachs grow,  
And blackberry-vines are creeping.

Within, the master's desk is seen,  
Deep-scarred by raps official;  
The warping floor, the battered seats,  
The jack-knife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescoes on its wall;  
Its door's worn sill, betraying  
The feet that, creeping slow to school,  
Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun  
Shone over it at setting;  
Lit up its western window-panes,  
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,  
And brown eyes full of grieving,  
Of one who still her steps delayed  
When all the school were leaving.

For near it stood the little boy  
Her childish favor singled;  
His cap pulled low upon a face  
Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow  
To right and left, he lingered;---  
As restlessly her tiny hands  
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt  
The soft hand's light caressing,  
And heard the tremble of her voice,  
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:  
I hate to go above you,  
Because,"---the brown eyes lower fell,---  
"Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man  
That sweet child-face is showing.  
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave  
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,  
How few who pass above him  
Lament their triumph and his loss,  
Like her, because they love him.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## In The

She came and stood in the Old South Church,  
A wonder and a sign,  
With a look the old-time sibyls wore,  
Half-crazed and half-divine.

Save the mournful sackcloth about her wound,  
Unclothed as the primal mother,  
With limbs that trembled and eyes that blazed  
With a fire she dare not smother.

Loose on her shoulders fell her hair,  
With sprinkled ashes gray;  
She stood in the broad aisle strange and weird  
As a soul at the judgment day.

And the minister paused in his sermon's midst,  
And the people held their breath,  
For these were the words the maiden spoke  
Through lips as the lips of death:

'Thus saith the Lord, with equal feet  
All men my courts shall tread,  
And priest and ruler no more shall eat  
My people up like bread!

'Repent! repent! ere the Lord shall speak  
In thunder and breaking seals  
Let all souls worship Him in the way  
His light within reveals.'

She shook the dust from her naked feet,  
And her sackcloth closer drew,  
And into the porch of the awe-hushed church  
She passed like a ghost from view.

They whipped her away at the tail o' the cart  
Through half the streets of the town,  
But the words she uttered that day nor fire  
Could burn nor water drown.

And now the aisles of the ancient church  
By equal feet are trod,  
And the bell that swings in its belfry rings  
Freedom to worship God!

And now whenever a wrong is done  
It thrills the conscious walls;  
The stone from the basement cries aloud  
And the beam from the timber calls.

There are steeple-houses on every hand,  
And pulpits that bless and ban,  
And the Lord will not grudge the single church  
That is set apart for man.

For in two commandments are all the law  
And the prophets under the sun,  
And the first is last and the last is first,  
And the twain are verily one.

So, long as Boston shall Boston be,  
And her bay-tides rise and fall,  
Shall freedom stand in the Old South Church  
And plead for the rights of all!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Incription To Milton

The new world honors him whose lofty plea  
For England's freedom made her own more sure,  
Whose song, immortal as its theme, shall be  
Their common freehold while both worlds endure.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Inscription On A Fountain

FOR DOROTHEA L. DIX.

Stranger and traveller,  
Drink freely and bestow  
A kindly thought on her  
Who bade this fountain flow,  
Yet hath no other claim  
Than as the minister  
Of blessing in God's name.  
Drink, and in His peace go

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Inscription-For The Relief By Preston Powers

The Eagle, stooping from yon snow-blown peaks,  
For the wild hunter and the Bison seeks,  
In the changed world below; and finds alone  
Their graven semblance in the eternal stone.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Inscriptions On A Sun-Dial

For Dr Henry L Bowditch

With warning hand I mark Time's rapid  
flight  
From life's glad morning to it's solemn  
night;  
Yet through thee dear God's love, I also  
show  
There's Light above me by the shade  
below.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Invocation

Through Thy clear spaces, Lord, of old,  
Formless and void the dead earth rolled;  
Deaf to Thy heaven's sweet music, blind  
To the great lights which o'er it shined;  
No sound, no ray, no warmth, no breath,--  
A dumb despair, a wandering death.

To that dark, weltering horror came  
Thy spirit, like a subtle flame,--  
A breath of life electrical,  
Awakening and transforming all,  
Till beat and thrilled in every part  
The pulses of a living heart.

Then knew their bounds the land and sea;  
Then smiled the bloom of mead and tree;  
From flower to moth, from beast to man,  
The quick creative impulse ran;  
And earth, with life from thee renewed,  
Was in thy holy eyesight good.

As lost and void, as dark and cold  
And formless as that earth of old;  
A wandering waste of storm and night,  
Midst spheres of song and realms of light;  
A blot upon thy holy sky,  
Untouched, unwarned of thee, am I.

O Thou who movest on the deep  
Of spirits, wake my own from sleep  
Its darkness melt, its coldness warm,  
The lost restore, the ill transform,  
That flower and fruit henceforth may be  
Its grateful offering, worthy Thee.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Italy

ACROSS the sea I heard the groans  
Of nations in the intervals  
Of wind and wave. Their blood and bones  
Cried out in torture, crushed by thrones,  
And sucked by priestly cannibals.  
I dreamed of Freedom slowly gained  
By martyr meekness, patience, faith,  
And lo! an athlete grimly stained,  
With corded muscles battle-strained,  
Shouting it from the fields of death!  
I turn me, awe-struck, from the sight,  
Among the clamoring thousands mute,  
I only know that God is right,  
And that the children of the light  
Shall tread the darkness under foot.  
I know the pent fire heaves its crust,  
That sultry skies the bolt will form  
To smite them clear; that Nature must  
The balance of her powers adjust,  
Though with the earthquake and the storm.  
God reigns, and let the earth rejoice!  
I bow before His sterner plan.  
Dumb are the organs of my choice;  
He speaks in battle's stormy voice,  
His praise is in the wrath of man!  
Yet, surely as He lives, the day  
Of peace He promised shall be ours,  
To fold the flags of war, and lay  
Its sword and spear to rust away,  
And sow its ghastly fields with flowers!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# James Russell Lowell

From purest wells of English undefiled  
None deeper drank than he, the New World's child,  
Who in the language of their farm-fields spoke  
The wit and wisdom of New England folk,  
Shaming a monstrous wrong. The world-wide laugh  
Provoked thereby might well have shaken half  
The walls of Slavery down, ere yet the ball  
And mine of battle overthrew them all.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# John Underhill

A score of years had come and gone  
Since the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth stone,  
When Captain Underhill, bearing scars  
From Indian ambush and Flemish wars,  
Left three-hilled Boston and wandered down,  
East by north, to Cocheco town.

With Vane the younger, in counsel sweet,  
He had sat at Anna Hutchinson's feet,  
And, when the bolt of banishment fell  
On the head of his saintly oracle,  
He had shared her ill as her good report,  
And braved the wrath of the General Court.

He shook from his feet as he rode away  
The dust of the Massachusetts Bay.  
The world might bless and the world might ban,  
What did it matter the perfect man,  
To whom the freedom of earth was given,  
Proof against sin, and sure of heaven?

He cheered his heart as he rode along  
With screed of Scripture and holy song,  
Or thought how he rode with his lances free  
By the Lower Rhine and the Zuyder-Zee,  
Till his wood-path grew to a trodden road,  
And Hilton Point in the distance showed.

He saw the church with the block-house nigh,  
The two fair rivers, the flakes thereby,  
And, tacking to windward, low and crank,  
The little shallop from Strawberry Bank;  
And he rose in his stirrups and looked abroad  
Over land and water, and praised the Lord.

Goodly and stately and grave to see,  
Into the clearing's space rode he,  
With the sun on the hilt of his sword in sheath,  
And his silver buckles and spurs beneath,

And the settlers welcomed him, one and all,  
From swift Quampeagan to Gonic Fall.

And he said to the elders: 'Lo, I come  
As the way seemed open to seek a home.  
Somewhat the Lord hath wrought by my hands  
In the Narragansett and Netherlands,  
And if here ye have work for a Christian man,  
I will tarry, and serve ye as best I can.

'I boast not of gifts, but fain would own  
The wonderful favor God hath shown,  
The special mercy vouchsafed one day  
On the shore of Narragansett Bay,  
As I sat, with my pipe, from the camp aside,  
And mused like Isaac at eventide.

'A sudden sweetness of peace I found,  
A garment of gladness wrapped me round;  
I felt from the law of works released,  
The strife of the flesh and spirit ceased,  
My faith to a full assurance grew,  
And all I had hoped for myself I knew.

'Now, as God appointeth, I keep my way,  
I shall not stumble, I shall not stray;  
He hath taken away my fig-leaf dress,  
I wear the robe of His righteousness;  
And the shafts of Satan no more avail  
Than Pequot arrows on Christian mail.'

'Tarry with us,' the settlers cried,  
'Thou man of God, as our ruler and guide.'  
And Captain Underhill bowed his head.  
'The will of the Lord be done!' he said.  
And the morrow beheld him sitting down  
In the ruler's seat in Cocheco town.

And he judged therein as a just man should;  
His words were wise and his rule was good;  
He coveted not his neighbor's land,  
From the holding of bribes he shook his hand;

And through the camps of the heathen ran  
A wholesome fear of the valiant man.

But the heart is deceitful, the good Book saith,  
And life hath ever a savor of death.  
Through hymns of triumph the tempter calls,  
And whoso thinketh he standeth falls.  
Alas! ere their round the seasons ran,  
There was grief in the soul of the saintly man.

The tempter's arrows that rarely fail  
Had found the joints of his spiritual mail;  
And men took note of his gloomy air,  
The shame in his eye, the halt in his prayer,  
The signs of a battle lost within,  
The pain of a soul in the coils of sin.

Then a whisper of scandal linked his name  
With broken vows and a life of blame;  
And the people looked askance on him  
As he walked among them sullen and grim,  
Ill at ease, and bitter of word,  
And prompt of quarrel with hand or sword.

None knew how, with prayer and fasting still,  
He strove in the bonds of his evil will;  
But he shook himself like Samson at length,  
And girded anew his loins of strength,  
And bade the crier go up and down  
And call together the wondering town.

Jeer and murmur and shaking of head  
Ceased as he rose in his place and said  
'Men, brethren, and fathers, well ye know  
How I came among you a year ago,  
Strong in the faith that my soul was freed  
From sin of feeling, or thought, or deed.

'I have sinned, I own it with grief and shame,  
But not with a lie on my lips I came.  
In my blindness I verily thought my heart  
Swept and garnished in every part.

He chargeth His angels with folly; He sees  
The heavens unclean. Was I more than these?

'I urge no plea. At your feet I lay  
The trust you gave me, and go my way.  
Hate me or pity me, as you will,  
The Lord will have mercy on sinners still;  
And I, who am chiefest, say to all,  
Watch and pray, lest ye also fall.'

No voice made answer: a sob so low  
That only his quickened ear could know  
Smote his heart with a bitter pain,  
As into the forest he rode again,  
And the veil of its oaken leaves shut down  
On his latest glimpse of Cocheco town.

Crystal-clear on the man of sin  
The streams flashed up, and the sky shone in;  
On his cheek of fever the cool wind blew,  
The leaves dropped on him their tears of dew,  
And angels of God, in the pure, sweet guise  
Of flowers, looked on him with sad surprise.

Was his ear at fault that brook and breeze  
Sang in their saddest of minor keys?  
What was it the mournful wood-thrush said?  
What whispered the pine-trees overhead?  
Did he hear the Voice on his lonely way  
That Adam heard in the cool of day?

Into the desert alone rode he,  
Alone with the Infinite Purity;  
And, bowing his soul to its tender rebuke,  
As Peter did to the Master's look,  
He measured his path with prayers of pain  
For peace with God and nature again.

And in after years to Cocheco came  
The bruit of a once familiar name;  
How among the Dutch of New Netherlands,  
From wild Danskamer to Haarlem sands,

A penitent soldier preached the Word,  
And smote the heathen with Gideon's sword!

And the heart of Boston was glad to hear  
How he harried the foe on the long frontier,  
And heaped on the land against him barred  
The coals of his generous watch and ward.  
Frailest and bravest! the Bay State still  
Counts with her worthies John Underhill.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# June On The Merrimac

O dwellers in the stately towns,  
What come ye out to see?  
This common earth, this common sky,  
This water flowing free?

As gayly as these kalmia flowers  
Your door-yard blossoms spring;  
As sweetly as these wild-wood birds  
Your caged minstrels sing.

You find but common bloom and green,  
The rippling river's rune,  
The beauty which is everywhere  
Beneath the skies of June;

The Hawkswood oaks, the storm-torn plumes  
Of old pine-forest kings,  
Beneath whose century-woven shade  
Deer Island's mistress sings.

And here are pictured Artichoke,  
And Curson's bowery mill;  
And Pleasant Valley smiles between  
The river and the hill.

You know full well these banks of bloom,  
The upland's wavy line,  
And how the sunshine tips with fire  
The needles of the pine.

Yet, like some old remembered psalm,  
Or sweet, familiar face,  
Not less because of commonness  
You love the day and place.

And not in vain in this soft air  
Shall hard-strung nerves relax,  
Not all in vain the o'erworn brain  
Forego its daily tax.

The lust of power, the greed of gain  
Have all the year their own;  
The haunting demons well may let  
Our one bright day alone.

Unheeded let the newsboy call,  
Aside the ledger lay  
The world will keep its treadmill step  
Though we fall out to-day.

The truants of life's weary school,  
Without excuse from thrift  
We change for once the gains of toil  
For God's unpurchased gift.

From ceiled rooms, from silent books,  
From crowded car and town,  
Dear Mother Earth, upon thy lap,  
We lay our tired heads down.

Cool, summer wind, our heated brows;  
Blue river, through the green  
Of clustering pines, refresh the eyes  
Which all too much have seen.

For us these pleasant woodland ways  
Are thronged with memories old,  
Have felt the grasp of friendly hands  
And heard love's story told.

A sacred presence overbroods  
The earth whereon we meet;  
These winding forest-paths are trod  
By more than mortal feet.

Old friends called from us by the voice  
Which they alone could hear,  
From mystery to mystery,  
From life to life, draw near.

More closely for the sake of them

Each other's hands we press;  
Our voices take from them a tone  
Of deeper tenderness.

Our joy is theirs, their trust is ours,  
Alike below, above,  
Or here or there, about us fold  
The arms of one great love!

We ask to-day no countersign,  
No party names we own;  
Unlabelled, individual,  
We bring ourselves alone.

What cares the unconventioned wood  
For pass-words of the town?  
The sound of fashion's shibboleth  
The laughing waters drown.

Here cant forgets his dreary tone,  
And care his face forlorn;  
The liberal air and sunshine laugh  
The bigot's zeal to scorn.

From manhood's weary shoulder falls  
His load of selfish cares;  
And woman takes her rights as flowers  
And brooks and birds take theirs.

The license of the happy woods,  
The brook's release are ours;  
The freedom of the unshamed wind  
Among the glad-eyed flowers.

Yet here no evil thought finds place,  
Nor foot profane comes in;  
Our grove, like that of Samothrace,  
Is set apart from sin.

We walk on holy ground; above  
A sky more holy smiles;  
The chant of the beatitudes

Swells down these leafy aisles.

Thanks to the gracious Providence  
That brings us here once more;  
For memories of the good behind  
And hopes of good before.

And if, unknown to us, sweet days  
Of June like this must come,  
Unseen of us these laurels clothe  
The river-banks with bloom;

And these green paths must soon be trod  
By other feet than ours,  
Full long may annual pilgrims come  
To keep the Feast of Flowers;

The matron be a girl once more,  
The bearded man a boy,  
And we, in heaven's eternal June,  
Be glad for earthly joy!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Kallundborg Church ( From The Tent On The Beach)

"Tie stille, barn min!  
Imorgen kommer Fin,  
Fa'er din,  
Og gi'er dich Esbern Snares öine og hjerte at lege med!"  
Zealand Rhyme.

"BUILD at Kallundborg by the sea  
A church as stately as church may be,  
And there shalt thou wed my daughter fair,"  
Said the Lord of Nesvek to Esbern Snare.

And the Baron laughed. But Esbern said,  
"Though I lose my soul, I will Helva wed!"  
And off he strode, in his pride of will,  
To the Troll who dwelt in Ulshoi hill.

"Build, O Troll, a church for me  
At Kallundborg by the mighty sea;  
Build it stately, and build it fair,  
Build it quickly," said Esbern Snare.

But the sly Dwarf said, "No work is wrought  
By Trolls of the Hills, O man, for naught.  
What wilt thou give for thy church so fair?"  
"Set thy own price," quoth Esbern Snare.

"When Kallundborg church is builded well,  
Thou must the name of its builder tell,  
Or thy heart and thy eyes must be my boon."  
"Build," said Esbern, "and build it soon."

By night and by day the Troll wrought on;  
He hewed the timbers, he piled the stone;  
But day by day, as the walls rose fair,  
Darker and sadder grew Esbern Snare.

He listened by night, he watched by day,  
He sought and thought, but he dared not pray;

In vain he called on the Elle-maids shy,  
And the Neck and the Nis gave no reply.

Of his evil bargain far and wide  
A rumor ran through the country-side;  
And Helva of Nesvek, young and fair,  
Prayed for the soul of Esbern Snare.

And now the church was wellnigh done;  
One pillar it lacked, and one alone;  
And the grim Troll muttered, "Fool thou art!  
To-morrow gives me thy eyes and heart!"

By Kallundborg in black despair,  
Through wood and meadow, walked Esbern Snare,  
Till, worn and weary, the strong man sank  
Under the birches on Ulshoi bank.

At his last day's work he heard the Troll  
Hammer and delve in the quarry's hole;  
Before him the church stood large and fair:  
"I have builded my tomb," said Esbern Snare.

And he closed his eyes the sight to hide,  
When he heard a light step at his side:  
"O Esbern Snare! a sweet voice said,  
"Would I might die now in thy stead!"

With a grasp by love and by fear made strong,  
He held her fast, and he held her long;  
With the beating heart of a bird afeard,  
She hid her face in his flame-red beard.

"O love!" he cried, "let me look to-day  
In thine eyes ere mine are plucked away;  
Let me hold thee close, let me feel thy heart  
Ere mine by the Troll is torn apart!

"I sinned, O Helva, for love of thee!  
Pray that the Lord Christ pardon me!"  
But fast as she prayed, and faster still,  
Hammered the Troll in Ulshoi hill.

He knew, as he wrought, that a loving heart  
Was somehow baffling his evil art;  
For more than spell of Elf or Troll  
Is a maiden's prayer for her lover's soul.

And Esbern listened, and caught the sound  
Of a Troll-wife singing underground:  
"To-morrow comes Fine, father thine:  
Lie still and hush thee, baby mine!

"Lie still, my darling! next sunrise  
Thou'lt play with Esbern Snare's heart and eyes!"  
"Ho! ho!" quoth Esbern, "is that your game?  
Thanks to the Troll-wife, I know his name!"

The Troll he heard him, and hurried on  
To Kallundborg church with the lacking stone.  
"Too late, Gaffer Fine!" cried Esbern Snare;  
And Troll and pillar vanished in air!

That night the harvesters heard the sound  
Of a woman sobbing underground,  
And the voice of the Hill-Troll loud with blame  
Of the careless singer who told his name.

Of the Troll of the Church they sing the rune  
By the Northern Sea in the harvest moon;  
And the fishers of Zealand hear him still  
Scolding his wife in Ulshoi hill.

And seaward over its groves of birch  
Still looks the tower of Kallundborg church  
Where, first at its altar, a wedded pair,  
Stood Helva of Nesvek and Esbern Snare!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Kathleen

O Norah, lay your basket down,  
And rest your weary hand,  
And come and hear me sing a song  
Of our old Ireland.

There was a lord of Galaway,  
A mighty lord was he;  
And he did wed a second wife,  
A maid of low degree.

But he was old, and she was young,  
And so, in evil spite,  
She baked the black bread for his kin,  
And fed her own with white.

She whipped the maids and starved the kern,  
And drove away the poor;  
'Ah, woe is me!' the old lord said,  
'I rue my bargain sore!'

This lord he had a daughter fair,  
Beloved of old and young,  
And nightly round the shealing-fires  
Of her the gleeman sung.

'As sweet and good is young Kathleen  
As Eve before her fall;'  
So sang the harper at the fair,  
So harped he in the hall.

'Oh, come to me, my daughter dear!  
Come sit upon my knee,  
For looking in your face, Kathleen,  
Your mother's own I see!'

He smoothed and smoothed her hair away,  
He kissed her forehead fair;  
'It is my darling Mary's brow,  
It is my darling's hair!'

Oh, then spake up the angry dame,  
'Get up, get up,' quoth she,  
'I'll sell ye over Ireland,  
I'll sell ye o'er the sea!'

She clipped her glossy hair away,  
That none her rank might know;  
She took away her gown of silk,  
And gave her one of tow,

And sent her down to Limerick town  
And to a seaman sold  
This daughter of an Irish lord  
For ten good pounds in gold.

The lord he smote upon his breast,  
And tore his beard so gray;  
But he was old, and she was young,  
And so she had her way.

Sure that same night the Banshee howled  
To fright the evil dame,  
And fairy folks, who loved Kathleen,  
With funeral torches came.

She watched them glancing through the trees,  
And glimmering down the hill;  
They crept before the dead-vault door,  
And there they all stood still!

'Get up, old man! the wake-lights shine!'  
'Ye murdering witch,' quoth he,  
'So I'm rid of your tongue, I little care  
If they shine for you or me.'

'Oh, whoso brings my daughter back,  
My gold and land shall have!'  
Oh, then spake up his handsome page,  
'No gold nor land I crave!

'But give to me your daughter dear,

Give sweet Kathleen to me,  
Be she on sea or be she on land,  
I'll bring her back to thee.'

'My daughter is a lady born,  
And you of low degree,  
But she shall be your bride the day  
You bring her back to me.'

He sailed east, he sailed west,  
And far and long sailed he,  
Until he came to Boston town,  
Across the great salt sea.

'Oh, have ye seen the young Kathleen,  
The flower of Ireland?  
Ye'll know her by her eyes so blue,  
And by her snow-white hand!'

Out spake an ancient man, 'I know  
The maiden whom ye mean;  
I bought her of a Limerick man,  
And she is called Kathleen.

'No skill hath she in household work,  
Her hands are soft and white,  
Yet well by loving looks and ways  
She doth her cost requite.'

So up they walked through Boston town,  
And met a maiden fair,  
A little basket on her arm  
So snowy-white and bare.

'Come hither, child, and say hast thou  
This young man ever seen?'  
They wept within each other's arms,  
The page and young Kathleen.

'Oh give to me this darling child,  
And take my purse of gold.'  
'Nay, not by me,' her master said,

'Shall sweet Kathleen be sold.

'We loved her in the place of one  
The Lord hath early ta'en;  
But, since her heart's in Ireland,  
We give her back again!'

Oh, for that same the saints in heaven  
For his poor soul shall pray,  
And Mary Mother wash with tears  
His heresies away.

Sure now they dwell in Ireland;  
As you go up Claremore  
Ye'll see their castle looking down  
The pleasant Galway shore.

And the old lord's wife is dead and gone,  
And a happy man is he,  
For he sits beside his own Kathleen,  
With her darling on his knee.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Kenoza Lake

As Adam did in Paradise,  
To-day the primal right we claim  
Fair mirror of the woods and skies,  
We give to thee a name.

Lake of the pickerel!--let no more  
The echoes answer back, 'Great Pond,'  
But sweet Kenoza, from thy shore  
And watching hills beyond,

Let Indian ghosts, if such there be  
Who ply unseen their shadowy lines,  
Call back the ancient name to thee,  
As with the voice of pines.

The shores we trod as barefoot boys,  
The nutted woods we wandered through,  
To friendship, love, and social joys  
We consecrate anew.

Here shall the tender song be sung,  
And memory's dirges soft and low,  
And wit shall sparkle on the tongue,  
And mirth shall overflow,

Harmless as summer lightning plays  
From a low, hidden cloud by night,  
A light to set the hills ablaze,  
But not a bolt to smite.

In sunny South and prairied West  
Are exiled hearts remembering still,  
As bees their hive, as birds their nest,  
The homes of Haverhill.

They join us in our rites to-day;  
And, listening, we may hear, erelong,  
From inland lake and ocean bay,  
The echoes of our song.

Kenoza! o'er no sweeter lake  
Shall morning break or noon-cloud sail,--  
No fairer face than thine shall take  
The sunset's golden veil.

Long be it ere the tide of trade  
Shall break with harsh-resounding din  
The quiet of thy banks of shade,  
And hills that fold thee in.

Still let thy woodlands hide the hare,  
The shy loon sound his trumpet-note,  
Wing-weary from his fields of air,  
The wild-goose on thee float.

Thy peace rebuke our feverish stir,  
Thy beauty our deforming strife;  
Thy woods and waters minister  
The healing of their life.

And sinless Mirth, from care released,  
Behold, unawed, thy mirrored sky,  
Smiling as smiled on Cana's feast  
The Master's loving eye.

And when the summer day grows dim,  
And light mists walk thy mimic sea,  
Revive in us the thought of Him  
Who walked on Galilee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# King Solomon And The Ants

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

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

Whereto devout souls turn  
In fond, ecstatic dream,  
And through its earth-born theme  
The Love of loves discern.

Proud in the Syrian sun,  
In gold and purple sheen,  
The dusky Ethiop queen  
Smiled on King Solomon.

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

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

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

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

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

'Thou of the God-lent crown,  
Shall these vile creatures dare  
Murmur against thee where  
The knees of kings kneel down?'

'Nay,' Solomon replied,  
'The wise and strong should seek  
The welfare of the weak,'  
And turned his horse aside.

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

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

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

John Greenleaf Whittier

# King Volmer And Elsie

After the Danish of Christian Winter

Where, over heathen doom-rings and gray stones of the Horg,  
In its little Christian city stands the church of Vordingborg,  
In merry mood King Volmer sat, forgetful of his power,  
As idle as the Goose of Gold that brooded on his tower.

Out spake the King to Henrik, his young and faithful squire  
'Dar'st trust thy little Elsie, the maid of thy desire?'  
'Of all the men in Denmark she loveth only me  
As true to me is Elsie as thy Lily is to thee.'

Loud laughed the king: 'To-morrow shall bring another day,  
When I myself will test her; she will not say me nay.'  
Thereat the lords and gallants, that round about him stood,  
Wagged all their heads in concert and smiled as courtiers should.

The gray lark sings o'er Vordingborg, and on the ancient town  
From the tall tower of Valdemar the Golden Goose looks down;  
The yellow grain is waving in the pleasant wind of morn,  
The wood resounds with cry of hounds and blare of hunter's horn.

In the garden of her father little Elsie sits and spins,  
And, singing with the early birds, her daily task, begins.  
Gay tulips bloom and sweet mint curls around her garden-bower,  
But she is sweeter than the mint and fairer than the flower.

About her form her kirtle blue clings lovingly, and, white  
As snow, her loose sleeves only leave her small, round wrists in sight;  
Below, the modest petticoat can only half conceal  
The motion of the lightest foot that ever turned a wheel.

The cat sits purring at her side, bees hum in sunshine warm;  
But, look! she starts, she lifts her face, she shades it with her arm.  
And, hark! a train of horsemen, with sound of dog and horn,  
Come leaping o'er the ditches, come trampling down the corn!

Merrily rang the bridle-reins, and scarf and plume streamed gay,

As fast beside her father's gate the riders held their way;  
And one was brave in scarlet cloak, with golden spur on heel,  
And, as he checked his foaming steed, the maiden checked her wheel.

'All hail among thy roses, the fairest rose to me!  
For weary months in secret my heart has longed for thee!  
What noble knight was this? What words for modest maiden's ear?  
She dropped a lowly courtesy of bashfulness and fear.

She lifted up her spinning-wheel; she fain would seek the door,  
Trembling in every limb, her cheek with blushes crimsoned o'er.  
'Nay, fear me not,' the rider said, 'I offer heart and hand,  
Bear witness these good Danish knights who round about me stand.

'I grant you time to think of this, to answer as you may,  
For to-morrow, little Elsie, shall bring another day.'  
He spake the old phrase slyly as, glancing round his train,  
He saw his merry followers seek to hide their smiles in vain.

'The snow of pearls I'll scatter in your curls of golden hair,  
I'll line with furs the velvet of the kirtle that you wear;  
All precious gems shall twine your neck; and in a chariot gay  
You shall ride, my little Elsie, behind four steeds of gray.

'And harps shall sound, and flutes shall play, and brazen lamps shall glow;  
On marble floors your feet shall weave the dances to and fro.  
At frosty eventide for us the blazing hearth shall shine,  
While, at our ease, we play at draughts, and drink the blood-red wine.'

Then Elsie raised her head and met her wooer face to face;  
A roguish smile shone in her eye and on her lip found place.  
Back from her low white forehead the curls of gold she threw,  
And lifted up her eyes to his, steady and clear and blue.

'I am a lowly peasant, and you a gallant knight;  
I will not trust a love that soon may cool and turn to slight.  
If you would wed me henceforth be a peasant, not a lord;  
I bid you hang upon the wall your tried and trusty sword.'

'To please you, Elsie, I will lay keen Dynadel away,  
And in its place will swing the scythe and mow your father's hay.'  
'Nay, but your gallant scarlet cloak my eyes can never bear;

A Vadmal coat, so plain and gray, is all that you must wear.'

'Well, Vadmal will I wear for you,' the rider gayly spoke,  
'And on the Lord's high altar I'll lay my scarlet cloak.'  
'But mark,' she said, 'no stately horse my peasant love must ride,  
A yoke of steers before the plough is all that he must guide.'

The knight looked down upon his steed: 'Well, let him wander free  
No other man must ride the horse that has been backed by me.  
Henceforth I'll tread the furrow and to my oxen talk,  
If only little Elsie beside my plough will walk.'

'You must take from out your cellar cask of wine and flask and can;  
The homely mead I brew you may serve a peasant man.'  
'Most willingly, fair Elsie, I'll drink that mead of thine,  
And leave my minstrel's thirsty throat to drain my generous wine.'

'Now break your shield asunder, and shatter sign and boss,  
Unmeet for peasant-wedded arms, your knightly knee across.  
And pull me down your castle from top to basement wall,  
And let your plough trace furrows in the ruins of your hall!'

Then smiled he with a lofty pride; right well at last he knew  
The maiden of the spinning-wheel was to her troth. plight true.  
'Ah, roguish little Elsie! you act your part full well  
You know that I must bear my shield and in my castle dwell!

'The lions ramping on that shield between the hearts aflame  
Keep watch o'er Denmark's honor, and guard her ancient name.

'For know that I am Volmer; I dwell in yonder towers,  
Who ploughs them ploughs up Denmark, this goodly home of ours'.

'I tempt no more, fair Elsie! your heart I know is true;  
Would God that all our maidens were good and pure as you!  
Well have you pleased your monarch, and he shall well repay;  
God's peace! Farewell! To-morrow will bring another day!'

He lifted up his bridle hand, he spurred his good steed then,  
And like a whirl-blast swept away with all his gallant men.  
The steel hoofs beat the rocky path; again on winds of morn  
The wood resounds with cry of hounds and blare of hunter's horn.

'Thou true and ever faithful!' the listening Henrik cried;  
And, leaping o'er the green hedge, he stood by Elsie's side.  
None saw the fond embracing, save, shining from afar,  
The Golden Goose that watched them from the tower of Valdemar.

O darling girls of Denmark! of all the flowers that throng  
Her vales of spring the fairest, I sing for you my song.  
No praise as yours so bravely rewards the singer's skill;  
Thank God! of maids like Elsie the land has plenty still!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Kinsman

Where ceaseless Spring her garland twines,  
As sweetly shall the loved one rest,  
As if beneath the whispering pines  
And maple shadows of the West.

Ye mourn, O hearts of home! for him,  
But, haply, mourn ye not alone;  
For him shall far-off eyes be dim,  
And pity speak in tongues unknown.

There needs no graven line to give  
The story of his blameless youth;  
All hearts shall throb intuitive,  
And nature guess the simple truth.

The very meaning of his name  
Shall many a tender tribute win;  
The stranger own his sacred claim,  
And all the world shall be his kin.

And there, as here, on main and isle,  
The dews of holy peace shall fall,  
The same sweet heavens above him smile,  
And God's dear love be over all

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Kossuth

Type of two mighty continents!--combining  
The strength of Europe with the warmth and glow  
Of Asian song and prophecy,--the shining  
Of Orient splendors over Northern snow!  
Who shall receive him? Who, unblushing, speak  
Welcome to him, who, while he strove to break  
The Austrian yoke from Magyar necks, smote off  
At the same blow the fetters of the serf,  
Rearing the altar of his Fatherland  
On the firm base of freedom, and thereby  
Lifting to Heaven a patriot's stainless hand,  
Mocked not the God of Justice with a lie!  
Who shall be Freedom's mouthpiece? Who shall give  
Her welcoming cheer to the great fugitive?  
Not he who, all her sacred trusts betraying,  
Is scourging back to slavery's hell of pain  
The swarthy Kossuths of our land again!  
Not he whose utterance now from lips designed  
The bugle-march of Liberty to wind,  
And call her hosts beneath the breaking light,  
The keen reveille of her morn of fight,  
Is but the hoarse note of the blood-hound's baying,  
The wolf's long howl behind the bondman's flight!  
Oh for the tongue of him who lies at rest  
In Quincy's shade of patrimonial trees,  
Last of the Puritan tribunes and the best,  
To lend a voice to Freedom's sympathies,  
And hail the coming of the noblest guest  
The Old World's wrong has given the New World of the West!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Laus Deo

It is done!

Clang of bell and roar of gun  
Send the tidings up and down.  
How the belfries rock and reel!  
How the great guns, peal on peal,  
Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O bells!

Every stroke exulting tells  
Of the burial hour of crime.  
Loud and long, that all may hear,  
Ring for every listening ear  
Of Eternity and Time!

Let us kneel:

God's own voice is in that peal,  
And this spot is holy ground.  
Lord, forgive us! What are we  
That our eyes this glory see,  
That our ears have heard this sound!

For the Lord

On the whirlwind is abroad;  
In the earthquake He has spoken;  
He has smitten with His thunder  
The iron walls asunder,  
And the gates of brass are broken!

Loud and long

Lift the old exulting song;  
Sing with Miriam by the sea,  
He has cast the mighty down;  
Horse and rider sink and drown;  
'He hath triumphed gloriously!'

Did we dare,

In our agony of prayer,  
Ask for more than He has done?  
When was ever His right hand

Over any time or land  
Stretched as now beneath the sun?

How they pale,  
Ancient myth and song and tale,  
In this wonder of our days  
When the cruel rod of war  
Blossoms white with righteous law,  
And the wrath of man is praise!

Blotted out!  
All within and all about  
Shall a fresher life begin;  
Freer breathe the universe  
As it rolls its heavy curse  
On the dead and buried sin!

It is done!  
In the circuit of the sun  
Shall the sound thereof go forth.  
It shall bid the sad rejoice,  
It shall give the dumb a voice,  
It shall belt with joy the earth!

Ring and swing,  
Bells of joy! On morning's wing  
Sound the song of praise abroad!  
With a sound of broken chains  
Tell the nations that He reigns,  
Who alone is Lord and God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Laying Up Treasure

From the Mahabharata.

Before the Ender comes, whose charioteer  
Is swift or slow Disease, lay up each year  
Thy harvests of well-doing, wealth that kings  
Nor thieves can take away. When all the things  
Thou tallest thine, goods, pleasures, honors fall,  
Thou in thy virtue shalt survive them all.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Le Marais Du Cygne

A BLUSH as of roses  
Where rose never grew!  
Great drops on the bunch-grass,  
But not of the dew!  
A taint in the sweet air  
For wild bees to shun!  
A stain that shall never  
Bleach out in the sun!  
Back, steed of the prairies!  
Sweet song-bird, fly back!  
Wheel hither, bald vulture!  
Gray wolf, call thy pack!  
The foul human vultures  
Have feasted and fled;  
The wolves of the Border  
Have crept from the dead.  
From the hearths of their cabins,  
The fields of their corn,  
Unwarned and unweaponed,  
The victims were torn, —  
By the whirlwind of murder  
Swooped up and swept on  
To the low, reedy fen-lands,  
The Marsh of the Swan.  
With a vain plea for mercy  
No stout knee was crooked;  
In the mouths of the rifles  
Right manly they looked.  
How paled the May sunshine,  
O Marais du Cygne!  
On death for the strong life,  
On red grass for green!  
In the homes of their rearing,  
Yet warm with their lives,  
Ye wait the dead only,  
Poor children and wives!  
Put out the red forge-fire,  
The smith shall not come;  
Unyoke the brown oxen,

The ploughman lies dumb.  
Wind slow from the Swan's Marsh,  
O dreary death-train,  
With pressed lips as bloodless  
As lips of the slain!  
Kiss down the young eyelids,  
Smooth down the gray hairs;  
Let tears quench the curses  
That burn through your prayers.  
Strong man of the prairies,  
Mourn bitter and wild!  
Wail, desolate woman!  
Weep, fatherless child!  
But the grain of God springs up  
From ashes beneath,  
And the crown of his harvest  
Is life out of death.  
Not in vain on the dial  
The shade moves along,  
To point the great contrasts  
Of right and of wrong:  
Free homes and free altars,  
Free prairie and flood, —  
The reeds of the Swan's Marsh,  
Whose bloom is of blood!  
On the lintels of Kansas  
That blood shall not dry;  
Henceforth the Bad Angel  
Shall harmless go by;  
Henceforth to the sunset,  
Unchecked on her way,  
Shall Liberty follow  
The march of the day.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Leggett's Monument

Yes, pile the marble o'er him! It is well  
That ye who mocked him in his long stern strife,  
And planted in the pathway of his life  
The ploughshares of your hatred hot from hell,  
Who clamored down the bold reformer when  
He pleaded for his captive fellow-men,  
Who spurned him in the market-place, and sought  
Within thy walls, St. Tammany, to bind  
In party chains the free and honest thought,  
The angel utterance of an upright mind,  
Well is it now that o'er his grave ye raise  
The stony tribute of your tardy praise,  
For not alone that pile shall tell to Fame  
Of the brave heart beneath, but of the builders' shame!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Letter From A Missionary Of The Methodist Episcopal Church South, In Kansas, To A Distinguished Politician. Douglas Mission 1854.

LAST week — the Lord be praised for all His mercies  
To His unworthy servant! — I arrived  
Safe at the Mission, via Westport; where  
I tarried over night, to aid in forming  
A Vigilance Committee, to send back,  
In shirts of tar, and feather-doublets quilted  
With forty stripes save one, all Yankee comers,  
Uncircumcised and Gentile, aliens from  
The Commonwealth of Israel, who despise  
The prize of the high calling of the saints,  
Who plant amidst this heathen wilderness  
Pure gospel institutions, sanctified  
By patriarchal use. The meeting opened  
With prayer, as was most fitting. Half an hour,  
Or thereaway, I groaned, and strove, and wrestled,  
As Jacob did at Penuel, till the power  
Fell on the people, and they cried 'Amen!'  
'Glory to God!' and stamped and clapped their hands;  
And the rough river boatmen wiped their eyes;  
'Go it, old hoss!' they cried, and cursed the niggers —  
Fulfilling thus the word of prophecy,  
'Cursed be Cannan.' After prayer, the meeting  
Chose a committee — good and pious men —  
A Presbyterian Elder, Baptist deacon,  
A local preacher, three or four class-leaders,  
Anxious inquirers, and renewed backsliders,  
A score in all — to watch the river ferry,  
(As they of old did watch the fords of Jordan,)  
And cut off all whose Yankee tongues refuse  
The Shibboleth of the Nebraska bill.  
And then, in answer to repeated calls,  
I gave a brief account of what I saw  
In Washington; and truly many hearts  
Rejoiced to know the President, and you  
And all the Cabinet regularly hear  
The gospel message of a Sunday morning,

Drinking with thirsty souls of the sincere  
Milk of the Word. Glory! Amen, and Selah!  
Here, at the Mission, all things have gone well:  
The brother who, throughout my absence, acted  
As overseer, assures me that the crops  
Never were better. I have lost one negro,  
A first-rate hand, but obstinate and sullen.  
He ran away some time last spring, and hid  
In the river timber. There my Indian converts  
Found him, and treed and shot him. For the rest,  
The heathens round about begin to feel  
The influence of our pious ministrations  
And works of love; and some of them already  
Have purchased negroes, and are settling down  
As sober Christians! Bless the Lord for this!  
I know it will rejoice you. You, I hear,  
Are on the eve of visiting Chicago,  
To fight with the wild beasts of Ephesus,  
Long John, and Dutch Free-Soilers. May your arm  
Be clothed with strength, and on your tongue be found  
The sweet oil of persuasion. So desires  
Your brother and co-laborer. Amen!  
P.S. All's lost. Even while I write these lines,  
The Yankee abolitionists are coming  
Upon us like a flood — grim, stalwart men,  
Each face set like a flint of Plymouth Rock  
Against our institutions — staking out  
Their farm lots on the wooded Wakarusa,  
Or squatting by the mellow-bottomed Kansas;  
The pioneers of mightier multitudes,  
The small rain-patter, ere the thunder shower  
Drowns the dry prairies. Hope from man is not.  
Oh, for a quiet berth at Washington,  
Snug naval chaplaincy, or clerkship, where  
These rumors of free labor and free soil  
Might never meet me more. Better to be  
Door-keeper in the White House, than to dwell  
Amidst these Yankee tents, that, whitening, show  
On the green prairie like a fleet becalmed.  
Methinks I hear a voice come up the river  
From those far bayous, where the alligators  
Mount guard around the camping filibusters:

'Shake off the dust of Kansas. Turn to Cuba —  
(That golden orange just about to fall,  
O'er-ripe, into the Democratic lap  
Keep pace with Providence, or, as we say,  
Manifest destiny. Go forth and follow  
The message of our gospel, thither borne  
Upon the point of Quitman's bowie-knife,  
And the persuasive lips of Colt's revolvers.  
There may'st thou, underneath thy vine and fig-tree,  
Watch thy increase of sugar cane and negroes,  
Calm as a patriarch in his eastern tent!'  
Amen: So mote it be. So prays your friend.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Lexington

1775.

No Berserk thirst of blood had they,  
No battle-joy was theirs, who set  
Against the alien bayonet  
Their homespun breasts in that old day.

Their feet had trodden peaceful, ways;  
They loved not strife, they dreaded pain;  
They saw not, what to us is plain,  
That God would make man's wrath his praise.

No seers were they, but simple men;  
Its vast results the future hid  
The meaning of the work they did  
Was strange and dark and doubtful then.

Swift as their summons came they left  
The plough mid-furrow standing still,  
The half-ground corn grist in the mill,  
The spade in earth, the axe in cleft.

They went where duty seemed to call,  
They scarcely asked the reason why;  
They only knew they could but die,  
And death was not the worst of all!

Of man for man the sacrifice,  
All that was theirs to give, they gave.  
The flowers that blossomed from their grave  
Have sown themselves beneath all skies.

Their death-shot shook the feudal tower,  
And shattered slavery's chain as well;  
On the sky's dome, as on a bell,  
Its echo struck the world's great hour.

That fateful echo is not dumb  
The nations listening to its sound

Wait, from a century's vantage-ground,  
The holier triumphs yet to come,--

The bridal time of Law and Love,  
The gladness of the world's release,  
When, war-sick, at the feet of Peace  
The hawk shall nestle with the dove!--

The golden age of brotherhood  
Unknown to other rivalries  
Than of the mild humanities,  
And gracious interchange of good,

When closer strand shall lean to strand,  
Till meet, beneath saluting flags,  
The eagle of our mountain-crag,  
The lion of our Motherland!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Lines From A Letter To A Young Clerical Friend

A STRENGTH Thy service cannot tire,  
A faith which doubt can never dim,  
A heart of love, a lip of fire,  
O Freedom's God! be Thou to him!  
Speak through him words of power and fear,  
As through Thy prophet bards of old,  
And let a scornful people hear  
Once more Thy Sinai-thunders rolled.  
For lying lips Thy blessing seek,  
And hands of blood are raised to Thee,  
And on Thy children, crushed and weak,  
The oppressor plants his kneeling knee.  
Let then, O God! Thy servant dare  
Thy truth in all its power to tell,  
Unmask the priestly thieves, and tear  
The Bible from the grasp of hell!  
From hollow rite and narrow span  
Of law and sect by Thee released,  
Oh, teach him that the Christian man  
Is holier than the Jewish priest.  
Chase back the shadows, gray and old,  
Of the dead ages, from his way,  
And let his hopeful eyes behold  
The dawn of Thy millennial day;  
That day when lettered limb and mind  
Shall know the truth which maketh free,  
And he alone who loves his kind  
Shall, childlike, claim the love of Thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Lines On A Fly-Leaf

I need not ask thee, for my sake,  
To read a book which well may make  
Its way by native force of wit  
Without my manual sign to it.  
Its piquant writer needs from me  
No gravely masculine guaranty,  
And well might laugh her merriest laugh  
At broken spears in her behalf;  
Yet, spite of all the critics tell,  
I frankly own I like her well.  
It may be that she wields a pen  
Too sharply nibbed for thin-skinned men,  
That her keen arrows search and try  
The armor joints of dignity,  
And, though alone for error meant,  
Sing through the air irreverent.  
I blame her not, the young athlete  
Who plants her woman's tiny feet,  
And dares the chances of debate  
Where bearded men might hesitate,  
Who, deeply earnest, seeing well  
The ludicrous and laughable,  
Mingling in eloquent excess  
Her anger and her tenderness,  
And, chiding with a half-caress,  
Strives, less for her own sex than ours,  
With principalities and powers,  
And points us upward to the clear  
Sunned heights of her new atmosphere.

Heaven mend her faults!--I will not pause  
To weigh and doubt and peck at flaws,  
Or waste my pity when some fool  
Provokes her measureless ridicule.  
Strong-minded is she? Better so  
Than dulness set for sale or show,  
A household folly, capped and belled  
In fashion's dance of puppets held,  
Or poor pretence of womanhood,

Whose formal, flavorless platitude  
Is warranted from all offence  
Of robust meaning's violence.  
Give me the wine of thought whose head  
Sparkles along the page I read,--  
Electric words in which I find  
The tonic of the northwest wind;  
The wisdom which itself allies  
To sweet and pure humanities,  
Where scorn of meanness, hate of wrong,  
Are underlaid by love as strong;  
The genial play of mirth that lights  
Grave themes of thought, as when, on nights  
Of summer-time, the harmless blaze  
Of thunderless heat-lightning plays,  
And tree and hill-top resting dim  
And doubtful on the sky's vague rim,  
Touched by that soft and lambent gleam,  
Start sharply outlined from their dream.

Talk not to me of woman's sphere,  
Nor point with Scripture texts a sneer,  
Nor wrong the manliest saint of all  
By doubt, if he were here, that Paul  
Would own the heroines who have lent  
Grace to truth's stern arbitrament,  
Foregone the praise to woman sweet,  
And cast their crowns at Duty's feet;  
Like her, who by her strong Appeal  
Made Fashion weep and Mammon feel,  
Who, earliest summoned to withstand  
The color-madness of the land,  
Counted her life-long losses gain,  
And made her own her sisters' pain;  
Or her who, in her greenwood shade,  
Heard the sharp call that Freedom made,  
And, answering, struck from Sappho's lyre  
Of love the Tyrtman carmen's fire  
Or that young girl,--Domremy's maid  
Revived a nobler cause to aid,--  
Shaking from warning finger-tips  
The doom of her apocalypse;

Or her, who world-wide entrance gave  
To the log-cabin of the slave,  
Made all his want and sorrow known,  
And all earth's languages his own.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Lines On The Death Of S. Oliver Torrey

SECRETARY OF THE BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

Gone before us, O our brother,  
To the spirit-land!  
Vainly look we for another  
In thy place to stand.  
Who shall offer youth and beauty  
On the wasting shrine  
Of a stern and lofty duty,  
With a faith like thine?

Oh, thy gentle smile of greeting  
Who again shall see?  
Who amidst the solemn meeting  
Gaze again on thee?  
Who when peril gathers o'er us,  
Wear so calm a brow?  
Who, with evil men before us,  
So serene as thou?

Early hath the spoiler found thee,  
Brother of our love!  
Autumn's faded earth around thee,  
And its storms above!  
Evermore that turf lie lightly,  
And, with future showers,  
O'er thy slumbers fresh and brightly  
Blow the summer flowers

In the locks thy forehead gracing,  
Not a silvery streak;  
Nor a line of sorrow's tracing  
On thy fair young cheek;  
Eyes of light and lips of roses,  
Such as Hylas wore,--  
Over all that curtain closes,  
Which shall rise no more!

Will the vigil Love is keeping

Round that grave of thine,  
Mournfully, like Jazer weeping  
Over Sibmah's vine;  
Will the pleasant memories, swelling  
Gentle hearts, of thee,  
In the spirit's distant dwelling  
All unheeded be?

If the spirit ever gazes,  
From its journeyings, back;  
If the immortal ever traces  
O'er its mortal track;  
Wilt thou not, O brother, meet us  
Sometimes on our way,  
And, in hours of sadness, greet us  
As a spirit may?

Peace be with thee, O our brother,  
In the spirit-land  
Vainly look we for another  
In thy place to stand.  
Unto Truth and Freedom giving  
All thy early powers,  
Be thy virtues with the living,  
And thy spirit ours!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Lines On The Portrait Of A Celebrated Publisher

A MOONY breadth of virgin face,  
By thought unviolated;  
A patient mouth, to take from scorn  
The hook with bank-notes baited!  
Its self-complacent sleekness shows  
How thrift goes with the fawner;  
An unctuous unconcern of all  
Which nice folks call dishonor!  
A pleasant print to peddle out  
In lands of rice and cotton;  
The model of that face in dough  
Would make the artist's fortune.  
For Fame to thee has come unsought,  
While others vainly woo her,  
In proof how mean a thing can make  
A great man of its doer.  
To whom shall men thyself compare,  
Since common models fail 'em,  
Save classic goose of ancient Rome,  
Or sacred ass of Balaam?  
The gabble of that wakeful goose  
Saved Rome from sack of Brennus;  
The braying of the prophet's ass  
Betrayed the angel's menace!  
So when Guy Fawkes, in petticoats,  
And azure-tinted hose on,  
Was twisting from thy love-lorn sheets  
The slow-match of explosion —  
An earthquake blast that would have tossed  
The Union as a feather,  
Thy instinct saved a perilled land  
And perilled purse together.  
Just think of Carolina's sage  
Sent whirling like a Dervis,  
Of Quattlebum in middle air  
Performing strange drill-service!  
Doomed like Assyria's lord of old,  
Who fell before the Jewess,  
Or sad Abimelech, to sigh,

'Alas! a woman slew us!  
Thou saw'st beneath a fair disguise  
The danger darkly lurking,  
And maiden bodice dreaded more  
Than warrior's steel-wrought jerkin.  
How keen to scent the hidden plot!  
How prompt wert thou to balk it,  
With patriot zeal and pedler thrift,  
For country and for pocket!  
Thy likeness here is doubtless well,  
But higher honor's due it;  
On auction-block and negro-jail  
Admiring eyes should view it.  
Or, hung aloft, it well might grace  
The nation's senate-chamber —  
A greedy Northern bottle-fly  
Preserved in Slavery's amber!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Lucy Hooper

They tell me, Lucy, thou art dead,  
That all of thee we loved and cherished  
Has with thy summer roses perished;  
And left, as its young beauty fled,  
An ashen memory in its stead,  
The twilight of a parted day  
Whose fading light is cold and vain,  
The heart's faint echo of a strain  
Of low, sweet music passed away.  
That true and loving heart, that gift  
Of a mind, earnest, clear, profound,  
Bestowing, with a glad unthrift,  
Its sunny light on all around,  
Affinities which only could  
Cleave to the pure, the true, and good;  
And sympathies which found no rest,  
Save with the loveliest and best.  
Of them--of thee--remains there naught  
But sorrow in the mourner's breast?  
A shadow in the land of thought?  
No! Even my weak and trembling faith  
Can lift for thee the veil which doubt  
And human fear have drawn about  
The all-awaiting scene of death.

Even as thou wast I see thee still;  
And, save the absence of all ill  
And pain and weariness, which here  
Summoned the sigh or wrung the tear,  
The same as when, two summers back,  
Beside our childhood's Merrimac,  
I saw thy dark eye wander o'er  
Stream, sunny upland, rocky shore,  
And heard thy low, soft voice alone  
Midst lapse of waters, and the tone  
Of pine-leaves by the west-wind blown,  
There's not a charm of soul or brow,  
Of all we knew and loved in thee,  
But lives in holier beauty now,

Baptized in immortality!  
Not mine the sad and freezing dream  
Of souls that, with their earthly mould,  
Cast off the loves and joys of old,  
Unbodied, like a pale moonbeam,  
As pure, as passionless, and cold;  
Nor mine the hope of Indra's son,  
Of slumbering in oblivion's rest,  
Life's myriads blending into one,  
In blank annihilation blest;  
Dust-atoms of the infinite,  
Sparks scattered from the central light,  
And winning back through mortal pain  
Their old unconsciousness again.  
No! I have friends in Spirit Land,  
Not shadows in a shadowy band,  
Not others, but themselves are they.  
And still I think of them the same  
As when the Master's summons came;  
Their change,--the holy morn-light breaking  
Upon the dream-worn sleeper, waking,--  
A change from twilight into day.

They 've laid thee midst the household graves,  
Where father, brother, sister lie;  
Below thee sweep the dark blue waves,  
Above thee bends the summer sky.  
Thy own loved church in sadness read  
Her solemn ritual o'er thy head,  
And blessed and hallowed with her prayer  
The turf laid lightly o'er thee there.  
That church, whose rites and liturgy,  
Sublime and old, were truth to thee,  
Undoubted to thy bosom taken,  
As symbols of a faith unshaken.  
Even I, of simpler views, could feel  
The beauty of thy trust and zeal;  
And, owning not thy creed, could see  
How deep a truth it seemed to thee,  
And how thy fervent heart had thrown  
O'er all, a coloring of its own,  
And kindled up, intense and warm,

A life in every rite and form,  
As, when on Chebar's banks of old,  
The Hebrew's gorgeous vision rolled,  
A spirit filled the vast machine,  
A life, 'within the wheels' was seen.

Farewell! A little time, and we  
Who knew thee well, and loved thee here,  
One after one shall follow thee  
As pilgrims through the gate of fear,  
Which opens on eternity.  
Yet shall we cherish not the less  
All that is left our hearts meanwhile;  
The memory of thy loveliness  
Shall round our weary pathway smile,  
Like moonlight when the sun has set,  
A sweet and tender radiance yet.  
Thoughts of thy clear-eyed sense of duty,  
Thy generous scorn of all things wrong,  
The truth, the strength, the graceful beauty  
Which blended in thy song.  
All lovely things, by thee beloved,  
Shall whisper to our hearts of thee;  
These green hills, where thy childhood roved,  
Yon river winding to the sea,  
The sunset light of autumn eves  
Reflecting on the deep, still floods,  
Cloud, crimson sky, and trembling leaves  
Of rainbow-tinted woods,  
These, in our view, shall henceforth take  
A tenderer meaning for thy sake;  
And all thou lovedst of earth and sky,  
Seem sacred to thy memory.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Lydia H. Sigourney

She sang alone, ere womanhood had known  
The gift of song which fills the air to-day  
Tender and sweet, a music all her own  
May fitly linger where she knelt to pray.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Mabel Martin

A HARVEST IDYL.

PROEM.

I CALL the old time back: I bring my lay  
in tender memory of the summer day  
When, where our native river lapsed away,

We dreamed it over, while the thrushes made  
Songs of their own, and the great pine-trees laid  
On warm noonlights the masses of their shade.

And she was with us, living o'er again  
Her life in ours, despite of years and pain,--  
The Autumn's brightness after latter rain.

Beautiful in her holy peace as one  
Who stands, at evening, when the work is done,  
Glorified in the setting of the sun!

Her memory makes our common landscape seem  
Fairer than any of which painters dream;  
Lights the brown hills and sings in every stream;

For she whose speech was always truth's pure gold  
Heard, not unpleased, its simple legends told,  
And loved with us the beautiful and old.

I. THE RIVER VALLEY.

Across the level tableland,  
A grassy, rarely trodden way,  
With thinnest skirt of birchen spray

And stunted growth of cedar, leads  
To where you see the dull plain fall  
Sheer off, steep-slanted, ploughed by all

The seasons' rainfalls. On its brink  
The over-leaning harebells swing,

With roots half bare the pine-trees cling;

And, through the shadow looking west,  
You see the wavering river flow  
Along a vale, that far below

Holds to the sun, the sheltering hills  
And glimmering water-line between,  
Broad fields of corn and meadows green,

And fruit-bent orchards grouped around  
The low brown roofs and painted eaves,  
And chimney-tops half hid in leaves.

No warmer valley hides behind  
Yon wind-scourged sand-dunes, cold and bleak;  
No fairer river comes to seek

The wave-sung welcome of the sea,  
Or mark the northmost border line  
Of sun-loved growths of nut and vine.

Here, ground-fast in their native fields,  
Untempted by the city's gain,  
The quiet farmer folk remain

Who bear the pleasant name of Friends,  
And keep their fathers' gentle ways  
And simple speech of Bible days;

In whose neat homesteads woman holds  
With modest ease her equal place,  
And wears upon her tranquil face

The look of one who, merging not  
Her self-hood in another's will,  
Is love's and duty's handmaid still.

Pass with me down the path that winds  
Through birches to the open land,  
Where, close upon the river strand

You mark a cellar, vine o'errun,  
Above whose wall of loosened stones  
The sumach lifts its reddening cones,

And the black nightshade's berries shine,  
And broad, unsightly burdocks fold  
The household ruin, century-old.

Here, in the dim colonial time  
Of sterner lives and gloomier faith,  
A woman lived, tradition saith,

Who wrought her neighbors foul annoy,  
And witched and plagued the country-side,  
Till at the hangman's hand she died.

Sit with me while the westering day  
Falls slantwise down the quiet vale,  
And, haply ere yon loitering sail,

That rounds the upper headland, falls  
Below Deer Island's pines, or sees  
Behind it Hawkswood's belt of trees

Rise black against the sinking sun,  
My idyl of its days of old,  
The valley's legend, shall be told.

## II. THE HUSKING.

It was the pleasant harvest-time,  
When cellar-bins are closely stowed,  
And garrets bend beneath their load,

And the old swallow-haunted barns,--  
Brown-gabled, long, and full of seams  
Through which the rooted sunlight streams,

And winds blow freshly in, to shake  
The red plumes of the roasted cocks,  
And the loose hay-mow's scented locks,

Are filled with summer's ripened stores,  
Its odorous grass and barley sheaves,  
From their low scaffolds to their eaves.

On Esek Harden's oaken floor,  
With many an autumn threshing worn,  
Lay the heaped ears of unhusked corn.

And thither came young men and maids,  
Beneath a moon that, large and low,  
Lit that sweet eve of long ago.

They took their places; some by chance,  
And others by a merry voice  
Or sweet smile guided to their choice.

How pleasantly the rising moon,  
Between the shadow of the mows,  
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs!

On sturdy boyhood, sun-embrowned,  
On girlhood with its solid curves  
Of healthful strength and painless nerves!

And jests went round, and laughs that made  
The house-dog answer with his howl,  
And kept astir the barn-yard fowl;

And quaint old songs their fathers sung  
In Derby dales and Yorkshire moors,  
Ere Norman William trod their shores;

And tales, whose merry license shook  
The fat sides of the Saxon thane,  
Forgetful of the hovering Dane,--

Rude plays to Celt and Cimbri known,  
The charms and riddles that beguiled  
On Oxus' banks the young world's child,--

That primal picture-speech wherein  
Have youth and maid the story told,

So new in each, so dateless old,

Recalling pastoral Ruth in her  
Who waited, blushing and demure,  
The red-ear's kiss of forfeiture.

But still the sweetest voice was mute  
That river-valley ever heard  
From lips of maid or throat of bird;

For Mabel Martin sat apart,  
And let the hay-mow's shadow fall  
Upon the loveliest face of all.

She sat apart, as one forbid,  
Who knew that none would condescend  
To own the Witch-wife's child a friend.

The seasons scarce had gone their round,  
Since curious thousands thronged to see  
Her mother at the gallows-tree;

And mocked the prison-palsied limbs  
That faltered on the fatal stairs,  
And wan lip trembling with its prayers!

Few questioned of the sorrowing child,  
Or, when they saw the mother die;  
Dreamed of the daughter's agony.

They went up to their homes that day,  
As men and Christians justified  
God willed it, and the wretch had died!

Dear God and Father of us all,  
Forgive our faith in cruel lies,--  
Forgive the blindness that denies!

Forgive thy creature when he takes,  
For the all-perfect love Thou art,  
Some grim creation of his heart.

Cast down our idols, overturn  
Our bloody altars; let us see  
Thyself in Thy humanity!

Young Mabel from her mother's grave  
Crept to her desolate hearth-stone,  
And wrestled with her fate alone;

With love, and anger, and despair,  
The phantoms of disordered sense,  
The awful doubts of Providence!

Oh, dreary broke the winter days,  
And dreary fell the winter nights  
When, one by one, the neighboring lights

Went out, and human sounds grew still,  
And all the phantom-peopled dark  
Closed round her hearth-fire's dying spark.

And summer days were sad and long,  
And sad the unaccompanied eves,  
And sadder sunset-tinted leaves,

And Indian Summer's airs of balm;  
She scarcely felt the soft caress,  
The beauty died of loneliness!

The school-boys jeered her as they passed,  
And, when she sought the house of prayer,  
Her mother's curse pursued her there.

And still o'er many a neighboring door  
She saw the horseshoe's curved charm,  
To guard against her mother's harm!

That mother, poor and sick and lame,  
Who daily, by the old arm-chair,  
Folded her withered hands in prayer;--

Who turned, in Salem's dreary jail,  
Her worn old Bible o'er and o'er,

When her dim eyes could read no more!

Sore tried and pained, the poor girl kept  
Her faith, and trusted that her way,  
So dark, would somewhere meet the day.

And still her weary wheel went round  
Day after day, with no relief  
Small leisure have the poor for grief.

#### IV. THE CHAMPION.

So in the shadow Mabel sits;  
Untouched by mirth she sees and hears,  
Her smile is sadder than her tears.

But cruel eyes have found her out,  
And cruel lips repeat her name,  
And taunt her with her mother's shame.

She answered not with railing words,  
But drew her apron o'er her face,  
And, sobbing, glided from the place.

And only pausing at the door,  
Her sad eyes met the troubled gaze  
Of one who, in her better days,

Had been her warm and steady friend,  
Ere yet her mother's doom had made  
Even Esek Harden half afraid.

He felt that mute appeal of tears,  
And, starting, with an angry frown,  
Hushed all the wicked murmurs down.

'Good neighbors mine,' he sternly said,  
'This passes harmless mirth or jest;  
I brook no insult to my guest.

'She is indeed her mother's child;  
But God's sweet pity ministers

Unto no whiter soul than hers.

'Let Goody Martin rest in peace;  
I never knew her harm a fly,  
And witch or not, God knows--not I.

'I know who swore her life away;  
And as God lives, I'd not condemn  
An Indian dog on word of them.'

The broadest lands in all the town,  
The skill to guide, the power to awe,  
Were Harden's; and his word was law.

None dared withstand him to his face,  
But one sly maiden spake aside  
'The little witch is evil-eyed!

'Her mother only killed a cow,  
Or witched a churn or dairy-pan;  
But she, forsooth, must charm a man!'

#### V. IN THE SHADOW.

Poor Mabel, homeward turning, passed  
The nameless terrors of the wood,  
And saw, as if a ghost pursued,

Her shadow gliding in the moon;  
The soft breath of the west-wind gave  
A chill as from her mother's grave.

How dreary seemed the silent house!  
Wide in the moonbeams' ghastly glare  
Its windows had a dead man's stare!

And, like a gaunt and spectral hand,  
The tremulous shadow of a birch  
Reached out and touched the door's low porch,

As if to lift its latch; hard by,  
A sudden warning call she beard,

The night-cry of a boding bird.

She leaned against the door; her face,  
So fair, so young, so full of pain,  
White in the moonlight's silver rain.

The river, on its pebbled rim,  
Made music such as childhood knew;  
The door-yard tree was whispered through

By voices such as childhood's ear  
Had heard in moonlights long ago;  
And through the willow-boughs below.

She saw the rippled waters shine;  
Beyond, in waves of shade and light,  
The hills rolled off into the night.

She saw and heard, but over all  
A sense of some transforming spell,  
The shadow of her sick heart fell.

And still across the wooded space  
The harvest lights of Harden shone,  
And song and jest and laugh went on.

And he, so gentle, true, and strong,  
Of men the bravest and the best,  
Had he, too, scorned her with the rest?

She strove to drown her sense of wrong,  
And, in her old and simple way,  
To teach her bitter heart to pray.

Poor child! the prayer, begun in faith,  
Grew to a low, despairing cry  
Of utter misery: 'Let me die!

'Oh! take me from the scornful eyes,  
And hide me where the cruel speech  
And mocking finger may not reach!

'I dare not breathe my mother's name  
A daughter's right I dare not crave  
To weep above her unblest grave!

'Let me not live until my heart,  
With few to pity, and with none  
To love me, hardens into stone.

'O God! have mercy on Thy child,  
Whose faith in Thee grows weak and small,  
And take me ere I lose it all!

A shadow on the moonlight fell,  
And murmuring wind and wave became  
A voice whose burden was her name.

#### VI. THE BETROTHAL.

Had then God heard her? Had He sent  
His angel down? In flesh and blood,  
Before her Esek Harden stood!

He laid his hand upon her arm  
'Dear Mabel, this no more shall be;  
Who scoffs at you must scoff at me.

'You know rough Esek Harden well;  
And if he seems no suitor gay,  
And if his hair is touched with gray,

'The maiden grown shall never find  
His heart less warm than when she smiled,  
Upon his knees, a little child!

Her tears of grief were tears of joy,  
As, folded in his strong embrace,  
She looked in Esek Harden's face.

'O truest friend of all" she said,  
'God bless you for your kindly thought,  
And make me worthy of my lot!

He led her forth, and, blent in one,  
Beside their happy pathway ran  
The shadows of the maid and man.

He led her through his dewy fields,  
To where the swinging lanterns glowed,  
And through the doors the huskers showed.

'Good friends and neighbors!' Esek said,  
'I'm weary of this lonely life;  
In Mabel see my chosen wife!

'She greets you kindly, one and all;  
The past is past, and all offence  
Falls harmless from her innocence.

'Henceforth she stands no more alone;  
You know what Esek Harden is;--  
He brooks no wrong to him or his.

'Now let the merriest tales be told,  
And let the sweetest songs be sung  
That ever made the old heart young!

'For now the lost has found a home;  
And a lone hearth shall brighter burn,  
As all the household joys return!'

Oh, pleasantly the harvest-moon,  
Between the shadow of the mows,  
Looked on them through the great elm--boughs!

On Mabel's curls of golden hair,  
On Esek's shaggy strength it fell;  
And the wind whispered, 'It is well!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Marguerite

MASSACHUSETTS BAY, 1760.

THE robins sang in the orchard, the buds into  
blossoms grew;  
Little of human sorrow the buds and the robins  
knew!  
Sick, in an alien household, the poor French  
neutral lay;  
Into her lonesome garret fell the light of the April  
day,  
Through the dusty window, curtained by the spider's  
warp and woof,  
On the loose-laid floor of hemlock, on oaken ribs  
of roof,  
The bedquilt's faded patchwork, the teacups on the  
stand,  
The wheel with flaxen tangle, as it dropped from  
her sick hand.

What to her was the song of the robin, or warm  
morning light,  
As she lay in the trance of the dying, heedless of  
sound or sight?

Done was the work of her bands, she had eaten her  
bitter bread;  
The world of the alien people lay behind her dim  
and dead.

But her soul went back to its child-time; she saw  
the sun o'erflow  
With gold the Basin of Minas, and set over  
Gaspereau;

The low, bare flats at ebb-tide, the rush of the sea  
at flood,  
Through inlet and creek and river, from dike to  
upland wood;

The gulls in the red of morning, the fish-hawk's  
rise and fall,  
The drift of the fog in moonshine, over the dark  
coast-wall.

She saw the face of her mother, she heard the song  
she sang;  
And far off, faintly, slowly, the bell for vespers  
rang.

By her bed the hard-faced mistress sat, smoothing  
the wrinkled sheet,  
Peering into the face, so helpless, and feeling the  
ice-cold feet.

With a vague remorse atoning for her greed and  
long abuse,  
By care no longer heeded and pity too late for use.

Up the stairs of the garret softly the son of the  
mistress stepped,  
Leaned over the head-board, covering his face with  
his hands, and wept.

Outspake the mother, who watched him sharply,  
with brow a-frown  
'What! love you the Papist, the beggar, the  
charge of the town?'

Be she Papist or beggar who lies here, I know  
and God knows  
I love her, and fain would go with her wherever  
she goes!

'O mother! that sweet face came pleading, for  
love so athirst.  
You saw but the town-charge; I knew her God's  
angel at first.'

Shaking her gray head, the mistress hushed down  
a bitter cry;  
And awed by the silence and shadow of death

drawing nigh,

She murmured a psalm of the Bible; but closer  
the young girl pressed,  
With the last of her life in her fingers, the cross  
to her breast.

'My son, come away,' cried the mother, her voice  
cruel grown.  
'She is joined to her idols, like Ephraim; let her  
alone!'

But he knelt with his hand on her forehead, his  
lips to her ear,  
And he called back the soul that was passing  
'Marguerite, do you hear?'

She paused on the threshold of Heaven; love, pity,  
surprise,  
Wistful, tender, lit up for an instant the cloud of  
her eyes.

With his heart on his lips he kissed her, but never  
her cheek grew red,  
And the words the living long for he spake in the  
ear of the dead.

And the robins sang in the orchard, where buds to  
blossoms grew;  
Of the folded hands and the still face never the  
robins knew!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Mary Garvin

FROM the heart of Waumbek Methna, from the  
lake that never fails,  
Falls the Saco in the green lap of Conway's  
intervalles;  
There, in wild and virgin freshness, its waters  
foam and flow,  
As when Darby Field first saw them, two hundred  
years ago.

But, vexed in all its seaward course with bridges,  
dams, and mills,  
How changed is Saco's stream, how lost its freedom  
of the hills,  
Since travelled Jocelyn, factor Vines, and stately  
Champernoon  
Heard on its banks the gray wolf's howl, the trumpet  
of the loon!

With smoking axle hot with speed, with steeds of  
fire and steam,  
Wide-waked To-day leaves Yesterday behind him  
like a dream.  
Still, from the hurrying train of Life, fly backward  
far and fast  
The milestones of the fathers, the landmarks of  
the past.

But human hearts remain unchanged: the sorrow  
and the sin,  
The loves and hopes and fears of old, are to our  
own akin;

And if, in tales our fathers told, the songs our  
mothers sung,  
Tradition wears a snowy beard, Romance is always  
young.

O sharp-lined man of traffic, on Saco's banks today!  
O mill-girl watching late and long the shuttle's

restless play!

Let, for the once, a listening ear the working hand  
beguile,  
And lend my old Provincial tale, as suits, a tear or  
smile!

.....

The evening gun had sounded from gray Fort  
Mary's walls;  
Through the forest, like a wild beast, roared and  
plunged the Saco's' falls.

And westward on the sea-wind, that damp and  
gusty grew,  
Over cedars darkening inland the smokes of Spurwink  
blew.

On the hearth of Farmer Garvin, blazed the crackling  
walnut log;  
Right and left sat dame and goodman, and between  
them lay the dog,

Head on paws, and tail slow wagging, and beside  
him on her mat,  
Sitting drowsy in the firelight, winked and purred  
the mottled cat.

'Twenty years!' said Goodman Garvin, speaking  
sadly, under breath,  
And his gray head slowly shaking, as one who  
speaks of death.

The goodwife dropped her needles: 'It is twenty  
years to-day,  
Since the Indians fell on Saco, and stole our child  
away.'

Then they sank into the silence, for each knew  
the other's thought,  
Of a great and common sorrow, and words were,  
needed not.

'Who knocks?' cried Goodman Garvin. The  
door was open thrown;  
On two strangers, man and maiden, cloaked and  
furred, the fire-light shone.

One with courteous gesture lifted the bear-skin  
from his head;  
'Lives here Elkanah Garvin?' 'I am he,' the  
goodman said.

'Sit ye down, and dry and warm ye, for the night  
is chill with rain.'  
And the goodwife drew the settle, and stirred the  
fire amain.

The maid unclasped her cloak-hood, the firelight  
glistened fair  
In her large, moist eyes, and over soft folds of  
dark brown hair.

Dame Garvin looked upon her: 'It is Mary's self  
I see!'  
'Dear heart!' she cried, 'now tell me, has my  
child come back to me?'

'My name indeed is Mary,' said the stranger sobbing  
wild;  
'Will you be to me a mother? I am Mary Garvin's child!'

'She sleeps by wooded Simcoe, but on her dying  
day  
She bade my father take me to her kinsfolk far  
away.

'And when the priest besought her to do me no  
such wrong,  
She said, 'May God forgive me! I have closed  
my heart too long.'

'When I hid me from my father, and shut out  
my mother's call,

I sinned against those dear ones, and the Father  
of us all.

"Christ's love rebukes no home-love, breaks no  
tie of kin apart;  
Better heresy in doctrine, than heresy of heart.

"Tell me not the Church must censure: she who  
wept the Cross beside  
Never made her own flesh strangers, nor the claims  
of blood denied;

"And if she who wronged her parents, with her  
child atones to them,  
Earthly daughter, Heavenly Mother! thou at least  
wilt not condemn!"

'So, upon her death-bed lying, my blessed mother  
spake;  
As we come to do her bidding, So receive us for her  
sake.'

'God be praised!' said Goodwife Garvin, 'He taketh,  
and He gives;  
He woundeth, but He healeth; in her child our  
daughter lives!'

'Amen!' the old man answered, as he brushed a  
tear away,  
And, kneeling by his hearthstone, said, with reverence,  
'Let us pray.'

All its Oriental symbols, and its Hebrew paraphrase,  
Warm with earnest life and feeling, rose his prayer  
of love and praise.

But he started at beholding, as he rose from off  
his knee,  
The stranger cross his forehead with the sign of  
Papistrie.

'What is this?' cried Farmer Garvin. 'Is an English

Christian's home

A chapel or a mass-house, that you make the sign  
of Rome?'

Then the young girl knelt beside him, kissed his  
trembling hand, and cried:

Oh, forbear to chide my father; in that faith my  
mother died!

'On her wooden cross at Simcoe the dews and  
sunshine fall,

As they fall on Spurwink's graveyard; and the  
dear God watches all!'

The old man stroked the fair head that rested on  
his knee;

'Your words, dear child,' he answered, 'are God's  
rebuke to me.

'Creed and rite perchance may differ, yet our  
faith and hope be one.

Let me be your father's father, let him be to me  
a son.'

When the horn, on Sabbath morning, through the  
still and frosty air,

From Spurwink, Pool, and Black Point, called to  
sermon and to prayer,

To the goodly house of worship, where, in order  
due and fit,

As by public vote directed, classed and ranked the  
people sit;

Mistress first and goodwife after, clerkly squire  
before the clown,

'From the brave coat, lace-embroidered, to the gray  
frock, shading down;'

From the pulpit read the preacher, 'Goodman  
Garvin and his wife

Fain would thank the Lord, whose kindness has

followed them through life,

'For the great and crowning mercy, that their  
daughter, from the wild,  
Where she rests (they hope in God's peace), has  
sent to them her child;

'And the prayers of all God's people they ask,  
that they may prove  
Not unworthy, through their weakness, of such  
special proof of love.'

As the preacher prayed, uprising, the aged couple  
stood,  
And the fair Canadian also, in her modest maiden-  
hood.

Thought the elders, grave and doubting, 'She is  
Papist born and bred;'  
Thought the young men, 'T is an angel in Mary  
Garvin's stead!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Massachusetts To Virginia

The blast from Freedom's Northern hills, upon its Southern way,  
Bears greeting to Virginia from Massachusetts Bay:  
No word of haughty challenging, nor battle bugle's peal,  
Nor steady tread of marching files, nor clang of horsemen's steel,

No trains of deep-mouthed cannon along our highways go;  
Around our silent arsenals untrodden lies the snow;  
And to the land-breeze of our ports, upon their errands far,  
A thousand sails of commerce swell, but none are spread for war.

We hear thy threats, Virginia! thy stormy words and high  
Swell harshly on the Southern winds which melt along our sky;  
Yet not one brown, hard hand foregoes its honest labor here,  
No hewer of our mountain oaks suspends his axe in fear.

Wild are the waves which lash the reefs along St. George's bank;  
Cold on the shores of Labrador the fog lies white and dank;  
Through storm, and wave, and blinding mist, stout are the hearts which man  
The fishing-smacks of Marblehead, the sea-boats of Cape Ann.

The cold north light and wintry sun glare on their icy forms,  
Bent grimly o'er their straining lines or wrestling with the storms;  
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as the waves they roam,  
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against their rocky home.

What means the Old Dominion? Hath she forgot the day  
When o'er her conquered valleys swept the Briton's steel array?  
How, side by side with sons of hers, the Massachusetts men  
Encountered Tarleton's charge of fire, and stout Cornwallis, then?

Forgets she how the Bay State, in answer to the call  
Of her old House of Burgesses, spoke out from Faneuil Hall?  
When, echoing back her Henry's cry, came pulsing on each breath  
Of Northern winds the thrilling sounds of 'Liberty or Death!'

What asks the Old Dominion? If now her sons have proved  
False to their fathers' memory, false to the faith they loved;  
If she can scoff at Freedom, and its great charter spurn,  
Must we of Massachusetts from truth and duty turn?

We hunt your bondmen, flying from Slavery's hateful hell;  
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the bloodhound's yell;  
We gather, at your summons, above our fathers' graves,  
From Freedom's holy altar-horns to tear your wretched slaves!

Thank God! not yet so vilely can Massachusetts bow;  
The spirit of her early time is with her even now;  
Dream not because her Pilgrim blood moves slow and calm and cool,  
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a sister's slave and tool!

All that a sister State should do, all that a free State may,  
Heart, hand, and purse we proffer, as in our early day;  
But that one dark loathsome burden ye must stagger with alone,  
And reap the bitter harvest which ye yourselves have sown!

Hold, while ye may, your struggling slaves, and burden God's free air  
With woman's shriek beneath the lash, and manhood's wild despair;  
Cling closer to the 'cleaving curse' that writes upon your plains  
The blasting of Almighty wrath against a land of chains.

Still shame your gallant ancestry, the cavaliers of old,  
By watching round the shambles where human flesh is sold;  
Gloat o'er the new-born child, and count his market value, when  
The maddened mother's cry of woe shall pierce the slaver's den!

Lower than plummet soundeth, sink the Virginia name;  
Plant, if ye will, your fathers' graves with rankest weeds of shame;  
Be, if ye will, the scandal of God's fair universe;  
We wash our hands forever of your sin and shame and curse.

A voice from lips whereon the coal from Freedom's shrine hath been,  
Thrilled, as but yesterday, the hearts of Berkshire's mountain men:  
The echoes of that solemn voice are sadly lingering still  
In all our sunny valleys, on every wind-swept hill.

And when the prowling man-thief came hunting for his prey  
Beneath the very shadow of Bunker's shaft of gray,  
How, through the free lips of the son, the father's warning spoke;  
How, from its bonds of trade and sect, the Pilgrim city broke!

A hundred thousand right arms were lifted up on high,

A hundred thousand voices sent back their loud reply;  
Through the thronged towns of Essex the startling summons rang,  
And up from bench and loom and wheel her young mechanics sprang!

The voice of free, broad Middlesex, of thousands as of one,  
The shaft of Bunker calling to that Lexington;  
From Norfolk's ancient villages, from Plymouth's rocky bound  
To where Nantucket feels the arms of ocean close to her round;

From rich and rural Worcester, where through the calm repose  
Of cultured vales and fringing woods the gentle Nashua flows,  
To where Wachuset's wintry blasts the mountain larches stir,  
Swelled up to Heaven the thrilling cry of 'God save Latimer!'

And sandy Barnstable rose up, wet with the salt sea spray;  
And Bristol sent her answering shout down Narragansett Bay!  
Along the broad Connecticut old Hampden felt the thrill,  
And the cheer of Hampshire's woodmen swept down from Holyoke Hill.

The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons and daughters,  
Deep calling unto deep aloud, the sound of many waters!  
Against the burden of that voice what tyrant power shall stand?  
No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her land!

Look to it well, Virginians! In calmness we have borne,  
In answer to our faith and trust, your insult and your scorn;  
You've spurned our kindest counsels; you've hunted for our lives;  
And shaken round our hearths and homes your manacles and gyves!

We wage no war, we lift no arm, we fling no torch within  
The fire-damps of the quaking mine beneath your soil of sin;  
We leave ye with your bondmen, to wrestle, while ye can,  
With the strong upward tendencies and God-like soul of man!

But for us and for our children, the vow which we have given  
For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven;  
No slave-hunt in our borders, - no pirate on our strand!  
No fetters in the Bay State, - no slave upon our land!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Maud Muller

Maud Muller on a summer's day  
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth  
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee  
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town  
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest  
And a nameless longing filled her breast,-

A wish that she hardly dared to own,  
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,  
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade  
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed  
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,  
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down  
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught  
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,  
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether  
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown  
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise  
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay  
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!  
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,  
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;  
My brother should sail a pointed boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,  
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,  
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,  
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,  
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air  
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,  
Like her, a harvester of hay.

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,  
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,  
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,  
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,  
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,  
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well  
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,  
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,  
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes  
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,  
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms  
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, and with a secret pain,  
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,  
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,  
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,  
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot  
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall  
Over the roadside, through a wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again  
She saw a rider draw his rein;

And, gazing down with timid grace,  
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls  
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinet turned,  
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,  
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,  
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,  
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for the maiden, alas for the Judge,  
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both and pity us all,  
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies  
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may  
Roll the stone from its grave away!



# Memories

A beautiful and happy girl,  
With step as light as summer air,  
Eyes glad with smiles, and brow of pearl,  
Shadowed by many a careless curl  
Of unconfined and flowing hair;  
A seeming child in everything,  
Save thoughtful brow and ripening charms,  
As Nature wears the smile of Spring  
When sinking into Summer's arms.

A mind rejoicing in the light  
Which melted through its graceful bower,  
Leaf after leaf, dew-moist and bright,  
And stainless in its holy white,  
Unfolding like a morning flower  
A heart, which, like a fine-toned lute,  
With every breath of feeling woke,  
And, even when the tongue was mute,  
From eye and lip in music spoke.

How thrills once more the lengthening chain  
Of memory, at the thought of thee!  
Old hopes which long in dust have lain  
Old dreams, come thronging back again,  
And boyhood lives again in me;  
I feel its glow upon my cheek,  
Its fulness of the heart is mine,  
As when I leaned to hear thee speak,  
Or raised my doubtful eye to thine.

I hear again thy low replies,  
I feel thy arm within my own,  
And timidly again uprising  
The fringed lids of hazel eyes,  
With soft brown tresses overblown.  
Ah! memories of sweet summer eves,  
Of moonlit wave and willowy way,  
Of stars and flowers, and dewy leaves,  
And smiles and tones more dear than they!

Ere this, thy quiet eye hath smiled  
My picture of thy youth to see,  
When, half a woman, half a child,  
Thy very artlessness beguiled,  
And folly's self seemed wise in thee;  
I too can smile, when o'er that hour  
The lights of memory backward stream,  
Yet feel the while that manhood's power  
Is vainer than my boyhood's dream.

Years have passed on, and left their trace,  
Of graver care and deeper thought;  
And unto me the calm, cold face  
Of manhood, and to thee the grace  
Of woman's pensive beauty brought.  
More wide, perchance, for blame than praise,  
The school-boy's humble name has flown;  
Thine, in the green and quiet ways  
Of unobtrusive goodness known.

And wider yet in thought and deed  
Diverge our pathways, one in youth;  
Thine the Genevan's sternest creed,  
While answers to my spirit's need  
The Derby dalesman's simple truth.  
For thee, the priestly rite and prayer,  
And holy day, and solemn psalm;  
For me, the silent reverence where  
My brethren gather, slow and calm.

Yet hath thy spirit left on me  
An impress Time has worn not out,  
And something of myself in thee,  
A shadow from the past, I see,  
Lingering, even yet, thy way about;  
Not wholly can the heart unlearn  
That lesson of its better hours,  
Not yet has Time's dull footstep worn  
To common dust that path of flowers.

Thus, while at times before our eyes

The shadows melt, and fall apart,  
And, smiling through them, round us lies  
The warm light of our morning skies,--  
The Indian Summer of the heart!  
In secret sympathies of mind,  
In founts of feeling which retain  
Their pure, fresh flow, we yet may find  
Our early dreams not wholly vain

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Miriam

One Sabbath day my friend and I  
After the meeting, quietly  
Passed from the crowded village lanes,  
White with dry dust for lack of rains,  
And climbed the neighboring slope, with feet  
Slackened and heavy from the heat,  
Although the day was wellnigh done,  
And the low angle of the sun  
Along the naked hillside cast  
Our shadows as of giants vast.  
We reached, at length, the topmost swell,  
Whence, either way, the green turf fell  
In terraces of nature down  
To fruit-hung orchards, and the town  
With white, pretenceless houses, tall  
Church-steeple, and, o'ershadowing all,  
Huge mills whose windows had the look  
Of eager eyes that ill could brook  
The Sabbath rest. We traced the track  
Of the sea-seeking river back,  
Glistening for miles above its mouth,  
Through the long valley to the south,  
And, looking eastward, cool to view,  
Stretched the illimitable blue  
Of ocean, from its curved coast-line;  
Sombred and still, the warm sunshine  
Filled with pale gold-dust all the reach  
Of slumberous woods from hill to beach,-  
Slanted on walls of thronged retreats  
From city toil and dusty streets,  
On grassy bluff, and dune of sand,  
And rocky islands miles from land;  
Touched the far-glancing sails, and showed  
White lines of foam where long waves flowed  
Dumb in the distance. In the north,  
Dim through their misty hair, looked forth  
The space-dwarfed mountains to the sea,  
From mystery to mystery!

So, sitting on that green hill-slope,  
We talked of human life, its hope  
And fear, and unsolved doubts, and what  
It might have been, and yet was not.  
And, when at last the evening air  
Grew sweeter for the bells of prayer  
Ringing in steeples far below,  
We watched the people churchward go,  
Each to his place, as if thereon  
The true shekinah only shone;  
And my friend queried how it came  
To pass that they who owned the same  
Great Master still could not agree  
To worship Him in company.  
Then, broadening in his thought, he ran  
Over the whole vast field of man,-  
The varying forms of faith and creed  
That somehow served the holders' need;  
In which, unquestioned, undenied,  
Uncounted millions lived and died;  
The bibles of the ancient folk,  
Through which the heart of nations spoke;  
The old moralities which lent  
To home its sweetness and content,  
And rendered possible to bear  
The life of peoples everywhere  
And asked if we, who boast of light,  
Claim not a too exclusive right  
To truths which must for all be meant,  
Like rain and sunshine freely sent.  
In bondage to the letter still,  
We give it power to cramp and kill,-  
To tax God's fulness with a scheme  
Narrower than Peter's house-top dream,  
His wisdom and his love with plans  
Poor and inadequate as man's.  
It must be that He witnesses  
Somehow to all men that He is  
That something of His saving grace  
Reaches the lowest of the race,  
Who, through strange creed and rite, may draw  
The hints of a diviner law.

We walk in clearer light;-but then,  
Is He not God?-are they not men?  
Are His responsibilities  
For us alone and not for these?

And I made answer: 'Truth is one;  
And, in all lands beneath the sun,  
Whoso hath eyes to see may see  
The tokens of its unity.  
No scroll of creed its fulness wraps,  
We trace it not by school-boy maps,  
Free as the sun and air it is  
Of latitudes and boundaries.  
In Vedic verse, in dull Koran,  
Are messages of good to man;  
The angels to our Aryan sires  
Talked by the earliest household fires;  
The prophets of the elder day,  
The slant-eyed sages of Cathay,  
Read not the riddle all amiss  
Of higher life evolved from this.

'Nor doth it lessen what He taught,  
Or make the gospel Jesus brought  
Less precious, that His lips retold  
Some portion of that truth of old;  
Denying not the proven seers,  
The tested wisdom of the years;  
Confirming with his own impress  
The common law of righteousness.  
We search the world for truth; we cull  
The good, the pure, the beautiful,  
From graven stone and written scroll,  
From all old flower-fields of the soul;  
And, weary seekers of the best,  
We come back laden from our quest,  
To find that all the sages said  
Is in the Book our mothers read,  
And all our treasure of old thought  
In His harmonious fulness wrought  
Who gathers in one sheaf complete  
The scattered blades of God's sown wheat,

The common growth that maketh good  
His all-embracing Fatherhood.

'Wherever through the ages rise  
The altars of self-sacrifice,  
Where love its arms has opened wide,  
Or man for man has calmly died,  
I see the same white wings outspread  
That hovered o'er the Master's head!  
Up from undated time they come,  
The martyr souls of heathendom,  
And to His cross and passion bring  
Their fellowship of suffering.  
I trace His presence in the blind  
Pathetic gropings of my kind,-  
In prayers from sin and sorrow wrung,  
In cradle-hymns of life they sung,  
Each, in its measure, but a part  
Of the unmeasured Over-Heart;  
And with a stronger faith confess  
The greater that it owns the less.  
Good cause it is for thankfulness  
That the world-blessing of His life  
With the long past is not at strife;  
That the great marvel of His death  
To the one order witnesseth,  
No doubt of changeless goodness wakes,  
No link of cause and sequence breaks,  
But, one with nature, rooted is  
In the eternal verities;  
Whereby, while differing in degree  
As finite from infinity,  
The pain and loss for others borne,  
Love's crown of suffering meekly worn,  
The life man giveth for his friend  
Become vicarious in the end;  
Their healing place in nature take,  
And make life sweeter for their sake.

'So welcome I from every source  
The tokens of that primal Force,  
Older than heaven itself, yet new

As the young heart it reaches to,  
Beneath whose steady impulse rolls  
The tidal wave of human souls;  
Guide, comforter, and inward word,  
The eternal spirit of the Lord  
Nor fear I aught that science brings  
From searching through material things;  
Content to let its glasses prove,  
Not by the letter's oldness move,  
The myriad worlds on worlds that course  
The spaces of the universe;  
Since everywhere the Spirit walks  
The garden of the heart, and talks  
With man, as under Eden's trees,  
In all his varied languages.  
Why mourn above some hopeless flaw  
In the stone tables of the law,  
When scripture every day afresh  
Is traced on tablets of the flesh?  
By inward sense, by outward signs,  
God's presence still the heart divines;  
Through deepest joy of Him we learn,  
In sorest grief to Him we turn,  
And reason stoops its pride to share  
The child-like instinct of a prayer.'

And then, as is my wont, I told  
A story of the days of old,  
Not found in printed books,-in sooth,  
A fancy, with slight hint of truth,  
Showing how differing faiths agree  
In one sweet law of charity.  
Meanwhile the sky had golden grown,  
Our faces in its glory shone;  
But shadows down the valley swept,  
And gray below the ocean slept,  
As time and space I wandered o'er  
To tread the Mogul's marble floor,  
And see a fairer sunset fall  
On Jumna's wave and Agra's wall.

The good Shah Akbar (peace be his alway!)

Came forth from the Divan at close of day  
Bowed with the burden of his many cares,  
Worn with the hearing of unnumbered prayers,-  
Wild cries for justice, the importunate  
Appeals of greed and jealousy and hate,  
And all the strife of sect and creed and rite,  
Santon and Gouroo waging holy fight  
For the wise monarch, claiming not to be  
Allah's avenger, left his people free,  
With a faint hope, his Book scarce justified,  
That all the paths of faith, though severed wide,  
O'er which the feet of prayerful reverence passed,  
Met at the gate of Paradise at last.

He sought an alcove of his cool hareem,  
Where, far beneath, he heard the Jumna's stream  
Lapse soft and low along his palace wall,  
And all about the cool sound of the fall  
Of fountains, and of water circling free  
Through marble ducts along the balcony;  
The voice of women in the distance sweet,  
And, sweeter still, of one who, at his feet,  
Soothed his tired ear with songs of a far land  
Where Tagus shatters on the salt sea-sand  
The mirror of its cork-grown hills of drouth  
And vales of vine, at Lisbon's harbor-mouth.

The date-palms rustled not; the peepul laid  
Its topmost boughs against the balustrade,  
Motionless as the mimic leaves and vines  
That, light and graceful as the shawl-designs  
Of Delhi or Umritsir, twined in stone;  
And the tired monarch, who aside had thrown  
The day's hard burden, sat from care apart,  
And let the quiet steal into his heart  
From the still hour. Below him Agra slept,  
By the long light of sunset overswept  
The river flowing through a level land,  
By mango-groves and banks of yellow sand,  
Skirted with lime and orange, gay kiosks,  
Fountains at play, tall minarets of mosques,  
Fair pleasure-gardens, with their flowering trees

Relieved against the mournful cypresses;  
And, air-poised lightly as the blown sea-foam,  
The marble wonder of some holy dome  
Hung a white moonrise over the still wood,  
Glassing its beauty in a stiller flood.

Silent the monarch gazed, until the night  
Swift-falling hid the city from his sight;  
Then to the woman at his feet he said  
'Tell me, O Miriam, something thou hast read  
In childhood of the Master of thy faith,  
Whom Islam also owns. Our Prophet saith  
'He was a true apostle, yea, a Word  
And Spirit sent before me from the Lord.'  
Thus the Book witnesseth; and well I know  
By what thou art, O dearest, it is so.  
As the lute's tone the maker's hand betrays,  
The sweet disciple speaks her Master's praise.'

Then Miriam, glad of heart, (for in some sort  
She cherished in the Moslem's liberal court  
The sweet traditions of a Christian child;  
And, through her life of sense, the undefiled  
And chaste ideal of the sinless One  
Gazed on her with an eye she might not shun,-  
The sad, reproachful look of pity, born  
Of love that hath no part in wrath or scorn,)  
Began, with low voice and moist eyes, to tell  
Of the all-loving Christ, and what befell  
When the fierce zealots, thirsting for her blood,  
Dragged to his feet a shame of womanhood.  
How, when his searching answer pierced within  
Each heart, and touched the secret of its sin,  
And her accusers fled his face before,  
He bade the poor one go and sin no more.  
And Akbar said, after a moment's thought,  
'Wise is the lesson by thy prophet taught;  
Woe unto him who judges and forgets  
What hidden evil his own heart besets!  
Something of this large charity I find  
In all the sects that sever human kind;  
I would to Allah that their lives agreed

More nearly with the lesson of their creed!  
Those yellow Lamas who at Meerut pray  
By wind and water power, and love to say  
'He who forgiveth not shall, unforgiven,  
Fail of the rest of Buddha,' and who even  
Spare the black gnat that stings them, vex my ears  
With the poor hates and jealousies and fears  
Nursed in their human hives. That lean, fierce priest  
Of thy own people, (be his heart increased  
By Allah's love!) his black robes smelling yet  
Of Goa's roasted Jews, have I not met  
Meek-faced, barefooted, crying in the street  
The saying of his prophet true and sweet,-  
'He who is merciful shall mercy meet!'"

But, next day, so it chanced, as night began  
To fall, a murmur through the hareem ran  
That one, recalling in her dusky face  
The full-lipped, mild-eyed beauty of a race  
Known as the blameless Ethiops of Greek song,  
Plotting to do her royal master wrong,  
Watching, reproachful of the lingering light,  
The evening shadows deepen for her flight,  
Love-guided, to her home in a far land,  
Now waited death at the great Shah's command.  
Shapely as that dark princess for whose smile  
A world was bartered, daughter of the Nile  
Herself, and veiling in her large, soft eyes  
The passion and the languor of her skies,  
The Abyssinian knelt low at the feet  
Of her stern lord: 'O king, if it be meet,  
And for thy honor's sake,' she said, 'that I,  
Who am the humblest of thy slaves, should die,  
I will not tax thy mercy to forgive.  
Easier it is to die than to outlive  
All that life gave me,-him whose wrong of thee  
Was but the outcome of his love for me,  
Cherished from childhood, when, beneath the shade  
Of templed Axum, side by side we played.  
Stolen from his arms, my lover followed me  
Through weary seasons over land and sea;  
And two days since, sitting disconsolate

Within the shadow of the hareem gate,  
Suddenly, as if dropping from the sky,  
Down from the lattice of the balcony  
Fell the sweet song by Tigre's cowherds sung  
In the old music of his native tongue.  
He knew my voice, for love is quick of ear,  
Answering in song.

This night he waited near  
To fly with me. The fault was mine alone  
He knew thee not, he did but seek his own;  
Who, in the very shadow of thy throne,  
Sharing thy bounty, knowing all thou art,  
Greatest and best of men, and in her heart  
Grateful to tears for favor undeserved,  
Turned ever homeward, nor one moment swerved  
From her young love. He looked into my eyes,  
He heard my voice, and could not otherwise  
Than he hath done; yet, save one wild embrace  
When first we stood together face to face,  
And all that fate had done since last we met  
Seemed but a dream that left us children yet,  
He hath not wronged thee nor thy royal bed;  
Spare him, O king! and slay me in his stead!

But over Akbar's brows the frown hung black,  
And, turning to the eunuch at his back,  
'Take them,' he said, 'and let the Jumna's waves  
Hide both my shame and these accursed slaves!'  
His loathly length the unsexed bondman bowed  
'On my head be it!'

Straightway from a cloud  
Of dainty shawls and veils of woven mist  
The Christian Miriam rose, and, stooping, kissed  
The monarch's hand. Loose down her shoulders bare  
Swept all the rippled darkness of her hair,  
Veiling the bosom that, with high, quick swell  
Of fear and pity, through it rose and fell.

'Alas!' she cried, 'hast thou forgotten quite  
The words of Him we spake of yesternight?

Or thy own prophet's, 'Whoso doth endure  
And pardon, of eternal life is sure'?  
O great and good! be thy revenge alone  
Felt in thy mercy to the erring shown;  
Let thwarted love and youth their pardon plead,  
Who sinned but in intent, and not in deed!

One moment the strong frame of Akbar shook  
With the great storm of passion. Then his look  
Softened to her uplifted face, that still  
Pleaded more strongly than all words, until  
Its pride and anger seemed like overblown,  
Spent clouds of thunder left to tell alone  
Of strife and overcoming. With bowed head,  
And smiting on his bosom: 'God,' he said,  
'Alone is great, and let His holy name  
Be honored, even to His servant's shame!  
Well spake thy prophet, Miriam,-he alone  
Who hath not sinned is meet to cast a stone  
At such as these, who here their doom await,  
Held like myself in the strong grasp of fate.  
They sinned through love, as I through love forgive;  
Take them beyond my realm, but let them live!'

And, like a chorus to the words of grace,  
The ancient Fakir, sitting in his place,  
Motionless as an idol and as grim,  
In the pavilion Akbar built for him  
Under the court-yard trees, (for he was wise,  
Knew Menu's laws, and through his close-shut eyes  
Saw things far off, and as an open book  
Into the thoughts of other men could look,)  
Began, half chant, half howling, to rehearse  
The fragment of a holy Vedic verse;  
And thus it ran: 'He who all things forgives  
Conquers himself and all things else, and lives  
Above the reach of wrong or hate or fear,  
Calm as the gods, to whom he is most dear.'

Two leagues from Agra still the traveller sees  
The tomb of Akbar through its cypress-trees;  
And, near at hand, the marble walls that hide

The Christian Begum sleeping at his side.  
And o'er her vault of burial (who shall tell  
If it be chance alone or miracle?)  
The Mission press with tireless hand unrolls  
The words of Jesus on its lettered scrolls,-  
Tells, in all tongues, the tale of mercy o'er,  
And bids the guilty, 'Go and sin no more!'

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It now was dew-fall; very still  
The night lay on the lonely hill,  
Down which our homeward steps we bent,  
And, silent, through great silence went,  
Save that the tireless crickets played  
Their long, monotonous serenade.  
A young moon, at its narrowest,  
Curved sharp against the darkening west;  
And, momentarily, the beacon's star,  
Slow wheeling o'er its rock afar,  
From out the level darkness shot  
One instant and again was not.  
And then my friend spake quietly  
The thought of both: 'Yon crescent see!  
Like Islam's symbol-moon it gives  
Hints of the light whereby it lives  
Somewhat of goodness, something true  
From sun and spirit shining through  
All faiths, all worlds, as through the dark  
Of ocean shines the lighthouse spark,  
Attests the presence everywhere  
Of love and providential care.  
The faith the old Norse heart confessed  
In one dear name,-the hopefulest  
And tenderest heard from mortal lips  
In pangs of birth or death, from ships  
Ice-bitten in the winter sea,  
Or lisped beside a mother's knee,-  
The wiser world hath not outgrown,  
And the All-Father is our own!'



## Mithridates At Chios

KNOW'ST thou, O slave-cursed land!  
How, when the Chian's cup of guilt  
Was full to overflow, there came  
God's justice in the sword of flame  
That, red with slaughter to its hilt,  
Blazed in the Cappadocian victor's hand?  
The heavens are still and far;  
But, not unheard of awful Jove,  
The sighing of the island slave  
Was answered, when the Ægean wave  
The keels of Mithridates clove,  
And the vines shrivelled in the breath of war.  
'Robbers of Chios! hark,'  
The victor cried, 'to Heaven's decree!  
Pluck your last cluster from the vine,  
Drain your last cup of Chian wine;  
Slaves of your slaves, your doom shall be,  
In Colchian mines by Phasis rolling dark.'  
Then rose the long lament  
From the hoar sea-god's dusky caves:  
The priestess rent her hair and cried,  
'Woe! woe! The gods are sleepless-eyed!'  
And, chained and scourged, the slaves of slaves,  
The lords of Chios into exile went.  
'The gods at last pay well,'  
So Hellas sang her taunting song,  
'The fisher in his net is caught,  
The Chian hath his master bought;'  
And isle from isle, with laughter long,  
Took up and sped the mocking parable.  
Once more the slow, dumb years  
Bring their avenging cycle round,  
And, more than Hellas taught of old,  
Our wiser lesson shall be told,  
Of slaves uprising, freedom-crowned,  
To break, not wield, the scourge wet with their blood and tears.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Mogg Megone - Part I.

Who stands on that cliff, like a figure of stone,  
Unmoving and tall in the light of the sky,  
Where the spray of the cataract sparkles on high,  
Lonely and sternly, save Mogg Megone?  
Close to the verge of the rock is he,  
While beneath him the Saco its work is doing,  
Hurrying down to its grave, the sea,  
And slow through the rock its pathway hewing!  
Far down, through the mist of the falling river,  
Which rises up like an incense ever,  
The splintered points of the crags are seen,  
With water howling and vexed between,  
While the scooping whirl of the pool beneath  
Seems an open throat, with its granite teeth!

But Mogg Megone never trembled yet  
Wherever his eye or his foot was set.  
He is watchful: each form in the moonlight dim,  
Of rock or of tree, is seen of him:  
He listens; each sound from afar is caught,  
The faintest shiver of leaf and limb:  
But he sees not the waters, which foam and fret,  
Whose moonlit spray has his moccasin wet, -  
And the roar of their rushing, he bears it not.

The moonlight, through the open bough  
Of the gnarl'd beech, whose naked root  
Coils like a serpent at his foot,  
Falls, checkered, on the Indian's brow.  
His head is bare, save only where  
Waves in the wind one lock of hair,  
Reserved for him, whoe'er he be,  
More mighty than Megone in strife,  
When breast to breast and knee to knee,  
Above the fallen warrior's life  
Gleams, quick and keen, the scalping-knife.

Megone hath his knife and hatchet and gun,  
And his gaudy and tasselled blanket on:

His knife hath a handle with gold inlaid,  
And magic words on its polished blade, -  
'Twas the gift of Castine to Mogg Megone,  
For a scalp or twain from the Yengees torn:  
His gun was the gift of the Tarrantine,  
And Modocawando's wives had strung  
The brass and the beads, which tinkle and shine  
On the polished breach, and broad bright line  
Of beaded wampum around it hung.  
What seeks Megone? His foes are near, -  
Grey Jocelyn's eye is never sleeping,  
And the garrison lights are burning clear,  
Where Phillips' men their watch are keeping.  
Let him hie him away through the dank river fog,  
Never rustling the boughs nor displacing the rocks,  
For the eyes and the ears which are watching for Mogg  
Are keener than those of the wolf or the fox.

He starts, - there's a rustle among the leaves:  
Another, - the click of his gun in heard!  
A footstep, - is it the step of Cleaves,  
With Indian blood on his English sword?  
Steals Harmon down from the sands of York,  
With hand of iron and foot of cork?  
Has Scamman, versed in Indian wile,  
For vengeance left his vine-hung in isle?  
Hark! at that whistle, soft and low,  
How lights the eye of Mogg Megone!  
A smile gleams o'er his dusky brow, -  
'Boon welcome, Johnny Bonython!'

Out steps, with cautious foot and slow,  
And quick, keen glances to and fro,  
The hunted outlaw, Bonython!  
A low, lean, swarthy man is he,  
With blanket-garb and buskined knee,  
And naught of English fashion on;  
For he hates the race from whence he sprung,  
And he couches his words in the Indian tongue.

'Hush, - let the Sachem's voice be weak;  
The water-rat shall hear him speak, -

The owl shall whoop in the white man's ear,  
That Mogg Megone, with his scalps, is here!  
He pauses, - dark, over cheek and brow,  
A flush, as of shame, is stealing now:  
'Sachem!' he says, 'let me have the land,  
Which stretches away upon either hand,  
As far about as my feet can stray  
In the half of a gentle summer's day,  
From the leaping brook to the Saco river, -  
And the fair-haired girl, thou hast sought of me,  
Shall sit in the Sachem's wigwam, and be  
The wife of Mogg Megone forever.'

There's sudden light in the Indian's glance,  
A moment's trace of powerful feeling,  
Of love or triumph, or both perchance,  
Over his proud, calm features stealing.  
'The words of my father are very good;  
He shall have the land, and water, and wood;  
And he who harms the Sagamore John,  
Shall feel the knife of Mogg Megone;  
But the fawn of the Yengees shall sleep on my breast,  
And the bird of the clearing shall sing in my nest.'

'But, father!' - and the Indian's hand  
Falls gently on the white man's arm,  
And with a smile as shrewdly bland  
As the deep voice is slow and calm, -  
'Where is my father's singing-bird, -  
The sunny eye, and sunset hair?  
I know I have my father's word,  
And that his word is good and fair;  
But will my father tell me where  
Megone shall go and look for his bride? -  
For he sees her not by her father's side.'

The dark, stern eye of Bonython  
Flashes over the features of Mogg Megone,  
In one of those glances which search within ;  
But the stolid calm of the Indian alone  
Remains where the trace of emotion has been.  
'Does the Sachem doubt? Let him go with me,

And the eyes of the Sachem his bride shall see.'

Cautious and slow, with pauses oft,  
And watchful eyes and whispers soft,  
The twain are stealing through the wood,  
Leaving the downward-rushing flood,  
Whose deep and solemn roar behind  
Grows fainter on the evening wind.  
Hark! - is that the angry howl  
Of the wolf, the hills among? -  
Or the hooting of the owl,  
On his leafy cradle swung? -  
Quickly glancing, to and fro,  
Listening to each sound they go  
Round the columns of the pine,  
Indistinct, in shadow, seeming  
Like some old and pillared shrine;  
With the soft and white moonshine,  
Round the foliage-tracery shed  
Of each column's branching head,  
For its lamps of worship gleaming!  
And the sounds awakened there,  
In the pine-leaves fine and small,  
Soft and sweetly musical,  
By the fingers of the air,  
For the anthem's dying fall  
Lingering round some temple's wall!  
Niche and cornice round and round  
Wailing like the ghost of sound!  
Is not Nature's worship thus,  
Ceaseless ever, going on?  
Hath it not a voice for us  
In the thunder, or the tone  
Of the leaf-harp faint and small,  
Speaking to the unsealed ear  
Words of blended love and fear,  
Of the mighty Soul of all?

Naught had the twain of thoughts like these  
As they wound along through the crowded trees,  
Where never had rung the axeman's stroke  
On the gnarled trunk of the rough-barked oak; -

Climbing the dead tree's mossy log,  
Breaking the mesh of the bramble fine,  
Turning aside the wild grapevine,  
And lightly crossing the quaking bog  
Whose surface shakes at the leap of the frog,  
And out of whose pools the ghostly fog  
Creeps into the chill moonshine!  
Yet, even that Indian's ear had heard  
The preaching of the Holy Word:  
Sanchekantacket's isle of sand  
Was once his father's hunting land,  
Where zealous Hiacoomes stood, -  
The wild apostle of the wood,  
Shook from his soul the fear of harm,  
And trampled on the Powwaw's charm;  
Until the wizard's curses hung  
Suspended on his palsying tongue,  
And the fierce warrior, grim and tall,  
Trembled before the forest Paul!  
A cottage hidden in the wood, -  
Red through its seams a light is glowing,  
On rock and bough and tree-trunk rude,  
A narrow lustre throwing.  
'Who's there?' a clear, firm voice demands;  
'Hold, Ruth, - 'tis I, the Sage more!'  
Quick, at the summons, hasty hands  
Unclose the bolted door;  
And on the outlaw's daughter shine  
The flashes of the kindled pine.

Tall and erect the maiden stands,  
Like some young priestess of the wood,  
The freeborn child of Solitude,  
And bearing still the wild and rude,  
Yet noble trace of Nature's hands.  
Her dark brown cheek has caught its stain  
More from the sunshine than the rain;  
Yet, where her long fair hair is parting,  
A pure white brow into light is starting;  
And, where the folds of her blanket sever,  
Are a neck and bosom as white as ever  
The foam-wreaths rise on the leaping river.

But in the convulsive quiver and grip  
Of the muscles around her bloodless lip,  
There is something painful and sad to see;  
And her eye has a glance more sternly wild  
Than even that of a forest child  
In its fearless and untamed freedom should be.  
Yet, seldom in hall or court are seen  
So queenly a form and so noble a mien,  
As freely and smiling she welcomes them there, -  
Her outlawed sire and Mogg Megone:  
'Pray, father, how does thy hunting fare?  
And, Sachem, say, - does Scamman wear,  
In spite of thy promise, a scalp of his own?'  
Hurried and light is the maiden's tone;  
But a fearful meaning lurks within  
Her glance, as it questions the eye of Megone, -  
An awful meaning of guilt and sin! -  
The Indian hath opened his blanket, and there  
Hangs a human scalp by its long damp hair!  
With hand upraised, with quick drawn breath,  
She meets that ghastly sign of death.  
In one long, glassy, spectral stare  
The enlarging eye is fastened there,  
As if that mesh of pale brown hair  
Had power to change at sight alone,  
Even as the fearful locks which wound  
Medusa's fatal forehead round,  
The gazer into stone.  
With such a look Herodias read  
The features of the bleeding head,  
So looked the mad Moor on his dead,  
Or the young Cenci as she stood,  
O'er-dabbled with a father's blood!

Look! - feeling melts that frozen glance,  
It moves that marble countenance,  
As if at once within her strove  
Pity with shame, and hate with love.  
The Past recalls its joy and pain,  
Old memories rise before her brain, -  
The lips which love's embraces met,  
The hand her tears of parting wet,

The voice whose pleading tones beguiled  
The pleased ear of the forest-child, -  
And tears she may no more repress  
Reveal her lingering tenderness.

O, woman wronged can cherish hate  
More deep and dark than manhood may;  
But when the mockery of Fate  
Hath left Revenge its chosen way,  
And the fell curse, which years have nursed,  
Full on the spoiler's head hath burst, -  
When all her wrong, and shame, and pain,  
Burns fiercely on his heart and brain, -  
Still lingers something of the spell  
Which bound her to the traitor's bosom, -  
Still, midst the vengeful fires of hell,  
Some flowers of old affection blossom.

John Bonython's eyebrows together are drawn  
With a fierce expression of wrath and scorn, -  
He hoarsely whispers, 'Ruth, beware!  
Is this the time to be playing the fool, -  
Crying over a paltry lock of hair,  
Like a love-sick girl at school? -  
Curse on it! - an Indian can see and hear:  
Away, - and prepare our evening cheer!'

How keenly the Indian is watching now  
Her tearful eye and her varying brow, -  
With a serpent eye, which kindles and burns,  
Like a fiery star in the upper air:  
On sire and daughter his fierce glance turns: -  
'Has my old white father a scalp to spare?  
For his young one loves the pale brown hair  
Of the scalp of an English dog far more  
Than Mogg Megone, or his wigwam floor;  
Go, - Mogg is wise: he will keep his land, -  
And Sagamore John, when he feels with his hand,  
Shall miss his scalp where it grew before.

The moment's gust of grief is gone, -  
The lip is clenched, - the tears are still, -

God pity thee, Ruth Bonython!  
With what a strength of will  
Are nature's feelings in thy breast,  
As with an iron hand, repressed!  
And how, upon that nameless woe,  
Quick as the pulse can come and go,  
While shakes the unsteadfast knee, and yet  
The bosom heaves, - the eye is wet, -  
Has thy dark spirit power to stay  
The heart's wild current on its way?  
And whence that baleful strength of guile,  
Which over that still working brow  
And tearful eye and cheek can throw  
The mockery of a smile?  
Warned by her father's blackening frown,  
With one strong effort crushing down  
Grief, hate, remorse, she meets again  
The savage murderer's sullen gaze,  
And scarcely look or tone betrays  
How the heart strives beneath its chain.

'Is the Sachem angry, - angry with Ruth,  
Because she cries with an ache in her tooth,  
Which would make a Sagamore jump and cry,  
And look about with a woman's eye?  
No, - Ruth will sit in the Sachem's door  
And braid the mats for his wigwam floor,  
And broil his fish and tender fawn,  
And weave his wampum, and grind his corn, -  
For she loves the brave and the wise, and none  
Are braver and wiser than Mogg Megone!'

The Indian's brow is clear once more:  
With grave, calm face, and half-shut eye,  
He sits upon the wigwam floor,  
And watches Ruth go by,  
Intent upon her household care;  
And ever and anon, the while,  
Or on the maiden, or her fare,  
Which smokes in grateful promise there,  
Bestows his quiet smile.

Ah, Mogg Megone! - what dreams are thine,  
But those which love's own fancies dress, -  
The sum of Indian happiness! -  
A wigwam, where the warm sunshine  
Looks in among the groves of pine, -  
A stream, where, round thy light canoe,  
The trout and salmon dart in view,  
And the fair girl, before thee now,  
Or plying, in the dews of morn,  
Her hoe amidst thy patch of corn,  
Or offering up, at eve, to thee,  
Thy birchen dish of hominy!

From the rude board of Bonython,  
Venison and succotash have gone, -  
For long these dwellers want of food.  
But untasted of Ruth is the frugal cheer, -  
With head averted, yet ready ear,  
She stands by the side of her austere sire,  
Feeding, at times, the unequal fire  
With the yellow knots of the pitch-pine tree,  
Whose flaring light, as they kindle, falls  
On the cottage-roof, and its black log walls,  
And over its inmates three.

From Sagamore Bonython's hunting flask  
The fire-water burns at the lip of Megone:  
'Will the Sachem hear what his father shall ask?  
Will he make his mark, that it may be known,  
On the speaking-leaf, that he gives the land,  
From the Sachem's own, to his father's hand?'  
The fire-water shines in the Indian's eyes,  
As he rises, the white man's bidding to do:  
'Wuttamuttata - weekan! Mogg is wise, -  
For the water he drinks is strong and new, -  
Mogg's heart is great! - will he shut his hand,  
When his father asks for a little land?' -  
With unsteady fingers, the Indian has drawn  
On the parchment the shape of a hunter's bow,  
'Boon water, - boon water, - Sagamore John!  
Wuttamuttata, - weekan! our hearts will grow!'  
He drinks yet deeper, - he mutters low, -

He reels on his bear-skin to and fro, -  
His head falls down on his naked breast, -  
He struggles, and sinks to a drunken rest.

'Humph - drunk as a beast!' - and Bonython's brow  
Is darker than ever with evil thought -  
'The fool has signed his warrant; but how  
And when shall the deed be wrought?  
Speak, Ruth! why, what the devil is there,  
To fix thy gaze in that empty air? -  
Speak, Ruth! by my soul, if I thought that tear,  
Which shames thyself and our purpose here,  
Were shed for that cursed and pale-faced dog,  
Whose green scalp hangs from the belt of Mogg,  
And whose beastly soul is in Satan's keeping, -  
This - this!' - he dashes his hand upon  
The rattling stock of his loaded gun, -  
'Should send thee with him to do thy weeping!'

'Father!' - the eye of Bonython  
Sinks at that low, sepulchral tone,  
Hollow and deep, as it were spoken  
By the unmoving tongue of death, -  
Or from some statue's lips had broken, -  
A sound without a breath!  
'Father! - my life I value less  
Than yonder fool his gaudy dress;  
And how it ends it matters not,  
By heart-break or by rifle-shot;  
But spare awhile the scoff and threat, -  
Our business is not finished yet.'

'True, true, my girl, - I only meant  
To draw up again the bow unbent.  
Harm thee, my Ruth! I only sought  
To frighten off thy gloomy thought;  
Come, - let's be friends!' He seeks to clasp  
His daughter's cold, damp hand in his.  
Ruth startles from her father's grasp,  
As if each nerve and muscle felt,  
Instinctively, the touch of guilt,  
Through all their subtle sympathies.

He points her to the sleeping Mogg:  
'What shall be done with yonder dog?  
Scamman is dead, and revenge is thine, -  
The deed is signed and the land is mine;  
And this drunken fool is of use no more,  
Save as thy hopeful bridegroom, and sooth,  
'Twere Christian mercy to finish him, Ruth,  
Now, while he lies like a beast on our floor, -  
If not for thine, at least for his sake,  
Rather than let the poor dog awake  
To drain my flask, and claim as his bride  
Such a forest devil to run by his side, -  
Such a Wetuomanit as thou wouldst make!'

He laughs at his jest. Hush - what is there? -  
The sleeping Indian is striving to rise,  
With his knife in his hand, and glaring eyes! -  
'Wagh! - Mogg will have the pale-face's hair,  
For his knife is sharp, and his fingers can help  
The hair to pull and the skin to peel, -  
Let him cry like a woman and twist like an eel,  
The great Captain Scamman must lose his scalp!  
And Ruth, when she sees it, shall dance with Mogg.'  
His eyes are fixed, - but his lips draw in, -  
With a low, hoarse chuckle, and fiendish grin, -  
And he sinks again, like a senseless log.

Ruth does not speak, - she does not stir;  
But she gazes down on the murderer,  
Whose broken and dreamful slumbers tell  
Too much for her ear of that deed of hell.  
She sees the knife, with its slaughter red,  
And the dark fingers clenching the bearskin bed!  
What thoughts of horror and madness whirl  
Through the burning brain of that fallen girl!

John Bonython lifts his gun to his eye,  
Its muzzle is close to the Indian's ear, -  
But he drops it again. 'Some one may be nigh,  
And I would not that even the wolves should hear.'  
He draws his knife from its deer-skin belt, -

Its edge with his fingers is slowly felt; -  
Kneeling down on one knee, by the Indian's side,  
From his throat he opens the blanket wide;  
And twice or thrice he feebly essays  
A trembling hand with the knife to raise.

'I cannot,' - he mutters, - 'did he not save  
My life from a cold and wintry grave,  
When the storm came down from Agioochook,  
And the north-wind howled, and the tree-tops shook, -  
And I strove, in the drifts of the rushing snow,  
Till my knees grew weak and I could not go,  
And I felt the cold to my vitals creep,  
And my heart's blood stiffen, and pulses sleep!  
I cannot strike him - Ruth Bonython!  
In the Devil's name, tell me - what's to be done?'

O, when the soul, once pure and high,  
Is stricken down from Virtue's sky,  
As, with the downcast star of morn,  
Some gems of light are with it drawn, -  
And, through its night of darkness, play  
Some tokens of its primal day, -  
Some lofty feelings linger still, -  
The strength to dare, the nerve to meet  
Whatever threatens with defeat  
Its all-indomitable will! -  
But lacks the mean of mind and heart,  
Though eager for the gains of crime,  
Oft, at his chosen place and time,  
The strength to bear his evil part;  
And, shielded by his very Vice,  
Escapes from Crime by Cowardice.

Ruth starts erect, - with bloodshot eye,  
And lips drawn tight across her teeth,  
Showing their locked embrace beneath,  
In the red firelight: - 'Mogg must die!  
Give me the knife!' - The outlaw turns,  
Shuddering in the heart and limb, away, -  
But, fitfully there, the hearth-fire burns,  
And he sees on the wall strange shadows play.

A lifted arm, a tremulous blade,  
Are dimly pictured in light and shade,  
Plunging down in the darkness. Hark, that cry  
Again - and again - he sees it fall, -  
That shadowy arm down the lighted wall!  
He hears quick footsteps - a shape flits by -  
The door on its rusted hinges creaks: -  
'Ruth - daughter Ruth!' the outlaw shrieks.  
But no sound comes back, - he is standing alone  
By the mangled corse of Mogg Megone!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Mogg Megone - Part II.

'Tis morning over Norridgewock, -  
On tree and wigwam, wave and rock.  
Bathed in the autumnal sunshine, stirred  
At intervals by breeze and bird,  
And wearing all the hues which glow  
In heaven's own pure and perfect bow,  
That glorious picture of the air,  
Which summer's light-robed angel forms  
On the dark ground of fading storms,  
With pencil dipped in sunbeams there, -  
And, stretching out, on either hand,  
O'er all that wide and unshorn land,  
Till, weary of its gorgeousness,  
The aching and the dazzled eye  
Rests, gladdened, on the calm blue sky, -  
Slumbers the mighty wilderness!  
The oak, upon the windy hill,  
Its dark green burthen upward heaves -  
The hemlock broods above its rill,  
Its cone-like foliage darker still,  
Against the birch's graceful stem,  
And the rough walnut-bough receives  
The sun upon its crowded leaves,  
Each colored like a topaz gem;  
And the tall maple wears with them  
The coronal, which autumn gives,  
The brief, bright sign of ruin near,  
The hectic of a dying year!

The hermit priest, who lingers now  
On the Bald Mountain's shrubless brow,  
The gray and thunder-smitten pile  
Which marks afar the Desert Isle,  
While gazing on the scene below,  
May half forget the dreams of home,  
That nightly with his slumbers come, -  
The tranquil skies of sunny France,  
The peasant's harvest song and dance,  
The vines around the hillsides wreathing

The soft airs midst their clusters breathing,  
The wings which dipped, the stars which shone  
Within thy bosom, blue Garonne!  
And round the Abbey's shadowed wall,  
At morning spring and even-fall,  
Sweet voices in the still air singing, -  
The chant of many a holy hymn, -  
The solemn bell of vespers ringing, -  
And hallowed torchlight falling dim  
On pictured saint and seraphim!  
For here beneath him lies unrolled,  
Bathed deep in morning's flood of gold,  
A vision gorgeous as the dream  
Of the beautified may seem,  
When, as his Church's legends say,  
Borne upward in ecstatic bliss,  
The rapt enthusiast soars away  
Unto a brighter world than this:  
A mortal's glimpse beyond the pale, -  
A moment's lifting of the veil!

Far eastward o'er the lovely bay,  
Penobscot's clustered wigwams lay;  
And gently from that Indian town  
The verdant hillside slopes adown,  
To where the sparkling waters play  
Upon the yellow sands below;  
And shooting round the winding shores  
Of narrow capes, and isles which lie  
Slumbering to ocean's lullaby, -  
With birchen boat and glancing oars,  
The red men to their fishing go;  
While from their planting ground is borne  
The treasure of the golden corn,  
By laughing girls, whose dark eyes glow  
Wild through the locks which o'er them flow.  
The wrinkled squaw, whose toil is done,  
Sits on her bear-skin in the sun,  
Watching the huskers, with a smile  
For each full ear which swells the pile;  
And the old chief, who nevermore  
May bend the bow or pull the oar,

Smokes gravely in his wigwam door,  
Or slowly shapes, with axe of stone,  
The arrow-head from flint and bone.

Beneath the westward turning eye  
A thousand wooded islands lie, -  
Gems of the waters! - with each hue  
Of brightness set in ocean's blue.  
Each bears aloft its tuft of trees  
Touched by the pencil of the frost,  
And, with the motion of each breeze,  
A moment seen, - a moment lost, -  
Changing and blent, confused and tossed,  
The brighter with the darker crossed,  
Their thousand tints of beauty glow  
Down in the restless waves below,  
And tremble in the sunny skies,  
As if, from waving bough to bough,  
Flitted the birds of paradise.  
There sleep Placentia's group, - and there  
Pere Breteaux marks the hour of prayer;  
And there, beneath the sea-worn cliff,  
On which the Father's hut is seen,  
The Indian stays his rocking skiff,  
And peers the hemlock-boughs between,  
Half trembling, as he seeks to look  
Upon the Jesuit's Cross and Book.  
There, gloomily against the sky  
The Dark Isles rear their summits high;  
And Desert Rock, abrupt and bare,  
Lifts its gray turrets in the air, -  
Seen from afar, like some stronghold  
Built by the ocean kings of old;  
And, faint as smoke-wreath white and thin,  
Swells in the north vast Katahdin:  
And, wandering from its marshy feet,  
The broad Penobscot comes to meet  
And mingle with his own bright bay.  
Slow sweep his dark and gathering floods,  
Arched over by the ancient woods,  
Which Time, in those dim solitudes,  
Wielding the dull axe of Decay,

Alone hath ever shorn away.

Not thus, within the woods which hide  
The beauty of thy azure tide,  
And with their falling timbers block  
Thy broken currents, Kennebec!  
Gazes the white man on the wreck  
Of the down-trodden Norridgewock, -  
In one lone village hemmed at length,  
In battle shorn of half their strength,  
Turned, like the panther in his lair,  
With his fast-flowing life-blood wet,  
For one last struggle of despair,  
Wounded and faint, but tameless yet,  
Unreaped, upon the planting lands,  
The scant, neglected harvest stands:  
No shout is there, - no dance, - no song:  
The aspect of the very child  
Scowls with a meaning sad and wild  
Of bitterness and wrong.  
The almost infant Norridgewock  
Essays to lift the tomahawk;  
And plucks his father's knife away,  
To mimic, in his frightful play,  
The scalping of an English foe:  
Wreathes on his lip a horrid smile,  
Burns, like a snake's, his small eye, while  
Some bough or sapling meets his blow.  
The fisher, as he drops his line,  
Starts, when he sees the hazels quiver  
Along the margin of the river,  
Looks up and down the rippling tide,  
And grasps the firelock at his side.  
For Bomazeen from Tacconock  
Has sent his runners to Norridgewock,  
With tidings that Moulton and Harmon of York  
Far up the river have come:  
They have left their boats, - they have entered the wood,  
And filled the depths of the solitude  
With the sound of the ranger's drum.

On the brow of a hill, which slopes to meet

The flowing river, and bathe its feet, -  
The bare-washed rock, and the drooping grass,  
And the creeping vine, as the waters pass, -  
A rude and unshapely chapel stands,  
Built up in that wild by unskilled hands,  
Yet the traveller knows it a place of prayer,  
For the holy sign of the cross is there:  
And should he chance at that place to be,  
Of a Sabbath morn, or some hallowed day,  
When prayers are made and masses are said,  
Some for the living and some for the dead,  
Well might that traveller start to see  
The tall dark forms, that take their way  
From the birch canoe, on the river-shore,  
And the forest paths, to that chapel door;  
And marvel to mark the naked knees  
And the dusky foreheads bending there,  
While, in coarse white vesture, over these  
In blessing or in prayer,  
Stretching abroad his thin pale hands,  
Like a shrouded ghost, the Jesuit stands.

Two forms are now in that chapel dim,  
The Jesuit, silent and sad and pale,  
Anxiously heeding some fearful tale,  
Which a stranger is telling him.  
That stranger's garb is soiled and torn,  
And wet with dew and loosely worn;  
Her fair neglected hair falls down  
O'er cheeks with wind and sunshine brown;  
Yet still, in that disordered face,  
The Jesuit's cautious eye can trace  
Those elements of former grace  
Which, half effaced, seem scarcely less,  
Even now, than perfect loveliness.

With drooping head, and voice so low  
That scarce it meets the Jesuit's ears, -  
While through her clasped fingers flow,  
From the heart's fountain, hot and slow,  
Her penitential tears, -  
She tells the story of the woe

And evil of her years.

'O father, bear with me; my heart  
Is sick and death-like, and my brain  
Seems girdled with a fiery chain,  
Whose scorching links will never part,  
And never cool again.  
Bear with me while I speak, - but turn  
Away that gentle eye, the while, -  
The fires of guilt more fiercely burn  
Beneath its holy smile;  
For half I fancy I can see  
My mother's sainted look in thee.

'My dear lost mother! sad and pale,  
Mournfully sinking day by day,  
And with a hold on life as frail  
As frosted leaves, that, thin and gray,  
Hang feebly on their parent spray,  
And tremble in the gale;  
Yet watching o'er my childishness  
With patient fondness, - not the less  
For all the agony which kept  
Her blue eye wakeful, while I slept;  
And checking every tear and groan  
That haply might have waked my own,  
And bearing still, without offence,  
My idle words, and petulance;  
Reproving with a tear, - and, while  
The tooth of pain was keenly preying  
Upon her very heart, repaying  
My brief repentance with a smile.

'O, in her meek, forgiving eye  
There was a brightness not of mirth,  
A light whose clear intensity  
Was borrowed not of earth.  
Along her cheek a deepening red  
Told where the feverish hectic fed;  
And yet, each fatal token gave  
To the mild beauty of her face  
A newer and a dearer grace,

Unwarning of the grave.

'Twas like the hue which Autumn gives  
To yonder changed and dying leaves,  
Breathed over by his frosty breath;  
Scarce can the gazer feel that this  
Is but the spoiler's treacherous kiss,  
The mocking-smile of Death!

'Sweet were the tales she used to tell  
When summer's eve was dear to us,  
And, fading from the darkening dell,  
The glory of the sunset fell  
On wooded Agamenticus, -  
When, sitting by our cottage wall,  
The murmur of the Saco's fall,  
And the south-wind's expiring sighs,  
Came, softly blending, on my ear,  
With the low tones I loved to hear:  
Tales of the pure, - the good, - the wise, -  
The holy men and maids of old,  
In the all-sacred pages told; -  
Of Rachel, stooped at Haran's fountains,  
Amid her father's thirsty flock,  
Beautiful to her kinsman seeming  
As the bright angels of his dreaming,  
On Padan-aran's holy rock;  
Of gentle Ruth, - and her who kept  
Her awful vigil on the mountains,  
By Israel's virgin daughters wept;  
Of Miriam, with her maidens, singing  
The song for grateful Israel meet,  
While every crimson wave was bringing  
The spoils of Egypt at her feet;  
Of her, - Samaria's humble daughter,  
Who paused to hear, beside her well,  
Lessons of love and truth, which fell  
Softly as Shiloh's flowing water;  
And saw, beneath his pilgrim guise,  
The Promised One, so long foretold  
By holy seer and bard of old,  
Revealed before her wondering eyes!  
'Slowly she faded. Day by day

Her step grew weaker in our hall,  
And fainter, at each even-fall,  
Her sad voice died away.  
Yet on her thin, pale, lip, the while,  
Sat Resignation's holy smile:  
And even my father checked his tread,  
And hushed his voice, beside her bed:  
Beneath the calm and sad rebuke  
Of her meek eye's imploring look,  
The scowl of hate his brow forsook,  
And in his stern and gloomy eye,  
At times, a few unwonted tears  
Wet the dark lashes, which for years  
Hatred and pride had kept so dry.

'Calm as a child to slumber soothed,  
As if an angel's hand had smoothed  
The still, white features into rest,  
Silent and cold, without a breath  
To stir the drapery on her breast,  
Pain, with its keen and poisoned fang,  
The horror of the mortal pang,  
The suffering look her brow had worn,  
The fear, the strife, the anguish gone, -  
She slept at last in death!

'O, tell me, father,  
can  
the dead  
Walk on the earth, and look on us,  
And lay upon the living's head  
Their blessing or their curse?  
For, O, last night she stood by me,  
As I lay beneath the woodland tree!'

The Jesuit crosses himself in awe, -  
'Jesu! what was it my daughter saw?'

,

She  
came to me last night.  
The dried leaves did not feel her tread;

She stood by me in the wan moonlight,  
In the white robes of the dead!  
Pale, and very mournfully  
She bent her light form over me.  
I heard no sound, I felt no breath  
Breathe o'er me from that face of death:  
Its blue eyes rested on my own,  
Rayless and cold as eyes of stone;  
Yet, in their fixed, unchanging gaze,  
Something, which spoke of early days, -  
A sadness in their quiet glare,  
As if love's smile were frozen there, -  
Came o'er me with an icy thrill;  
O God! I feel its presence still!

The Jesuit makes the holy sign, -  
'How passed the vision, daughter mine?'  
'All dimly in the wan moonshine,  
As a wreath of mist will twist and twine  
And scatter, and melt into the light, -  
So scattering, - melting on my sight,  
The pale, cold vision passed;  
But those sad eyes were fixed on mine  
Mournfully to the last.'

'God help thee, daughter, tell me why  
That spirit passed before thine eye!'

'Father, I know not, save it be  
That deeds of mine have summoned her  
From the unbreathing sepulchre,  
To leave her last rebuke with me.  
Ah, woe for me! my mother died  
Just at the moment when I stood  
Close on the verge of womanhood,  
A child in everything beside;  
And when my wild heart needed most  
Her gentle counsels, they were lost.

'My father lived a stormy life,  
Of frequent change and daily strife;  
And - God forgive him! - left his child

To feel, like him, a freedom wild;  
To love the red man's dwelling-place.  
The birch boat on his shaded floods,  
The wild excitement of the chase  
Sweeping the ancient woods,  
The camp-fire, blazing on the shore  
Of the still lakes, the clear stream where  
The idle fisher sets his wear,  
Or angles in the shade, far more  
Than that restraining awe I felt  
Beneath my gentle mother's care,  
When nightly at her knee I knelt,  
With childhood's simple prayer.

'There came a change. The wild, glad mood  
Of unchecked freedom passed.  
Amid the ancient solitude  
Of unshorn grass and waving wood,  
And waters glancing bright and fast,  
A softened voice was in my ear,  
Sweet as those lulling sounds and fine  
The hunter lifts his head to hear,  
Now far and faint, now full and near -  
The murmur of the wind-swept pine.  
A manly form was ever nigh,  
A bold, free hunter, with an eye  
Whose dark, keen glance had power to wake  
Both fear and love, - to awe and charm  
'Twas as the wizard rattlesnake,  
Whose evil glances lure to harm -  
Whose cold and small and glittering eye,  
And brilliant coil, and changing dye,  
Draw, step by step, the gazer near,  
With drooping wing and cry of fear,  
Yet powerless all to turn away,  
A conscious, but a willing prey!

'Fear, doubt, thought, life itself, erelong  
Merged in one feeling deep and strong.  
Faded the world which I had known,  
A poor vain shadow, cold and waste;  
In the warm present bliss alone

Seemed I of actual life to taste.  
Fond longings dimly understood,  
The glow of passion's quickening blood,  
And cherished fantasies which press  
The young lip with a dream's caress, -  
The heart's forecast and prophecy  
Took form and life before my eye,  
Seen in the glance which met my own,  
Heard in the soft and pleading tone,  
Felt in the arms around me cast,  
And warm heart-pulses beating fast.  
Ah! scarcely yet to God above  
With deeper trust, with stronger love,  
Has prayerful saint his meek heart lent,  
Or cloistered nun at twilight bent,  
Than I, before a human shrine,  
With heart, and soul, and mind, and form,  
Knelt madly to a fellow-worm.

'Full soon, upon that dream of sin,  
An awful light came bursting in.  
The shrine was cold at which I knelt,  
The idol of that shrine was gone;  
A humbled thing of shame and guilt,  
Outcast, and spurned and lone,  
Wrapt in the shadows of my crime,  
With withering heart and burning brain,  
And tears that fell like fiery rain,  
I passed a fearful time.

'There came a voice - it checked the tear -  
In heart and soul it wrought a change; -  
My father's voice was in my ear;  
It whispered of revenge!  
A new and fiercer feeling swept  
All lingering tenderness away;  
And tiger passions, which had slept  
In childhood's better day,  
Unknown, unfelt, arose at length  
In all their own demoniac strength.  
'A youthful warrior of the wild,  
By words deceived, by smiles beguiled,

Of crime the cheated instrument,  
Upon our fatal errands went.  
Through camp and town and wilderness  
He tracked his victim; and, at last,  
Just when the tide of hate had passed,  
And milder thoughts came warm and fast,  
Exulting, at my feet he cast  
The bloody token of success.

'O God! with what an awful power  
I saw the buried past arise,  
And gather, in a single hour,  
Its ghost-like memories!  
And then I felt - alas! too late -  
That underneath the mask of hate,  
That shame and guilt and wrong had thrown  
O'er feelings which they might not own,  
The heart's wild love had known no change;  
And still that deep and hidden love,  
With its first fondness, wept above  
The victim of its own revenge!  
There lay the fearful scalp, and there  
The blood was on its pale brown hair!  
I thought not of the victim's scorn,  
I thought not of his baleful guile,  
My deadly wrong, my outcast name,  
The characters of sin and shame  
On heart and forehead drawn;  
I only saw that victim's smile, -  
The still, green places where we met, -  
The moonlit branches, dewy wet;  
I only felt, I only heard  
The greeting and the parting word, -  
The smile, - the embrace, - the tone which made  
An Eden of the forest shade.

'And oh, with what a loathing eye,  
With what a deadly hate, and deep,  
I saw that Indian murderer lie  
Before me, in his drunken sleep!  
What though for me the deed was done  
And words of mine had sped him on!

Yet when he murmured, as he slept,  
The horrors of that deed of blood,  
The tide of utter madness swept  
O'er brain and bosom, like a flood.  
And, father, with this hand of mine -'  
'Ha! what didst thou?' the Jesuit cries,  
Shuddering, as smitten with sudden pain,  
And shading, with one thin hand, his eyes,  
With the other he makes the holy sign.  
'- I smote him as I would a worm; -  
With heart as steeled, with nerves as firm:  
He never woke again!'

'Woman of sin and blood and shame,  
Speak, - I would know that victim's name.'

'Father,' she gasped, 'a chieftain, known  
As Saco's Sachem, - Mogg Megone!'

Pale priest! What proud and lofty dreams,  
What keen desires, what cherished schemes,  
What hopes, that time may not recall,  
Are darkened by that chieftain's fall!  
Was he not pledged, by cross and vow,  
To lift the hatchet of his sire,  
And, round his own, the Church's foe,  
To light the avenging fire?  
Who now the Tarrantine shall wake.  
For thine and for the Church's sake?  
Who summon to the scene  
Of conquest and unsparing strife,  
And vengeance dearer than his life,  
The fiery-souled Castine?  
Three backward steps the Jesuit takes, -  
His long, thin frame as ague shakes;  
And loathing hate is in his eye,  
As from his lips these words of fear  
Fall hoarsely on the maiden's ear, -  
'The soul that sinneth shall surely die!'

She stands, as stands the stricken deer,  
Checked midway in the fearful chase,

When bursts, upon his eye and ear,  
The gaunt, gray robber, baying near,  
Between him and his hiding-place;  
While still behind, with yell and blow,  
Sweeps, like a storm, the coming foe.  
'Save me, O holy man!' - her cry  
Fills all the void, as if a tongue,  
Unseen, from rib and rafter hung,  
Thrilling with mortal agony;  
Her hands are clasping the Jesuit's knee,  
And her eye looks fearfully into his own; -  
'Off, woman of sin! - nay, touch not me  
With those fingers of blood; - begone!'  
With a gesture of horror, he spurns the form  
That writhes at his feet like a trodden worm.

Ever thus the spirit must,  
Guilty in the sight of Heaven,  
With a keener woe be riven,  
For its weak and sinful trust  
In the strength of human dust  
And its anguish thrill afresh  
For each vain reliance given  
To the failing arm of flesh.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Mogg Megone - Part Iii.

Ah! weary Priest! - with pale hands pressed  
On thy throbbing brow of pain,  
Baffled in thy life-long quest,  
Overworn with toiling vain,  
How ill thy troubled musings fit  
The holy quiet of a breast  
With the Dove of Peace at rest,  
Sweetly brooding over it.  
Thoughts are thine which have no part  
With the meek and pure of heart,  
Undisturbed by outward things,  
Resting in the heavenly shade,  
By the overspreading wings  
Of the Blessed Spirit made.  
Thoughts of strife and hate and wrong  
Sweep thy heated brain along,  
Fading hopes for whose success  
It were sin to breathe a prayer; -  
Schemes which Heaven may never bless, -  
Fears which darken to despair.  
Hoary priest! thy dream is done  
Of a hundred red tribes won  
To the pale of Holy Church;  
And the heretic o'erthrown,  
And his name no longer known,  
And thy weary brethren turning,  
Joyful from their years of mourning,  
'Twixt the altar and the porch.  
Hark! what sudden sound is heard  
In the wood and in the sky,  
Shriller than the scream of bird, -  
Than the trumpet's clang more high!  
Every wolf-cave of the hills, -  
Forest arch and mountain gorge,  
Rock and dell, and river verge, -  
With an answering echo thrills.  
Well does the Jesuit know that cry  
Which summons the Norridgewock to die,  
And tells that the foe of his flock is nigh.

He listens, and hears the rangers come,  
With loud hurrah, and jar of drum,  
And hurrying feet (for the chase is hot),  
And the short, sharp sound of rifle shot,  
And taunt and menace, - answered well  
By the Indians' mocking cry and yell, -  
The bark of dogs, - the squaw's mad scream, -  
The dash of paddles along the stream, -  
The whistle of shot as it cuts the leaves  
Of the maples around the church's caves, -  
And the gride of hatchets fiercely thrown,  
On wigwam-log and tree and stone.  
Black with the grim of paint and dust,  
Spotted and streaked with human gore,  
A grim and naked head is thrust  
Within the chapel-door.

'Ha - Bomazeen! - In God's name say,  
What mean these sounds of bloody fray?'  
Silent, the Indian points his hand  
To where across the echoing glen  
Sweep Harmon's dreaded ranger-hand,  
And Moulton with his men.

'Where are thy warriors, Bomazeen?  
Where are De Rouville and Castine,  
And where the braves of Sawga's queen?'  
'Let my father find the winter snow  
Which the sun drank up long moons ago!  
Under the falls of Tacconock,  
The wolves are eating the Norridgewock;  
Castine with his wives lies closely hid  
Like a fox in the woods of Pemaquid!  
On Sawga's banks the man of war  
Sits in his wigwam like a squaw, -  
Squando has fled, and Mogg Megone,  
Struck by the knife of Sagamore John,  
Lies stiff and stark and cold as a stone.'

Fearfully over the Jesuit's face,  
Of a thousand thoughts, trace after trace,  
Like swift cloud-shadows, each other chase.  
One instant, his fingers grasp his knife,  
For a last vain struffle for cherished life, -

The next, he hurls the blade away,  
And kneels at his altar's foot to pray;  
Over his beads his fingers stray,  
And he kisses the cross, and calls aloud  
On the Virgin and her Son;  
For terrible thoughts his memory crowd  
Of evil seen and done, -  
Of scalps brought home by his savage flock  
From Casco and Sawga and Sagadahock  
In the Church's service won.

No shrift the gloomy savage brooks,  
As scowling on the priest he looks:  
'Cowesass - cowesass - tawhich wessaseen?  
Let my father look upon Bomazeen, -  
My father's heart is the heart of a squaw,  
But mine is so hard that it does not thaw;  
Let my father ask his God to make  
A dance and a feast for a great sagamore,  
When he paddles across the western lake,  
With his dogs and his squaws to the spirit's shore.  
'Cowesass - cowesass - tawhich wessaseen?  
Let my father die like Bomazeen!'

Through the chapel's narrow doors,  
And through each window in the walls,  
Bound the priest and warrior pours  
The deadly shower of English balls.  
Low on his cross the Jesuit falls;  
While at his side the Norridgewock,  
With failing breath, essays to mock  
And menace yet the hated foe, -  
Shakes his scalp-trophies to and fro  
Exultingly before their eyes, -  
Till, cleft and torn by shot and blow,  
Defiant still, he dies.

'So fare all eaters of the frog!  
Death to the Babylonish dog!  
Down with the beast of Rome!  
With shouts like these, around the dead,  
Unconscious on his bloody bed,

The rangers crowding come.  
Brave men! the dead priest cannot hear  
The unfeeling taunt, - the brutal jeer; -  
Spurn - for he sees ye not - in wrath,  
The symbol of your Saviour's death;  
Tear from his death-grasp, in your zeal,  
And trample, as a thing accursed,  
The cross he cherished in the dust:  
The dead man cannot feel!

Brutal alike in deed and word,  
With callous heart and hand of strife,  
How like a fiend may man be made,  
Plying the foul and monstrous trade  
Whose harvest-field is human life,  
Whose sickle is the reeking sword!  
Quenching, with reckless hand in blood,  
Sparks kindled by the breath of God;  
Urging the deathless soul, unshriven,  
Of open guilt of secret sin,  
Before the bar of that pure Heaven  
The holy only enter in!  
O, by the widow's sore distress,  
The orphan's wailing wretchedness,  
By Virtue struggling in the accursed  
Embraces of polluting Lust,  
By the fell discord of the Pit,  
And the painted souls that people it,  
And by the blessed peace which fills  
The Paradise of God forever,  
Resting on all its holy hills,  
And flowing with its crystal river, -  
Let Christian hands no longer bear  
In triumph on his crimson car  
The foul and idol god of war;  
No more the purple wreaths prepare  
To bind amid his snaky hair;  
Nor Christian bards his glories tell,  
Nor Christian tongues his praises swell.

Through the gun-smoke wreathing white,  
Glimpses on the soldiers' sight

A thing of human shape I ween,  
For a moment only seen,  
With its loose hair backward streaming,  
And its eyeballs madly gleaming,  
Shrieking, like a soul in pain,  
From the world of light and breath,  
Hurrying to its place again,  
Spectre-like it vanisheth!

Wretched girl! one eye alone  
Notes the way which thou hast gone.  
That great Eye, which slumbers never,  
Watching o'er a lost world ever,  
Tracks thee over vale and mountain,  
By the gushing forest-fountain,  
Plucking from the vine its fruit,  
Searching for the ground-nut's root,  
Peering in the she-wolf's den,  
Wading through the marshy fen,  
Where the sluggish water-snake  
Basks beside the sunny brake,  
Coiling in his slimy bed,  
Smooth and cold against thy tread, -  
Purposeless, thy mazy way  
Threading through the lingering day.  
And at night securely sleeping  
Where the dogwood's dewes are weeping!  
Still, though the earth and man discard thee,  
Doth thy Heavenly Father guard thee.  
He who spared the guilty Cain,  
Even when a brother's blood,  
Crying in the ear of God,  
Gave the earth its primal stain, -  
He whose mercy ever liveth,  
Who repenting guilt forgiveth,  
And the broken heart receiveth, -  
Wanderer of the wilderness,  
Haunted, guilty, crazed, and wild,  
He regardeth thy distress,  
And careth for his sinful child!

\*

'Tis springtime on the eastern hills!

Like torrents gush the summer rills;  
Through winter's moss and dry dead leaves  
The bladed grass revives and lives,  
Pushes the mouldering waste away,  
And glimpses to the April day.  
In kindly shower and sunshine bud  
The branches of the dull gray wood;  
Out from its sunned and sheltered nooks  
The blue eye of the violet looks;  
The southwest wind is warmly blowing,  
And odors from the springing grass,  
The pine-tree and the sassafras,  
Are with it on its errands going.

A band is marching through the wood  
Where rolls the Kennebec his flood, -  
The warriors of the wilderness,  
Painted, and in their battle dress;  
And with them one whose bearded cheek,  
And white and wrinkled brow, bespeak  
A wanderer from the shores of France.  
A few long locks of scattering snow  
Beneath a battered morion flow,  
And from the rivets of the best  
Which girds in steel his ample breast,  
The slanted sunbeams glance.  
In the harsh outlines of his face  
Passion and sin have left their trace;  
Yet, save worn brow and thin gray hair,  
No signs of weary age are there.  
His step is firm, his eye is keen,  
Nor years in broil and battle spent,  
Nor toil, nor wounds, no pain have bent  
The lordly frame of old Castine.

No purpose now of strife and blood  
Urges the hoary veteran on:  
The fire of conquest and the mood  
Of chivalry have gone.  
A mournful task is his, - to lay  
Within the earth the bones of those  
Who perished in that fearful day,

When Norridgewock became the prey  
Of all unsparing foes.  
Sadly and still, dark thoughts between,  
Of coming vengeance mused Castine,  
Of the fallen chieftain Bomazeen,  
Who bade for him the Norridgewocks  
Dig up their buried tomahawks  
For firm defence or swift attack;  
And him whose friendship formed the tie  
Which held the stern self-exile back  
From lapsing into savagery;  
Whose garb and tone and kindly glance  
Recalled a younger, happier day,  
And prompted memory's fond essay,  
To bridge the mighty waste which lay  
Between his wild home and that gray,  
Tall chateau of his native France,  
Whose chapel bell, with far-heard din,  
Ushered his birth-hour gayly in,  
And counted with its solemn toll  
The masses for his father's soul.

Hark! from the foremost of the band  
Suddenly bursts the Indian yell;  
For now on the very spot they stand  
Where the Norridgewock's fighting fell.  
No wigwam smoke is curling there;  
The very earth is scorched and bare:  
And they pause and listen to catch a sound  
Of breathing life, - but there comes not one,  
Save the fox's bark and the rabbit's bound;  
But here and there, on the blackened ground,  
White bones are glistening in the sun.  
And where the house of prayer arose,  
And the holy hymn, at daylight's close,  
And the aged priest stood p to bless  
The children of the wilderness,  
There is naught save ashes sodden and dank;  
And the birchen boat of the Norridgewock,  
Tethered to tree and stump and rock  
Rotting along the river bank!

Blessed Mary! who is she  
Leaning against that maple-tree?  
The sun upon her face burns hot,  
But the fixed eyelid moveth not;  
The squirrel's chirp is shrill and clear  
From the dry bough above her ear;  
Dashing from rock and root its spray,  
Close at her feet the river rushes;  
The blackbird's wing against her brushes,  
And sweetly through the hazel-bushes  
The robin's mellow music gushes; -  
God save her! will she sleep away?

Castine hath bent him over the sleeper:  
'Wake, daughter, - wake!' - but she stirs no limb:  
The eye that looks on him is fixed and dim;  
And the sleep she is sleeping shall be no deeper,  
Until the angel's oath is said,  
And the final blast of the trump goes forth  
To the graves of the sea and the graves of earth.  
Ruth Bonython Is Dead!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Moloch In State Street

THE moon has set: while yet the dawn  
Breaks cold and gray,  
Between the midnight and the morn  
Bear off your prey!  
On, swift and still! the conscious street  
Is panged and stirred;  
Tread light! that fall of serried feet  
The dead have heard!  
The first drawn blood of Freedom's veins  
Gushed where ye tread;  
Lo! through the dusk the martyr-stains  
Blush darkly red!  
Beneath the slowly waning stars  
And whitening day,  
What stern and awful presence bars  
That sacred way?  
What faces frown upon ye, dark  
With shame and pain?  
Come these from Plymouth's Pilgrim bark?  
Is that young Vane?  
Who, dimly beckoning, speed ye on  
With mocking cheer?  
Lo! spectral Andros, Hutchinson,  
And Gage are here!  
For ready mart or favoring blast  
Through Moloch's fire,  
Flesh of his flesh, unsparing, passed  
The Tyrian sire.  
Ye make that ancient sacrifice  
Of Man to Gain,  
Your traffic thrives, where freedom dies,  
Beneath the chain.  
Ye sow to-day; your harvest, scorn  
And hate, is near;  
How think ye freemen, mountain-born,  
The tale will hear?  
Thank God! our mother State can yet  
Her fame retrieve;  
To you and to your children let

The scandal cleave.  
Chain Hall and Pulpit, Court and Press,  
Make gods of gold;  
Let honor, truth, and manliness  
Like wares be sold.  
Your hoards are great, your walls are strong,  
But God is just;  
The gilded chambers built by wrong  
Invite the rust.  
What! know ye not the gains of Crime  
Are dust and dross;  
Its ventures on the waves of time  
Foredoomed to loss!  
And still the Pilgrim State remains  
What she hath been;  
Her inland hills, her seaward plains,  
Still nurture men!  
Nor wholly lost the fallen mart;  
Her olden blood  
Through many a free and generous heart  
Still pours its flood.  
That brave old blood, quick-flowing yet,  
Shall know no check,  
Till a free people's foot is set  
On Slavery's neck.  
Even now, the peal of bell and gun,  
And hills aflame,  
Tell of the first great triumph won  
In Freedom's name.  
The long night dies: the welcome gray  
Of dawn we see;  
Speed up the heavens thy perfect day,  
God of the free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Mountain Pictures

I.

## FRANCONIA FROM THE PEMIGEWASSET

Once more, O Mountains of the North, unveil  
Your brows, and lay your cloudy mantles by  
And once more, ere the eyes that seek ye fail,  
Uplift against the blue walls of the sky  
Your mighty shapes, and let the sunshine weave  
Its golden net-work in your belting woods,  
Smile down in rainbows from your falling floods,  
And on your kingly brows at morn and eve  
Set crowns of fire! So shall my soul receive  
Haply the secret of your calm and strength,  
Your unforgotten beauty interfuse  
My common life, your glorious shapes and hues  
And sun-dropped splendors at my bidding come,  
Loom vast through dreams, and stretch in billowy length  
From the sea-level of my lowland home!

They rise before me! Last night's thunder-gust  
Roared not in vain: for where its lightnings thrust  
Their tongues of fire, the great peaks seem so near,  
Burned clean of mist, so starkly bold and clear,  
I almost pause the wind in the pines to hear,  
The loose rock's fall, the steps of browsing deer.  
The clouds that shattered on yon slide-worn walls  
And splintered on the rocks their spears of rain  
Have set in play a thousand waterfalls,  
Making the dusk and silence of the woods  
Glad with the laughter of the chasing floods,  
And luminous with blown spray and silver gleams,  
While, in the vales below, the dry-lipped streams  
Sing to the freshened meadow-lands again.  
So, let me hope, the battle-storm that beats  
The land with hail and fire may pass away  
With its spent thunders at the break of day,  
Like last night's clouds, and leave, as it retreats,  
A greener earth and fairer sky behind,  
Blown crystal-clear by Freedom's Northern wind!

## II.

### MONADNOCK FROM WACHUSET.

I would I were a painter, for the sake  
Of a sweet picture, and of her who led,  
A fitting guide, with reverential tread,  
Into that mountain mystery. First a lake  
Tinted with sunset; next the wavy lines  
Of far receding hills; and yet more far,  
Monadnock lifting from his night of pines  
His rosy forehead to the evening star.  
Beside us, purple-zoned, Wachuset laid  
His head against the West, whose warm light made  
His aureole; and o'er him, sharp and clear,  
Like a shaft of lightning in mid-launching stayed,  
A single level cloud-line, shone upon  
By the fierce glances of the sunken sun,  
Menaced the darkness with its golden spear!

So twilight deepened round us. Still and black  
The great woods climbed the mountain at our back;  
And on their skirts, where yet the lingering day  
On the shorn greenness of the clearing lay,  
The brown old farm-house like a bird's-nest hung.  
With home-life sounds the desert air was stirred  
The bleat of sheep along the hill we heard,  
The bucket plashing in the cool, sweet well,  
The pasture-bars that clattered as they fell;  
Dogs barked, fowls fluttered, cattle lowed; the gate  
Of the barn-yard creaked beneath the merry weight  
Of sun-brown children, listening, while they swung,  
The welcome sound of supper-call to hear;  
And down the shadowy lane, in tinklings clear,  
The pastoral curfew of the cow-bell rung.  
Thus soothed and pleased, our backward path we took,  
Praising the farmer's home. He only spake,  
Looking into the sunset o'er the lake,  
Like one to whom the far-off is most near:  
'Yes, most folks think it has a pleasant look;  
I love it for my good old mother's sake,  
Who lived and died here in the peace of God!'

The lesson of his words we pondered o'er,  
As silently we turned the eastern flank  
Of the mountain, where its shadow deepest sank,  
Doubling the night along our rugged road:  
We felt that man was more than his abode,--  
The inward life than Nature's raiment more;  
And the warm sky, the sundown-tinted hill,  
The forest and the lake, seemed dwarfed and dim  
Before the saintly soul, whose human will  
Meekly in the Eternal footsteps trod,  
Making her homely toil and household ways  
An earthly echo of the song of praise  
Swelling from angel lips and harps of seraphim.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Mulford

Unnoted as the setting of a star  
He passed; and sect and party scarcely knew  
When from their midst a sage and seer withdrew  
To fitter audience, where the great dead are  
In God's republic of the heart and mind,  
Leaving no purer, nobler soul behind.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Birthday

Beneath the moonlight and the snow  
Lies dead my latest year;  
The winter winds are wailing low  
Its dirges in my ear.

I grieve not with the moaning wind  
As if a loss befell;  
Before me, even as behind,  
God is, and all is well!

His light shines on me from above,  
His low voice speaks within,--  
The patience of immortal love  
Outwearying mortal sin.

Not mindless of the growing years  
Of care and loss and pain,  
My eyes are wet with thankful tears  
For blessings which remain.

If dim the gold of life has grown,  
I will not count it dross,  
Nor turn from treasures still my own  
To sigh for lack and loss.

The years no charm from Nature take;  
As sweet her voices call,  
As beautiful her mornings break,  
As fair her evenings fall.

Love watches o'er my quiet ways,  
Kind voices speak my name,  
And lips that find it hard to praise  
Are slow, at least, to blame.

How softly ebb the tides of will!  
How fields, once lost or won,  
Now lie behind me green and still  
Beneath a level sun.

How hushed the hiss of party hate,  
The clamor of the throng!  
How old, harsh voices of debate  
Flow into rhythmic song!

Methinks the spirit's temper grows  
Too soft in this still air;  
Somewhat the restful heart foregoes  
Of needed watch and prayer.

The bark by tempest vainly tossed  
May founder in the calm,  
And he who braved the polar frost  
Faint by the isles of balm.

Better than self-indulgent years  
The outflung heart of youth,  
Than pleasant songs in idle ears  
The tumult of the truth.

Rest for the weary hands is good,  
And love for hearts that pine,  
But let the manly habitude  
Of upright souls be mine.

Let winds that blow from heaven refresh,  
Dear Lord, the languid air;  
And let the weakness of the flesh  
Thy strength of spirit share.

And, if the eye must fail of light,  
The ear forget to hear,  
Make clearer still the spirit's sight,  
More fine the inward ear!

Be near me in mine hours of need  
To soothe, or cheer, or warn,  
And down these slopes of sunset lead  
As up the hills of morn!



# My Dream

In my dream, methought I trod,  
Yesternight, a mountain road;  
Narrow as Al Sirat's span,  
High as eagle's flight, it ran.

Overhead, a roof of cloud  
With its weight of thunder bowed;  
Underneath, to left and right,  
Blankness and abysmal night.

Here and there a wild-flower blushed,  
Now and then a bird-song gushed;  
Now and then, through rifts of shade,  
Stars shone out, and sunbeams played.

But the goodly company,  
Walking in that path with me,  
One by one the brink o'erslid,  
One by one the darkness hid.

Some with wailing and lament,  
Some with cheerful courage went;  
But, of all who smiled or mourned,  
Never one to us returned.

Anxiously, with eye and ear,  
Questioning that shadow drear,  
Never hand in token stirred,  
Never answering voice I heard!

Steeper, darker!--lo! I felt  
From my feet the pathway melt.  
Swallowed by the black despair,  
And the hungry jaws of air,

Past the stony-throated caves,  
Strangled by the wash of waves,  
Past the splintered crags, I sank  
On a green and flowery bank,--

Soft as fall of thistle-down,  
Lightly as a cloud is blown,  
Soothingly as childhood pressed  
To the bosom of its rest.

Of the sharp-horned rocks instead,  
Green the grassy meadows spread,  
Bright with waters singing by  
Trees that propped a golden sky.

Painless, trustful, sorrow-free,  
Old lost faces welcomed me,  
With whose sweetness of content  
Still expectant hope was blent.

Waking while the dawning gray  
Slowly brightened into day,  
Pondering that vision fled,  
Thus unto myself I said:--

'Steep and hung with clouds of strife  
Is our narrow path of life;  
And our death the dreaded fall  
Through the dark, awaiting all.

'So, with painful steps we climb  
Up the dizzy ways of time,  
Ever in the shadow shed  
By the forecast of our dread.

'Dread of mystery solved alone,  
Of the untried and unknown;  
Yet the end thereof may seem  
Like the falling of my dream.

'And this heart-consuming care,  
All our fears of here or there,  
Change and absence, loss and death,  
Prove but simple lack of faith.'

Thou, O Most Compassionate!

Who didst stoop to our estate,  
Drinking of the cup we drain,  
Treading in our path of pain,--

Through the doubt and mystery,  
Grant to us thy steps to see,  
And the grace to draw from thence  
Larger hope and confidence.

Show thy vacant tomb, and let,  
As of old, the angels sit,  
Whispering, by its open door  
'Fear not! He hath gone before!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Namesake

Addressed to Francis Greenleaf Allison of Burlington, New Jersey.

You scarcely need my tardy thanks,  
Who, self-rewarded, nurse and tend--  
A green leaf on your own Green Banks--  
The memory of your friend.

For me, no wreath, bloom-woven, hides  
The sobered brow and lessening hair  
For aught I know, the myrtled sides  
Of Helicon are bare.

Their scallop-shells so many bring  
The fabled founts of song to try,  
They've drained, for aught I know, the spring  
Of Aganippe dry.

Ah well!--The wreath the Muses braid  
Proves often Folly's cap and bell;  
Methinks, my ample beaver's shade  
May serve my turn as well.

Let Love's and Friendship's tender debt  
Be paid by those I love in life.  
Why should the unborn critic whet  
For me his scalping-knife?

Why should the stranger peer and pry  
One's vacant house of life about,  
And drag for curious ear and eye  
His faults and follies out?--

Why stuff, for fools to gaze upon,  
With chaff of words, the garb he wore,  
As corn-husks when the ear is gone  
Are rustled all the more?

Let kindly Silence close again,  
The picture vanish from the eye,

And on the dim and misty main  
Let the small ripple die.

Yet not the less I own your claim  
To grateful thanks, dear friends of mine.  
Hang, if it please you so, my name  
Upon your household line.

Let Fame from brazen lips blow wide  
Her chosen names, I envy none  
A mother's love, a father's pride,  
Shall keep alive my own!

Still shall that name as now recall  
The young leaf wet with morning dew,  
The glory where the sunbeams fall  
The breezy woodlands through.

That name shall be a household word,  
A spell to waken smile or sigh;  
In many an evening prayer be heard  
And cradle lullaby.

And thou, dear child, in riper days  
When asked the reason of thy name,  
Shalt answer: One 't were vain to praise  
Or censure bore the same.

'Some blamed him, some believed him good,  
The truth lay doubtless 'twixt the two;  
He reconciled as best he could  
Old faith and fancies new.

'In him the grave and playful mixed,  
And wisdom held with folly truce,  
And Nature compromised betwixt  
Good fellow and recluse.

'He loved his friends, forgave his foes;  
And, if his words were harsh at times,  
He spared his fellow-men,--his blows  
Fell only on their crimes.

'He loved the good and wise, but found  
His human heart to all akin  
Who met him on the common ground  
Of suffering and of sin.

'Whate'er his neighbors might endure  
Of pain or grief his own became;  
For all the ills he could not cure  
He held himself to blame.

'His good was mainly an intent,  
His evil not of forethought done;  
The work he wrought was rarely meant  
Or finished as begun.

'Ill served his tides of feeling strong  
To turn the common mills of use;  
And, over restless wings of song,  
His birthright garb hung loose!

'His eye was beauty's powerless slave,  
And his the ear which discord pains;  
Few guessed beneath his aspect grave  
What passions strove in chains.

'He had his share of care and pain,  
No holiday was life to him;  
Still in the heirloom cup we drain  
The bitter drop will swim.

'Yet Heaven was kind, and here a bird  
And there a flower beguiled his way;  
And, cool, in summer noons, he heard  
The fountains splash and play.

'On all his sad or restless moods  
The patient peace of Nature stole;  
The quiet of the fields and woods  
Sank deep into his soul.

'He worshipped as his fathers did,

And kept the faith of childish days,  
And, howsoe'er he strayed or slid,  
He loved the good old ways.

'The simple tastes, the kindly traits,  
The tranquil air, and gentle speech,  
The silence of the soul that waits  
For more than man to teach.

'The cant of party, school, and sect,  
Provoked at times his honest scorn,  
And Folly, in its gray respect,  
He tossed on satire's horn.

'But still his heart was full of awe  
And reverence for all sacred things;  
And, brooding over form and law,'  
He saw the Spirit's wings!

'Life's mystery wrapt him like a cloud;  
He heard far voices mock his own,  
The sweep of wings unseen, the loud,  
Long roll of waves unknown.

'The arrows of his straining sight  
Fell quenched in darkness; priest and sage,  
Like lost guides calling left and right,  
Perplexed his doubtful age.

'Like childhood, listening for the sound  
Of its dropped pebbles in the well,  
All vainly down the dark profound  
His brief-lined plummet fell.

'So, scattering flowers with pious pains  
On old beliefs, of later creeds,  
Which claimed a place in Truth's domains,  
He asked the title-deeds.

'He saw the old-time's groves and shrines  
In the long distance fair and dim;  
And heard, like sound of far-off pines,

The century-mellowed hymn!

'He dared not mock the Dervish whirl,  
The Brahmin's rite, the Lama's spell;  
God knew the heart; Devotion's pearl  
Might sanctify the shell.

'While others trod the altar stairs  
He faltered like the publican;  
And, while they praised as saints, his prayers  
Were those of sinful man.

'For, awed by Sinai's Mount of Law,  
The trembling faith alone sufficed,  
That, through its cloud and flame, he saw  
The sweet, sad face of Christ!

'And listening, with his forehead bowed,  
Heard the Divine compassion fill  
The pauses of the trump and cloud  
With whispers small and still.

'The words he spake, the thoughts he penned,  
Are mortal as his hand and brain,  
But, if they served the Master's end,  
He has not lived in vain!'

Heaven make thee better than thy name,  
Child of my friends!--For thee I crave  
What riches never bought, nor fame  
To mortal longing gave.

I pray the prayer of Plato old:  
God make thee beautiful within,  
And let thine eyes the good behold  
In everything save sin!

Imagination held in check  
To serve, not rule, thy poised mind;  
Thy Reason, at the frown or beck  
Of Conscience, loose or bind.

No dreamer thou, but real all,--  
Strong manhood crowning vigorous youth;  
Life made by duty epical  
And rhythmic with the truth.

So shall that life the fruitage yield  
Which trees of healing only give,  
And green-leaved in the Eternal field  
Of God, forever live!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Playmate

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,  
Their song was soft and low;  
The blossoms in the sweet May wind  
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,  
The orchard birds sang clear;  
The sweetest and the saddest day  
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,  
My playmate left her home,  
And took with her the laughing spring,  
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,  
She laid her hand in mine  
What more could ask the bashful boy  
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May  
The constant years told o'er  
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,  
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round  
Of uneventful years;  
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring  
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year  
Her summer roses blow;  
The dusky children of the sun  
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jewelled hands  
She smooths her silken gown,-  
No more the homespun lap wherein  
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,  
The brown nuts on the hill,  
And still the May-day flowers make sweet  
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,  
The bird builds in the tree,  
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill  
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,  
And how the old time seems,-  
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood  
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice;  
Does she remember mine?  
And what to her is now the boy  
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build  
For other eyes than ours,-  
That other hands with nuts are filled,  
And other laps with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!  
Our mossy seat is green,  
Its fringing violets blossom yet,  
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern  
A sweeter memory blow;  
And there in spring the veeries sing  
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood  
Are moaning like the sea,-

The moaning of the sea of change  
Between myself and thee!



# My Psalm

I mourn no more my vanished years  
Beneath a tender rain,  
An April rain of smiles and tears,  
My heart is young again.

The west-winds blow, and, singing low,  
I hear the glad streams run;  
The windows of my soul I throw  
Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind  
I look in hope or fear;  
But, grateful, take the good I find,  
The best of now and here.

I plough no more a desert land,  
To harvest weed and tare;  
The manna dropping from God's hand  
Rebukes my painful care.

I break my pilgrim staff, I lay  
Aside the toiling oar;  
The angel sought so far away  
I welcome at my door.

The airs of spring may never play  
Among the ripening corn,  
Nor freshness of the flowers of May  
Blow through the autumn morn.

Yet shall the blue-eyed gentian look  
Through fringed lids to heaven,  
And the pale aster in the brook  
Shall see its image given;--

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,  
The south-wind softly sigh,  
And sweet, calm days in golden haze  
Melt down the amber sky.

Not less shall manly deed and word  
Rebuke an age of wrong;  
The graven flowers that wreath the sword  
Make not the blade less strong.

But smiting hands shall learn to heal,--  
To build as to destroy;  
Nor less my heart for others feel  
That I the more enjoy.

All as God wills, who wisely heeds  
To give or to withhold,  
And knoweth more of all my needs  
Than all my prayers have told.

Enough that blessings undeserved  
Have marked my erring track;  
That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,  
His chastening turned me back;

That more and more a Providence  
Of love is understood,  
Making the springs of time and sense  
Sweet with eternal good;--

That death seems but a covered way  
Which opens into light,  
Wherein no blinded child can stray  
Beyond the Father's sight;

That care and trial seem at last,  
Through Memory's sunset air,  
Like mountain-ranges overpast,  
In purple distance fair;

That all the jarring notes of life  
Seem blending in a psalm,  
And all the angles of its strife  
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,

And so the west-winds play;  
And all the windows of my heart  
I open to the day.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Soul And I

Stand still, my soul, in the silent dark  
I would question thee,  
Alone in the shadow drear and stark  
With God and me!

What, my soul, was thy errand here?  
Was it mirth or ease,  
Or heaping up dust from year to year?  
'Nay, none of these!'

Speak, soul, aright in His holy sight  
Whose eye looks still  
And steadily on thee through the night  
'To do His will!'

What hast thou done, O soul of mine,  
That thou tremblest so?  
Hast thou wrought His task, and kept the line  
He bade thee go?

Aha! thou tremblest!--well I see  
Thou 'rt craven grown.  
Is it so hard with God and me  
To stand alone?

Summon thy sunshine bravery back,  
O wretched sprite!  
Let me hear thy voice through this deep and black  
Abysmal night.

What hast thou wrought for Right and Truth,  
For God and Man,  
From the golden hours of bright-eyed youth  
To life's mid span?

What, silent all! art sad of cheer?  
Art fearful now?  
When God seemed far and men were near,  
How brave wert thou!

Ah, soul of mine, thy tones I hear,  
But weak and low,  
Like far sad murmurs on my ear  
They come and go.

I have wrestled stoutly with the Wrong,  
And borne the Right  
From beneath the footfall of the throng  
To life and light.

'Wherever Freedom shivered a chain,  
God speed, quoth I;  
To Error amidst her shouting train  
I gave the lie.'

Ah, soul of mine! ah, soul of mine!  
Thy deeds are well:  
Were they wrought for Truth's sake or for thine?  
My soul, pray tell.

'Of all the work my hand hath wrought  
Beneath the sky,  
Save a place in kindly human thought,  
No gain have I.'

Go to, go to! for thy very self  
Thy deeds were done  
Thou for fame, the miser for pelf,  
Your end is one!

And where art thou going, soul of mine?  
Canst see the end?  
And whither this troubled life of thine  
Evermore doth tend?

What daunts thee now? what shakes thee so?  
My sad soul say.  
'I see a cloud like a curtain low  
Hang o'er my way.

'Whither I go I cannot tell

That cloud hangs black,  
High as the heaven and deep as hell  
Across my track.

'I see its shadow coldly enwrap  
The souls before.  
Sadly they enter it, step by step,  
To return no more.

'They shrink, they shudder, dear God! they kneel  
To Thee in prayer.  
They shut their eyes on the cloud, but feel  
That it still is there.

'In vain they turn from the dread Before  
To the Known and Gone;  
For while gazing behind them evermore  
Their feet glide on.

'Yet, at times, I see upon sweet pale faces  
A light begin  
To tremble, as if from holy places  
And shrines within.

'And at times methinks their cold lips move  
With hymn and prayer,  
As if somewhat of awe, but more of love  
And hope were there.

'I call on the souls who have left the light  
To reveal their lot;  
I bend mine ear to that wall of night,  
And they answer not.

'But I hear around me sighs of pain  
And the cry of fear,  
And a sound like the slow sad dropping of rain,  
Each drop a tear!

'Ah, the cloud is dark, and day by day  
I am moving thither  
I must pass beneath it on my way--

God pity me!--whither?'

Ah, soul of mine! so brave and wise  
In the life-storm loud,  
Fronting so calmly all human eyes  
In the sunlit crowd!

Now standing apart with God and me  
Thou art weakness all,  
Gazing vainly after the things to be  
Through Death's dread wall.

But never for this, never for this  
Was thy being lent;  
For the craven's fear is but selfishness,  
Like his merriment.

Folly and Fear are sisters twain  
One closing her eyes.  
The other peopling the dark inane  
With spectral lies.

Know well, my soul, God's hand controls  
Whate'er thou fearest;  
Round Him in calmest music rolls  
Whate'er thou Nearest.

What to thee is shadow, to Him is day,  
And the end He knoweth,  
And not on a blind and aimless way  
The spirit goeth.

Man sees no future,--a phantom show  
Is alone before him;  
Past Time is dead, and the grasses grow,  
And flowers bloom o'er him.

Nothing before, nothing behind;  
The steps of Faith  
Fall on the seeming void, and find  
The rock beneath.

The Present, the Present is all thou hast  
For thy sure possessing;  
Like the patriarch's angel hold it fast  
Till it gives its blessing.

Why fear the night? why shrink from Death;  
That phantom wan?  
There is nothing in heaven or earth beneath  
Save God and man.

Peopling the shadows we turn from Him  
And from one another;  
All is spectral and vague and dim  
Save God and our brother!

Like warp and woof all destinies  
Are woven fast,  
Linked in sympathy like the keys  
Of an organ vast.

Pluck one thread, and the web ye mar;  
Break but one  
Of a thousand keys, and the paining jar  
Through all will run.

O restless spirit! wherefore strain  
Beyond thy sphere?  
Heaven and hell, with their joy and pain,  
Are now and here.

Back to thyself is measured well  
All thou hast given;  
Thy neighbor's wrong is thy present hell,  
His bliss, thy heaven.

And in life, in death, in dark and light,  
All are in God's care  
Sound the black abyss, pierce the deep of night,  
And He is there!

All which is real now remaineth,  
And fadeth never

The hand which upholds it now sustaineth  
The soul forever.

Leaning on Him, make with reverent meekness  
His own thy will,  
And with strength from Him shall thy utter weakness  
Life's task fulfil;

And that cloud itself, which now before thee  
Lies dark in view,  
Shall with beams of light from the inner glory  
Be stricken through.

And like meadow mist through autumn's dawn  
Uprolling thin,  
Its thickest folds when about thee drawn  
Let sunlight in.

Then of what is to be, and of what is done,  
Why quierest thou?  
The past and the time to be are one,  
And both are now!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Thanks,

ACCOMPANYING MANUSCRIPTS PRESENTED TO A FRIEND.

'T is said that in the Holy Land  
The angels of the place have blessed  
The pilgrim's bed of desert sand,  
Like Jacob's stone of rest.

That down the hush of Syrian skies  
Some sweet-voiced saint at twilight sings  
The song whose holy symphonies  
Are beat by unseen wings;

Till starting from his sandy bed,  
The wayworn wanderer looks to see  
The halo of an angel's head  
Shine through the tamarisk-tree.

So through the shadows of my way  
Thy smile hath fallen soft and clear,  
So at the weary close of day  
Hath seemed thy voice of cheer.

That pilgrim pressing to his goal  
May pause not for the vision's sake,  
Yet all fair things within his soul  
The thought of it shall wake:

The graceful palm-tree by the well,  
Seen on the far horizon's rim;  
The dark eyes of the fleet gazelle,  
Bent timidly on him;

Each pictured saint, whose golden hair  
Streams sunlike through the convent's gloom;  
Pale shrines of martyrs young and fair,  
And loving Mary's tomb;

And thus each tint or shade which falls,  
From sunset cloud or waving tree,

Along my pilgrim path, recalls  
The pleasant thought of thee.

Of one in sun and shade the same,  
In weal and woe my steady friend,  
Whatever by that holy name  
The angels comprehend.

Not blind to faults and follies, thou  
Hast never failed the good to see,  
Nor judged by one unseemly bough  
The upward-struggling tree.

These light leaves at thy feet I lay,--  
Poor common thoughts on common things,  
Which time is shaking, day by day,  
Like feathers from his wings;

Chance shootings from a frail life-tree,  
To nurturing care but little known,  
Their good was partly learned of thee,  
Their folly is my own.

That tree still clasps the kindly mould,  
Its leaves still drink the twilight dew,  
And weaving its pale green with gold,  
Still shines the sunlight through.

There still the morning zephyrs play,  
And there at times the spring bird sings,  
And mossy trunk and fading spray  
Are flowered with glossy wings.

Yet, even in genial sun and rain,  
Root, branch, and leaflet fail and fade;  
The wanderer on its lonely plain  
Erelong shall miss its shade.

O friend beloved, whose curious skill  
Keeps bright the last year's leaves and flowers,  
With warm, glad, summer thoughts to fill  
The cold, dark, winter hours

Pressed on thy heart, the leaves I bring  
May well defy the wintry cold,  
Until, in Heaven's eternal spring,  
Life's fairer ones unfold.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Triumph

The autumn-time has come;  
On woods that dream of bloom,  
And over purpling vines,  
The low sun fainter shines.

The aster-flower is failing,  
The hazel's gold is paling;  
Yet overhead more near  
The eternal stars appear!

And present gratitude  
Insures the future's good,  
And for the things I see  
I trust the things to be;

That in the paths untrod,  
And the long days of God,  
My feet shall still be led,  
My heart be comforted.

O living friends who love me!  
O dear ones gone above me!  
Careless of other fame,  
I leave to you my name.

Hide it from idle praises,  
Save it from evil phrases:  
Why, when dear lips that spake it  
Are dumb, should strangers wake it?

Let the thick curtain fall;  
I better know than all  
How little I have gained,  
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted  
Let life be banned or sainted:  
Deeper than written scroll  
The colors of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung  
My songs that found no tongue;  
Nobler than any fact  
My wish that failed of act.

Others shall sing the song,  
Others shall right the wrong, --  
Finish what I begin,  
And all I fail of win.

What matter, I or they?  
Mine or another's day,  
So the right word be said  
And life the sweeter made?

Hail to the coming singers!  
Hail to the brave light-bringers!  
Forward I reach and share  
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me;  
A glory shines before me  
Of what mankind shall be, --  
Pure, generous, brave, and free.

A dream of man and woman  
Diviner but still human,  
Solving the riddle old,  
Shaping the Age of Gold!

The love of God and neighbor;  
An equal-handed labor;  
The richer life, where beauty  
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in unreamed steeples,  
The joy of unborn peoples!  
Sound, trumpets far off blown,  
Your triumph is my own!

Parcel and part of all,

I keep the festival,  
Fore-reach the good to be,  
And share the victory.

I feel the earth move sunward,  
I join the great march onward,  
And take, by faith, while living,  
My freehold of thanksgiving.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# My Trust

A picture memory brings to me  
I look across the years and see  
Myself beside my mother's knee.

I feel her gentle hand restrain  
My selfish moods, and know again  
A child's blind sense of wrong and pain.

But wiser now, a man gray grown,  
My childhood's needs are better known,  
My mother's chastening love I own.

Gray grown, but in our Father's sight  
A child still groping for the light  
To read His works and ways aright.

I wait, in His good time to see  
That as my mother dealt with me  
So with His children dealeth He.

I bow myself beneath His hand  
That pain itself was wisely planned  
I feel, and partly understand.

The joy that comes in sorrow's guise,  
The sweet pains of self-sacrifice,  
I would not have them otherwise.

And what were life and death if sin  
Knew not the dread rebuke within,  
The pang of merciful discipline?

Not with thy proud despair of old,  
Crowned stoic of Rome's noblest mould!  
Pleasure and pain alike I hold.

I suffer with no vain pretence  
Of triumph over flesh and sense,  
Yet trust the grievous providence,

How dark soe'er it seems, may tend,  
By ways I cannot comprehend,  
To some unguessed benignant end;

That every loss and lapse may gain  
The clear-aired heights by steps of pain,  
And never cross is borne in vain.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Naples

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT C. WATERSTON, OF BOSTON.

Fold her, O Father, in Thine arms,  
And let her henceforth be  
A messenger of love between  
Our human hearts and Thee.

I give thee joy!--I know to thee  
The dearest spot on earth must be  
Where sleeps thy loved one by the summer sea;

Where, near her sweetest poet's tomb,  
The land of Virgil gave thee room  
To lay thy flower with her perpetual bloom.

I know that when the sky shut down  
Behind thee on the gleaming town,  
On Baiae's baths and Posilippo's crown;

And, through thy tears, the mocking day  
Burned Ischia's mountain lines away,  
And Capri melted in its sunny bay;

Through thy great farewell sorrow shot  
The sharp pang of a bitter thought  
That slaves must tread around that holy spot.

Thou knewest not the land was blest  
In giving thy beloved rest,  
Holding the fond hope closer to her breast,

That every sweet and saintly grave  
Was freedom's prophecy, and gave  
The pledge of Heaven to sanctify and save.

That pledge is answered. To thy ear  
The unchained city sends its cheer,  
And, tuned to joy, the muffled bells of fear

Ring Victor in. The land sits free  
And happy by the summer sea,  
And Bourbon Naples now is Italy!

She smiles above her broken chain  
The languid smile that follows pain,  
Stretching her cramped limbs to the sun again.

Oh, joy for all, who hear her call  
From gray Camaldoli's convent-wall  
And Elmo's towers to freedom's carnival!

A new life breathes among her vines  
And olives, like the breath of pines  
Blown downward from the breezy Apennines.

Lean, O my friend, to meet that breath,  
Rejoice as one who witnesseth  
Beauty from ashes rise, and life from death!

Thy sorrow shall no more be pain,  
Its tears shall fall in sunlit rain,  
Writing the grave with flowers: 'Arisen again!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Naples – 1860

I GIVE thee joy!—I know to thee  
The dearest spot on earth must be  
Where sleeps thy loved one by the summer sea;

Where, near her sweetest poet's tomb,  
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Writing the grave with flowers: "Arisen again!"

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Nauhaught, The Deacon

NAUHAUGHT, the Indian deacon, who of old  
Dwelt, poor but blameless, where his narrowing Cape  
Stretches its shrunk arm out to all the winds  
And the relentless smiting of the waves,  
Awoke one morning from a pleasant dream  
Of a good angel dropping in his hand  
A fair, broad gold-piece, in the name of God.

He rose and went forth with the early day  
Far inland, where the voices of the waves  
Mellowed and Mingled with the whispering leaves,  
As, through the tangle of the low, thick woods,  
He searched his traps. Therein nor beast nor bird  
He found; though meanwhile in the reedy pools  
The otter plashed, and underneath the pines  
The partridge drummed: and as his thoughts went back  
To the sick wife and little child at home,  
What marvel that the poor man felt his faith  
Too weak to bear its burden,--like a rope  
That, strand by strand uncoiling, breaks above  
The hand that grasps it. 'Even now, O Lord!  
Send me,' he prayed, 'the angel of my dream!  
Nauhaught is very poor; he cannot wait.'

Even as he spake he heard at his bare feet  
A low, metallic clink, and, looking down,  
He saw a dainty purse with disks of gold  
Crowding its silken net. Awhile he held  
The treasure up before his eyes, alone  
With his great need, feeling the wondrous coins  
Slide through his eager fingers, one by one.  
So then the dream was true. The angel brought  
One broad piece only; should he take all these?  
Who would be wiser, in the blind, dumb woods?  
The loser, doubtless rich, would scarcely miss  
This dropped crumb from a table always full.  
Still, while he mused, he seemed to hear the cry  
Of a starved child; the sick face of his wife  
Tempted him. Heart and flesh in fierce revolt

Urged the wild license of his savage youth  
Against his later scruples. Bitter toil,  
Prayer, fasting, dread of blame, and pitiless eyes  
To watch his halting,--had he lost for these  
The freedom of the woods;--the hunting-grounds  
Of happy spirits for a walled-in heaven  
Of everlasting psalms? One healed the sick  
Very far off thousands of moons ago  
Had he not prayed him night and day to come  
And cure his bed-bound wife? Was there a hell?  
Were all his fathers' people writhing there--  
Like the poor shell-fish set to boil alive--  
Forever, dying never? If he kept  
This gold, so needed, would the dreadful God  
Torment him like a Mohawk's captive stuck  
With slow-consuming splinters? Would the saints  
And the white angels dance and laugh to see him  
Burn like a pitch-pine torch? His Christian garb  
Seemed falling from him; with the fear and shame  
Of Adam naked at the cool of day,  
He gazed around. A black snake lay in coil  
On the hot sand, a crow with sidelong eye  
Watched from a dead bough. All his Indian lore  
Of evil blending with a convert's faith  
In the supernal terrors of the Book,  
He saw the Tempter in the coiling snake  
And ominous, black-winged bird; and all the while  
The low rebuking of the distant waves  
Stole in upon him like the voice of God  
Among the trees of Eden. Girding up  
His soul's loins with a resolute hand, he thrust  
The base thought from him: 'Nauhaught, be a man  
Starve, if need be; but, while you live, look out  
From honest eyes on all men, unashamed.  
God help me! I am deacon of the church,  
A baptized, praying Indian! Should I do  
This secret meanness, even the barken knots  
Of the old trees would turn to eyes to see it,  
The birds would tell of it, and all the leaves  
Whisper above me: 'Nauhaught is a thief!'  
The sun would know it, and the stars that hide  
Behind his light would watch me, and at night

Follow me with their sharp, accusing eyes.  
Yea, thou, God, seest me!' Then Nauhaught drew  
Closer his belt of leather, dulling thus  
The pain of hunger, and walked bravely back  
To the brown fishing-hamlet by the sea;  
And, pausing at the inn-door, cheerily asked  
'Who hath lost aught to-day?'  
'I,' said a voice;  
'Ten golden pieces, in a silken purse,  
My daughter's handiwork.' He looked, and to  
One stood before him in a coat of frieze,  
And the glazed bat of a seafaring man,  
Shrewd-faced, broad-shouldered, with no trace of wings.  
Marvelling, he dropped within the stranger's hand  
The silken web, and turned to go his way.  
But the man said: 'A tithe at least is yours;  
Take it in God's name as an honest man.'  
And as the deacon's dusky fingers closed  
Over the golden gift, 'Yea, in God's name  
I take it, with a poor man's thanks,' he said.  
So down the street that, like a river of sand,  
Ran, white in sunshine, to the summer sea,  
He sought his home singing and praising God;  
And when his neighbors in their careless way  
Spoke of the owner of the silken purse--  
A Wellfleet skipper, known in every port  
That the Cape opens in its sandy wall--  
He answered, with a wise smile, to himself  
'I saw the angel where they see a man.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# New Hampshire

GOD bless New Hampshire! from her granite peaks  
Once more the voice of Stark and Langdon speaks.  
The long-bound vassal of the exulting South  
For very shame her self-forged chain has broken;  
Turn the black seal of slavery from her mouth,  
And in the clear tones of her old time spoken!  
Oh, all undreamed-of, all un hoped for changes!  
The tyrants's ally proves his sternest foe;  
To all his biddings, from her mountain ranges,  
New Hampshire thunders an indignant No!  
Who is it now despairs? Oh, faint of heart,  
Look upward to those Northern mountain cold,  
Flouted by Freedom's victor-flag unrolled  
And gather strength to bear a manlier part!  
All is not lost. The angel of God's blessing  
Encamps with Freedom on the field of fight;  
Still to her banner, day by day, are pressing,  
Unlooked-for allies, striking for the right!  
Courage, then, Northern hearts! Be firm, be true:  
What one brave State hath done, can ye not also do?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Norembega

THE winding way the serpent takes  
The mystic water took,  
From where, to count its beaded lakes,  
The forest sped its brook.

A narrow space 'twixt shore and shore,  
For sun or stars to fall,  
While evermore, behind, before,  
Closed in the forest wall.

The dim wood hiding underneath  
Wan flowers without a name;  
Life tangled with decay and death,  
League after league the same.

Unbroken over swamp and hill  
The rounding shadow lay,  
Save where the river cut at will  
A pathway to the day.

Beside that track of air and light,  
Weak as a child unweaned,  
At shut of day a Christian knight  
Upon his henchman leaned.

The embers of the sunset's fires  
Along the clouds burned down;  
'I see,' he said, 'the domes and spires  
Of Norembega town.'

'Alack! the domes, O master mine,  
Are golden clouds on high;  
Yon spire is but the branchless pine  
That cuts the evening sky.'

'Oh, hush and hark! What sounds are these  
But chants and holy hymns?'  
'Thou hear'st the breeze that stirs the trees  
Though all their leafy limbs.'

'Is it a chapel bell that fills  
The air with its low tone?'  
'Thou hear'st the tinkle of the rills,  
The insect's vesper drone.'

'The Christ be praised!--He sets for me  
A blessed cross in sight!'  
'Now, nay, 't is but yon blasted tree  
With two gaunt arms outright!'

'Be it wind so sad or tree so stark,  
It mattereth not, my knave;  
Methinks to funeral hymns I hark,  
The cross is for my grave!

'My life is sped; I shall not see  
My home-set sails again;  
The sweetest eyes of Normandie  
Shall watch for me in vain.

'Yet onward still to ear and eye  
The baffling marvel calls;  
I fain would look before I die  
On Norembega's walls.

'So, haply, it shall be thy part  
At Christian feet to lay  
The mystery of the desert's heart  
My dead hand plucked away.

'Leave me an hour of rest; go thou  
And look from yonder heights;  
Perchance the valley even now  
Is starred with city lights.'

The henchman climbed the nearest hill,  
He saw nor tower nor town,  
But, through the drear woods, lone and still,  
The river rolling down.

He heard the stealthy feet of things

Whose shapes he could not see,  
A flutter as of evil wings,  
The fall of a dead tree.

The pines stood black against the moon,  
A sword of fire beyond;  
He heard the wolf howl, and the loon  
Laugh from his reedy pond.

He turned him back: 'O master dear,  
We are but men misled;  
And thou hast sought a city here  
To find a grave instead.'

'As God shall will! what matters where  
A true man's cross may stand,  
So Heaven be o'er it here as there  
In pleasant Norman land?

'These woods, perchance, no secret hide  
Of lordly tower and hall;  
Yon river in its wanderings wide  
Has washed no city wall;

'Yet mirrored in the sullen stream  
The holy stars are given  
Is Norembega, then, a dream  
Whose waking is in Heaven?

'No builded wonder of these lands  
My weary eyes shall see;  
A city never made with hands  
Alone awaiteth me--

"\_Urbs Syon mystica\_;" I see  
Its mansions passing fair,  
'/Condita caelo/;' let me be,  
Dear Lord, a dweller there!

Above the dying exile hung  
The vision of the bard,  
As faltered on his failing tongue

The song of good Bernard.

The henchman dug at dawn a grave  
Beneath the hemlocks brown,  
And to the desert's keeping gave  
The lord of fief and town.

Years after, when the Sieur Champlain  
Sailed up the unknown stream,  
And Norembega proved again  
A shadow and a dream,

He found the Norman's nameless grave  
Within the hemlock's shade,  
And, stretching wide its arms to save,  
The sign that God had made,

The cross-boughed tree that marked the spot  
And made it holy ground  
He needs the earthly city not  
Who hath the heavenly found.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Norumbega Hall

Not on Penobscot's wooded bank the spires  
Of the sought City rose, nor yet beside  
The winding Charles, nor where the daily tide  
Of Naumkeag's haven rises and retires,  
The vision tarried; but somewhere we knew  
The beautiful gates must open to our quest,  
Somewhere that marvellous City of the West  
Would lift its towers and palace domes in view,  
And, to! at last its mystery is made known--  
Its only dwellers maidens fair and young,  
Its Princess such as England's Laureate sung;  
And safe from capture, save by love alone,  
It lends its beauty to the lake's green shore,  
And Norumbega is a myth no more.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## O. W. Holmes On His Eightieth Birth-Day

Climbing a path which leads back never more  
We heard behind his footsteps and his cheer;  
Now, face to face, we greet him standing here  
Upon the lonely summit of Fourscore  
Welcome to us, o'er whom the lengthened day  
Is closing and the shadows colder grow,  
His genial presence, like an afterglow,  
Following the one just vanishing away.  
Long be it ere the table shall be set  
For the last breakfast of the Autocrat,  
And love repeat with smiles and tears thereat  
His own sweet songs that time shall not forget.  
Waiting with us the call to come up higher,  
Life is not less, the heavens are only higher!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Official Piety

A PIOUS magistrate! sound his praise throughout  
The wondering churches. Who shall henceforth doubt  
That the long-wished millennium draweth nigh?  
Sin in high places has become devout,  
Tithes mint, goes painful-faced, and prays its lie  
Straight up to Heaven, and calls it piety!  
The pirate, watching from his bloody deck  
The weltering galleon, heavy with the gold  
Of Acapulco, holding death in check  
While prayers are said, brows crossed, and beads are told;  
The robber, kneeling where the wayside cross  
On dark Abruzzo tells of life's dread loss  
From his own carbine, glancing still abroad  
For some new victim, offering thanks to God!  
Rome, listening at her altars to the cry  
Of midnight Murder, while her hounds of hell  
Scour France, from baptized cannon and holy bell  
And thousand-throated priesthood, loud and high,  
Pealing Te Deums to the shuddering sky,  
'Thanks to the Lord, who giveth victory!'  
What prove these, but that crime was ne'er so black  
As ghostly cheer and pious thanks to lack?  
Satan is modest. At Heaven's door he lays  
His evil offspring, and, in Scriptural phrase  
And saintly posture, gives to God the praise  
And honor of the monstrous progeny.  
What marvel, then, in our own time to see  
His old devices, smoothly acted o'er, —  
Official piety, locking fast the door  
Of Hope against three million souls of men, —  
Brothers, God's children, Christ's redeemed, — and then,  
With uprolled eyeballs and on bended knee,  
Whining a prayer for help to hide the key!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## On A Prayer-Book, With Its Frontispiece, Ary Scheffer's

O ARY SCHEFFER! when beneath thine eye,  
Touched with the light that cometh from above,  
Grew the sweet picture of the dear Lord's love,  
No dream hadst thou that Christian hands would tear  
Therefrom the token of His equal care,  
And make thy symbol of His truth a lie!  
The poor, dumb slave whose shackles fall away  
In His compassionate gaze, grubbed smoothly out,  
To mar no more the exercise devout  
Of sleek oppression kneeling down to pray  
Where the great oriel stains the Sabbath day!  
Let whoso can before such praying-books  
Kneel on his velvet cushion; I, for one,  
Would sooner bow, a Parsee, to the sun,  
Or tend a prayer-wheel in Thibetar brooks,  
Or beat a drum on Yedo's temple-floor.  
No falsier idol man has bowed before,  
In Indian groves or islands of the sea,  
Than that which through the quaint-carved Gothic door  
Looks forth, — a Church without humanity!  
Patron of pride, and prejudice, and wrong, —  
The rich man's charm and fetich of the strong,  
The Eternal Fulness meted, clipped, and shorn,  
The seamless robe of equal mercy torn,  
The dear Christ hidden from His kindred flesh,  
And, in His poor ones, crucified afresh!  
Better the simple Lama scattering wide,  
Where sweeps the storm Alechan's steppes along,  
His paper horses for the lost to ride,  
And wearying Buddha with his prayers to make  
The figures living for the traveller's sake,  
Than he who hopes with cheap praise to beguile  
The ear of God, dishonoring man the while;  
Who dreams the pearl gate's hinges, rusty grown,  
Are moved by flattery's oil of tongue alone;  
That in the scale Eternal Justice bears  
The generous deed weighs less than selfish prayers,

And words intoned with graceful unction move  
The Eternal Goodness more than lives of truth and love.  
Alas, the Church! The reverend head of Jay,  
Enhaloed with its saintly silvered hair,  
Adorns no more the places of her prayer;  
And brave young Tyng, too early called away,  
Troubles the Haman of her courts no more  
Like the just Hebrew at the Assyrian's door;  
And her sweet ritual, beautiful but dead  
As the dry husk from which the grain is shed,  
And holy hymns from which the life devout  
Of saints and martyrs has wellnigh gone out,  
Like candles dying in exhausted air,  
For Sabbath use in measured grists are ground;  
And, ever while the spiritual mill goes round,  
Between the upper and the nether stones,  
Unseen, unheard, the wretched bondman groans,  
And urges his vain plea, prayer-smothered, anthem-drowned!.  
O heart of mine, keep patience!  
As from the Mount of Vision, I behold,  
Pure, just, and free, the Church of Christ on earth;  
The martyr's dream, the golden age foretold!  
And found, at last, the mystic Graal I see,  
Brimmed with His blessing, pass from lip to lip  
In sacred pledge of human fellowship;  
And over all the songs of angels hear;  
Songs of the love that casteth out all fear;  
Songs of the Gospel of Humanity!  
Lo! in the midst, with the same look He wore,  
Healing and blessing on Genesaret's shore,  
Folding together, with the all-tender might  
Of His great love, the dark hands and the white,  
Stands the Consoler, soothing every pain,  
Making all burdens light, and breaking every chain.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# On Receiving An Eagle's Quill From Lake Superior

All day the darkness and the cold  
Upon my heart have lain,  
Like shadows on the winter sky,  
Like frost upon the pane;

But now my torpid fancy wakes,  
And, on thy Eagle's plume,  
Rides forth, like Sindbad on his bird,  
Or witch upon her broom!

Below me roar the rocking pines,  
Before me spreads the lake  
Whose long and solemn-sounding waves  
Against the sunset break.

I hear the wild Rice-Eater thresh  
The grain he has not sown;  
I see, with flashing scythe of fire,  
The prairie harvest mown!

I hear the far-off voyager's horn;  
I see the Yankee's trail,--  
His foot on every mountain-pass,  
On every stream his sail.

By forest, lake, and waterfall,  
I see his pedler show;  
The mighty mingling with the mean,  
The lofty with the low.

He's whittling by St. Mary's Falls,  
Upon his loaded wain;  
He's measuring o'er the Pictured Rocks,  
With eager eyes of gain.

I hear the mattock in the mine,  
The axe-stroke in the dell,  
The clamor from the Indian lodge,  
The Jesuit chapel bell!

I see the swarthy trappers come  
From Mississippi's springs;  
And war-chiefs with their painted brows,  
And crests of eagle wings.

Behind the scared squaw's birch canoe,  
The steamer smokes and raves;  
And city lots are staked for sale  
Above old Indian graves.

I hear the tread of pioneers  
Of nations yet to be;  
The first low wash of waves, where soon  
Shall roll a human sea.

The rudiments of empire here  
Are plastic yet and warm;  
The chaos of a mighty world  
Is rounding into form!

Each rude and jostling fragment soon  
Its fitting place shall find,--  
The raw material of a State,  
Its muscle and its mind!

And, westering still, the star which leads  
The New World in its train  
Has tipped with fire the icy spears  
Of many a mountain chain.

The snowy cones of Oregon  
Are kindling on its way;  
And California's golden sands  
Gleam brighter in its ray!

Then blessings on thy eagle quill,  
As, wandering far and wide,  
I thank thee for this twilight dream  
And Fancy's airy ride!

Yet, welcomer than regal plumes,

Which Western trappers find,  
Thy free and pleasant thoughts, chance sown,  
Like feathers on the wind.

Thy symbol be the mountain-bird,  
Whose glistening quill I hold;  
Thy home the ample air of hope,  
And memory's sunset gold!

In thee, let joy with duty join,  
And strength unite with love,  
The eagle's pinions folding round  
The warm heart of the dove!

So, when in darkness sleeps the vale  
Where still the blind bird clings  
The sunshine of the upper sky  
Shall glitter on thy wings!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# On The Big Horn

THE years are but half a score,  
And the war-whoop sounds no more  
With the blast of bugles, where  
Straight into a slaughter pen,  
With his doomed three hundred men,  
Rode the chief with the yellow hair.  
O Hampton, down by the sea!  
What voice is beseeching thee  
For the scholar's lowliest place?  
Can this be the voice of him  
Who fought on the Big Horn's rim?  
Can this be Rain-in-the-Face?  
His war-paint is washed away,  
His hands have forgotten to slay;  
He seeks for himself and his race  
The arts of peace and the lore  
That give to the skilled hand more  
Than the spoils of war and chase.  
O chief of the Christ-like school!  
Can the zeal of thy heart grow cool  
When the victor scarred with fight  
Like a child for thy guidance craves,  
And the faces of hunters and braves  
Are turning to thee for light?  
The hatchet lies overgrown  
With grass by the Yellowstone,  
Wind River and Paw of Bear;  
And, in sign that foes are friends,  
Each lodge like a peace-pipe sends  
Its smoke in the quiet air.  
The hands that have done the wrong  
To right the wronged are strong,  
And the voice of a nation saith:  
'Enough of the war of swords,  
Enough of the lying words  
And shame of a broken faith!'  
The hills that have watched afar  
The valleys ablaze with war  
Shall look on the tasselled corn;

And the dust of the grinded grain,  
Instead of the blood of the slain,  
Shall sprinkle thy banks, Big Horn!  
The Ute and the wandering Crow  
Shall know as the white men know,  
And fare as the white men fare;  
The pale and the red shall be brothers,  
One's rights shall be as another's,  
Home, School, and House of Prayer!  
O mountains that climb to snow,  
O river winding below,  
Through meadows by war once trod,  
O wild, waste lands that await  
The harvest exceeding great,  
Break forth into praise of God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# One Of The Signers

O storied vale of Merrimac  
Rejoice through all thy shade and shine,  
And from his century's sleep call back  
A brave and honored son of thine.

Unveil his effigy between  
The living and the dead to-day;  
The fathers of the Old Thirteen  
Shall witness bear as spirits may.

Unseen, unheard, his gray compeers  
The shades of Lee and Jefferson,  
Wise Franklin reverend with his years  
And Carroll, lord of Carrollton!

Be thine henceforth a pride of place  
Beyond thy namesake's over-sea,  
Where scarce a stone is left to trace  
The Holy House of Amesbury.

A prouder memory lingers round  
The birthplace of thy true man here  
Than that which haunts the refuge found  
By Arthur's mythic Guinevere.

The plain deal table where he sat  
And signed a nation's title-deed  
Is dearer now to fame than that  
Which bore the scroll of Runnymede.

Long as, on Freedom's natal morn,  
Shall ring the Independence bells,  
Give to thy dwellers yet unborn  
The lesson which his image tells.

For in that hour of Destiny,  
Which tried the men of bravest stock,  
He knew the end alone must be  
A free land or a traitor's block.

Among those picked and chosen men  
Than his, who here first drew his breath,  
No firmer fingers held the pen  
Which wrote for liberty or death.

Not for their hearths and homes alone,  
But for the world their work was done;  
On all the winds their thought has flown  
Through all the circuit of the sun.

We trace its flight by broken chains,  
By songs of grateful Labor still;  
To-day, in all her holy fanes,  
It rings the bells of freed Brazil.

O hills that watched his boyhood's home,  
O earth and air that nursed him, give,  
In this memorial semblance, room  
To him who shall its bronze outlive!

And thou, O Land he loved, rejoice  
That in the countless years to come,  
Whenever Freedom needs a voice,  
These sculptured lips shall not be dumb!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Our Autocrat

His laurels fresh from song and lay,  
Romance, art, science, rich in all,  
And young of heart, how dare we say  
We keep his seventieth festival?

No sense is here of loss or lack;  
Before his sweetness and his light  
The dial holds its shadow back,  
The charmed hours delay their flight.

His still the keen analysis  
Of men and moods, electric wit,  
Free play of mirth, and tenderness  
To heal the slightest wound from it.

And his the pathos touching all  
Life's sins and sorrows and regrets,  
Its hopes and fears, its final call  
And rest beneath the violets.

His sparkling surface scarce betrays  
The thoughtful tide beneath it rolled,  
The wisdom of the latter days,  
And tender memories of the old.

What shapes and fancies, grave or gay,  
Before us at his bidding come  
The Treadmill tramp, the One-Horse Shay,  
The dumb despair of Elsie's doom!

The tale of Avis and the Maid,  
The plea for lips that cannot speak,  
The holy kiss that Iris laid  
On Little Boston's pallid cheek!

Long may he live to sing for us  
His sweetest songs at evening time,  
And, like his Chambered Nautilus,  
To holier heights of beauty climb,

Though now unnumbered guests surround  
The table that he rules at will,  
Its Autocrat, however crowned,  
Is but our friend and comrade still.

The world may keep his honored name,  
The wealth of all his varied powers;  
A stronger claim has love than fame,  
And he himself is only ours!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Our Country

WE give thy natal day to hope,  
O Country of our love and prayer!  
Thy way is down no fatal slope,  
But up to freer sun and air.  
Tried as by furnace-fires, and yet  
By God's grace only stronger made,  
In future tasks before thee set  
Thou shalt not lack the old-time aid.  
The fathers sleep, but men remain  
As wise, as true, and brave as they;  
Why count the loss and not the gain?  
The best is that we have to-day.  
Whate'er of folly, shame, or crime,  
Within thy mighty bounds transpires,  
With speed defying space and time  
Comes to us on the accusing wires;  
While of thy wealth of noble deeds,  
Thy homes of peace, thy votes unsold,  
The love that pleads for human needs,  
The wrong redressed, but half is told!  
We read each felon's chronicle,  
His acts, his words, his gallows-mood;  
We know the single sinner well  
And not the nine and ninety good.  
Yet if, on daily scandals fed,  
We seem at times to doubt thy worth,  
We know thee still, when all is said,  
The best and dearest spot on earth.  
From the warm Mexic Gulf, or where  
Belted with flowers Los Angeles  
Basks in the semi-tropic air,  
To where Katahdin's cedar trees  
Are dwarfed and bent by Northern winds,  
Thy plenty's horn is yearly filled;  
Alone, the rounding century finds  
Thy liberal soil by free hands tilled.  
A refuge for the wronged and poor,  
Thy generous heart has borne the blame  
That, with them, through thy open door,

The old world's evil outcasts came.  
But, with thy just and equal rule,  
And labor's need and breadth of lands,  
Free press and rostrum, church and school,  
Thy sure, if slow, transforming hands  
Shall mould even them to thy design,  
Making a blessing of the ban;  
And Freedom's chemistry combine  
The alien elements of man.  
The power that broke their prison bar  
And set the dusky millions free,  
And welded in the flame of war  
The Union fast to Liberty,  
Shall if not deal with other ills,  
Redress the red man's grievance, break  
The Circean cup which shames and kills  
And Labor full requital make?  
Alone to such as fitly bear  
Thy civic honors bid them fall?  
And call thy daughters forth to share  
The rights and duties pledged to all?  
Give every child his right of school,  
Merge private greed in public good,  
And spare a treasury overfull  
The tax upon a poor man's food?  
No lack was in thy primal stock,  
No weakling founders builded here;  
Thine were the men of Plymouth Rock,  
The Huguenot and Cavalier;  
And they whose firm endurance gained  
The freedom of the souls of men,  
Whose hands, unstained with blood, maintained  
The swordless commonwealth of Penn.  
And thine shall be the power of all  
To do the work which duty bids,  
And make the people's council hall  
As lasting as the Pyramids!  
Well have thy later years made good  
Thy brave-said word a century back,  
The pledge of human brotherhood,  
The equal claim of white and black.  
That word still echoes round the world,

And all who hear it turn to thee,  
And read upon thy flag unfurled  
The prophecies of destiny.  
Thy great world-lesson all shall learn,  
The nations in thy school shall sit,  
Earth's farthest mountain-tops shall burn  
With watch-fires from thy own uplift.  
Great without seeking to be great  
By fraud or conquest, rich in gold,  
But richer in the large estate  
Of virtue which thy children hold,  
With peace that comes of purity  
And strength to simple justice due,  
So runs our loyal dream of thee;  
God of our fathers! make it true.  
O Land of lands! to thee we give  
Our prayers, our hopes, our service free;  
For thee thy sons shall nobly live,  
And at thy need shall die for thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Our Master

Immortal Love, forever full,  
Forever flowing free,  
Forever shared, forever whole,  
A never-ebbing sea!

Our outward lips confess the name  
All other names above;  
Love only knoweth whence it came  
And comprehendeth love.

Blow, winds of God, awake and blow  
The mists of earth away!  
Shine out, O Light Divine, and show  
How wide and far we stray!

Hush every lip, close every book,  
The strife of tongues forbear;  
Why forward reach, or backward look,  
For love that clasps like air?

We may not climb the heavenly steeps  
To bring the Lord Christ down  
In vain we search the lowest deeps,  
For Him no depths can drown.

Nor holy bread, nor blood of grape,  
The lineaments restore  
Of Him we know in outward shape  
And in the flesh no more.

He cometh not a king to reign;  
The world's long hope is dim;  
The weary centuries watch in vain  
The clouds of heaven for Him.

Death comes, life goes; the asking eye  
And ear are answerless;  
The grave is dumb, the hollow sky  
Is sad with silentness.

The letter fails, and systems fall,  
And every symbol wanes;  
The Spirit over-brooding all  
Eternal Love remains.

And not for signs in heaven above  
Or earth below they look,  
Who know with John His smile of love,  
With Peter His rebuke.

In joy of inward peace, or sense  
Of sorrow over sin,  
He is His own best evidence,  
His witness is within.

No fable old, nor mythic lore,  
Nor dream of bards and seers,  
No dead fact stranded on the shore  
Of the oblivious years;--

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet  
A present help is He;  
And faith has still its Olivet,  
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch Him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

Through Him the first fond prayers are said  
Our lips of childhood frame,  
The last low whispers of our dead  
Are burdened with His name.

Our Lord and Master of us all!  
Whate'er our name or sign,  
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,  
We test our lives by Thine.

Thou judgest us; Thy purity

Doth all our lusts condemn;  
The love that draws us nearer Thee  
Is hot with wrath to them.

Our thoughts lie open to Thy sight;  
And, naked to Thy glance,  
Our secret sins are in the light  
Of Thy pure countenance.

Thy healing pains, a keen distress  
Thy tender light shines in;  
Thy sweetness is the bitterness,  
Thy grace the pang of sin.

Yet, weak and blinded though we be,  
Thou dost our service own;  
We bring our varying gifts to Thee,  
And Thou rejectest none.

To Thee our full humanity,  
Its joys and pains, belong;  
The wrong of man to man on Thee  
Inflicts a deeper wrong.

Who hates, hates Thee, who loves becomes  
Therein to Thee allied;  
All sweet accords of hearts and homes  
In Thee are multiplied.

Deep strike Thy roots, O heavenly Vine,  
Within our earthly sod,  
Most human and yet most divine,  
The flower of man and God!

O Love! O Life! Our faith and sight  
Thy presence maketh one  
As through transfigured clouds of white  
We trace the noon-day sun.

So, to our mortal eyes subdued,  
Flesh-veiled, but not concealed,  
We know in Thee the fatherhood

And heart of God revealed.

We faintly hear, we dimly see,  
In differing phrase we pray;  
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee  
The Light, the Truth, the Way!

The homage that we render Thee  
Is still our Father's own;  
No jealous claim or rivalry  
Divides the Cross and Throne.

To do Thy will is more than praise,  
As words are less than deeds,  
And simple trust can find Thy ways  
We miss with chart of creeds.

No pride of self Thy service hath,  
No place for me and mine;  
Our human strength is weakness, death  
Our life, apart from Thine.

Apart from Thee all gain is loss,  
All labor vainly done;  
The solemn shadow of Thy Cross  
Is better than the sun.

Alone, O Love ineffable!  
Thy saving name is given;  
To turn aside from Thee is hell,  
To walk with Thee is heaven!

How vain, secure in all Thou art,  
Our noisy championship  
The sighing of the contrite heart  
Is more than flattering lip.

Not Thine the bigot's partial plea,  
Nor Thine the zealot's ban;  
Thou well canst spare a love of Thee  
Which ends in hate of man.

Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord,  
What may Thy service be?--  
Nor name, nor form, nor ritual word,  
But simply following Thee.

We bring no ghastly holocaust,  
We pile no graven stone;  
He serves thee best who loveth most  
His brothers and Thy own.

Thy litanies, sweet offices  
Of love and gratitude;  
Thy sacramental liturgies,  
The joy of doing good.

In vain shall waves of incense drift  
The vaulted nave around,  
In vain the minster turret lift  
Its brazen weights of sound.

The heart must ring Thy Christmas bells,  
Thy inward altars raise;  
Its faith and hope Thy canticles,  
And its obedience praise!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Our River

FOR A SUMMER FESTIVAL AT 'THE LAURELS' ON THE MERRIMAC.

Once more on yonder laurelled height  
The summer flowers have budded;  
Once more with summer's golden light  
The vales of home are flooded;  
And once more, by the grace of Him  
Of every good the Giver,  
We sing upon its wooded rim  
The praises of our river,

Its pines above, its waves below,  
The west-wind down it blowing,  
As fair as when the young Brissot  
Beheld it seaward flowing,--  
And bore its memory o'er the deep,  
To soothe a martyr's sadness,  
And fresco, hi his troubled sleep,  
His prison-walls with gladness.

We know the world is rich with streams  
Renowned in song and story,  
Whose music murmurs through our dreams  
Of human love and glory  
We know that Arno's banks are fair,  
And Rhine has castled shadows,  
And, poet-tuned, the Doon and Ayr  
Go singing down their meadows.

But while, unpictured and unsung  
By painter or by poet,  
Our river waits the tuneful tongue  
And cunning hand to show it,--  
We only know the fond skies lean  
Above it, warm with blessing,  
And the sweet soul of our Undine  
Awakes to our caressing.

No fickle sun-god holds the flocks

That graze its shores in keeping;  
No icy kiss of Dian mocks  
The youth beside it sleeping  
Our Christian river loveth most  
The beautiful and human;  
The heathen streams of Naiads boast,  
But ours of man and woman.

The miner in his cabin hears  
The ripple we are hearing;  
It whispers soft to homesick ears  
Around the settler's clearing  
In Sacramento's vales of corn,  
Or Santee's bloom of cotton,  
Our river by its valley-born  
Was never yet forgotten.

The drum rolls loud, the bugle fills  
The summer air with clangor;  
The war-storm shakes the solid hills  
Beneath its tread of anger;  
Young eyes that last year smiled in ours  
Now point the rifle's barrel,  
And hands then stained with fruits and flowers  
Bear redder stains of quarrel.

But blue skies smile, and flowers bloom on,  
And rivers still keep flowing,  
The dear God still his rain and sun  
On good and ill bestowing.  
His pine-trees whisper, 'Trust and wait!'  
His flowers are prophesying  
That all we dread of change or fate  
His live is underlying.

And thou, O Mountain-born!--no more  
We ask the wise Allotter  
Than for the firmness of thy shore,  
The calmness of thy water,  
The cheerful lights that overlay,  
Thy rugged slopes with beauty,  
To match our spirits to our day

And make a joy of duty.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Our State

THE South-land boasts its teeming cane,  
The prairied West its heavy grain,  
And sunset's radiant gates unfold  
On rising marts and sands of gold!  
Rough, bleak, and hard, our little State  
Is scant of soil, of limits strait;  
Her yellow sands are sands alone,  
Her only mines are ice and stone!  
From Autumn frost to April rain,  
Too long her winter woods complain;  
From budding flower to falling leaf,  
Her summer time is all too brief.  
Yet, on her rocks, and on her sands,  
And wintry hills, the school-house stands,  
And what her rugged soil denies,  
The harvest of the mind supplies.  
The riches of the Commonwealth  
Are free, strong minds, and hearts of health;  
And more to her than gold or grain,  
The cunning hand and cultured brain.  
For well she keeps her ancient stock,  
The stubborn strength of Pilgrim Rock;  
And still maintains, with milder laws,  
And clearer light, the Good Old Cause!  
Nor heeds the skeptic's puny hands,  
While near her school the church-spire stands;  
Nor fears the blinded bigot's rule,  
While near her church-spire stands the school.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Overruled

The threads our hands in blindness spin  
No self-determined plan weaves in;  
The shuttle of the unseen powers  
Works out a pattern not as ours.

Ah! small the choice of him who sings  
What sound shall leave the smitten strings;  
Fate holds and guides the hand of art;  
The singer's is the servant's part.

The wind-harp chooses not the tone  
That through its trembling threads is blown;  
The patient organ cannot guess  
What hand its passive keys shall press.

Through wish, resolve, and act, our will  
Is moved by undreamed forces still;  
And no man measures in advance  
His strength with untried circumstance.

As streams take hue from shade and sun,  
As runs the life the song must run;  
But, glad or sad, to His good end  
God grant the varying notes may tend!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Paeon

NOW, joy and thanks forevermore!  
The dreary night has wellnigh passed,  
The slumbers of the North are o'er,  
The Giant stands erect at last!  
More than we hoped in that dark time  
When, faint with watching, few and worn,  
We saw no welcome day-star climb  
The cold gray pathway of the morn!  
O weary hours! O night of years!  
What storms our darkling pathway swept,  
Where, beating back our thronging fears,  
By Faith alone our march we kept.  
How jeered the scoffing crowd behind,  
How mocked before the tyrant train,  
As, one by one, the true and kind  
Fell fainting in our path of pain!  
They died, their brave hearts breaking slow,  
But, self-forgetful to the last,  
In words of cheer and bugle blow  
Their breath upon the darkness passed.  
A mighty host, on either hand,  
Stood waiting for the dawn of day  
To crush like reeds our feeble band;  
The morn has come, and where are they?  
Troop after troop their line forsakes;  
With peace-white banners waving free,  
And from our own the glad shout breaks,  
Of Freedom and Fraternity!  
Like mist before the growing light,  
The hostile cohorts melt away;  
Our frowning foemen of the night  
Are brothers at the dawn of day!  
As unto these repentant ones  
We open wide our toil-worn ranks,  
Along our line a murmur runs  
Of song, and praise, and grateful thanks.  
Sound for the onset! Blast on blast!  
Till Slavery's minious cower and quail;  
One charge of fire shall drive them fast

Like chaff before our Northern gale!  
O prisoners in your house of pain  
Dumb, toiling millions, bound and sold,  
Look! stretched o'er Southern vale and plain,  
The Lord's delivering hand behold!  
Above the tyrant's pride of power,  
His iron gates and guarded wall,  
The bolts which shattered Shinar's tower  
Hang, smoking, for a fiercer fall.  
Awake! awake! my Fatherland!  
It is thy Northern light that shines;  
This stirring march of Freedom's band  
The storm-song of thy mountain pines.  
Wake, dwellers where the day expires!  
And hear, in winds that sweep your lakes  
And fan your prairies' roaring fires,  
The signal-call that Freedom makes!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Palestine

Blest land of Judea! thrice hallowed of song,  
Where the holiest of memories pilgrim-like throng;  
In the shade of thy palms, by the shores of thy sea,  
On the hills of thy beauty, my heart is with thee.

With the eye of a spirit I look on that shore,  
Where pilgrim and prophet have lingered before;  
With the glide of a spirit, I traverse the sod  
Made bright by the steps of the angels of God.

Blue sea of the hills! in my spirit I hear  
Thy waters, Genasseret, chime on my ear;  
Where the Lowly and Just with the people sat down,  
And thy spray on the dust of His sandals was thrown.

Beyond are Bethulia's mountains of green,  
And the desolate hills of the wild Godarene;  
And I pause on the goat-craggs of Tabor to see  
The gleam of thy waters, oh dark Gallilee!

Hark, a sound in the vallies! where, swollen and strong,  
Thy river, oh Kishon, is sweeping along;  
Where the Canaanite strove with Jehovah in vain,  
And thy torrent grew dark with the blood of the slain.

There down from his mountains stern Zebulon came,  
And Naphtali's stag, with his eye-balls of flame,  
And the chariots of Jabin rolled harmlessly on,  
For the arm of the Lord was Abinoam's son!

There sleep the still rocks and the caverns which rang  
To the song which the beautiful Prophetess sang,  
When the Princes of Issachar stood by her side,  
And the shout of a host in its triumph replied.

Lo! Bethlehem's hill-site before me is seen,  
With the mountains around, and the vallies between;  
There rested the shepherds of Judah, and there  
The song of the angels rose sweet on the air.

And Bethany's palm-trees in beauty still throw  
Their shadows at noon on the ruins below;  
But where are the sisters who hastened to greet  
The lowly Redeemer, and sit at His feet?

I tread where the TWELVE in their wayfaring trod;  
I stand where they stood with the CHOSEN of GOD!  
Where his blessing was heard, and his lessons were taught,  
Where the blind were restored, and the healing was wrought.

Oh, here with his flock the sad Wanderer came,  
These hills he toiled over in grief are the same-  
The founts where he drank by the wayside still flow,  
And the same airs are blowing which breathed on his brow.

And throned on her hills sits Jerusalem yet,  
But with dust on her forehead, and chains on her feet:  
For the crown of her pride to the mocker hath gone,  
And the holy Shechinah is dark where it shone!

But wherefore this dream of the earthly abode  
Of Humanity clothed in the brightness of God?  
Were my spirit but turned from the outward and dim,  
It could gaze, even now, on the presence of Him!

Not in clouds and in terrors, but gentle as when  
In love and in meekness he moved among men;  
And the voice which breathed peace to the waves of the sea,  
In the hush of my spirit would whisper to me!

And what if my feet may not tread where He stood,  
Nor my ears hear the dashing of Gallilee's flood,  
Nor my eyes see the cross which He bowed him to bear,  
Nor my knees press Gethsemane's garden of prayer.

Yet, Loved of the Father, Thy spirit is near  
To the meek, and the lowly, and penitent here;  
And the voice of thy love is the same even now,  
As at Bethany's tomb, or on Olivet's brow,mdash;

Oh, the outward hath gone!-but in glory and power,

The SPIRIT surviveth the things of an hour;  
Unchanged, undecaying, its Pentecost flame  
On the heart's secret altar is burning the same!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Pennsylvania Hall

NOT with the splendors of the days of old,  
The spoil of nations, and barbaric gold;  
No weapons wrested from the fields of blood,  
Where dark and stern the unyielding Roman stood,  
And the proud eagles of his cohorts saw  
A world, war-wasted, crouching to his law;  
Nor blazoned car, nor banners floating gay,  
Like those which swept along the Appian Way,  
When, to the welcome of imperial Rome,  
The victor warrior came in triumph home,  
And trumpet peal, and shoutings wild and high,  
Stirred the blue quiet of the Italian sky;  
But calm and grateful, prayerful and sincere,  
As Christian freemen only, gathering here,  
We dedicate our fair and lofty Hall,  
Pillar and arch, entablature and wall,  
As Virtue's shrine, as Liberty's abode,  
Sacred to Freedom, and to Freedom's God!  
Far statelier Halls, 'neath brighter skies than these,  
Stood darkly mirrored in the Ægean seas,  
Pillar and shrine, and life-like statues seen,  
Graceful and pure, the marble shafts between;  
Where glorious Athens from her rocky hill  
Saw Art and Beauty subject to her will;  
And the chaste temple, and the classic grove,  
The hall of sages, and the bowers of love,  
Arch, fane, and column, graced the shores, and gave  
Their shadows to the blue Saronic wave;  
And statelier rose, on Tiber's winding side,  
The Pantheon's dome, the Coliseum's pride,  
The Capitol, whose arches backward flung  
The deep, clear cadence of the Roman tongue,  
Whence stern decrees, like words of fate, went forth  
To the awed nations of a conquered earth,  
Where the proud Caesars in their glory came,  
And Brutus lightened from his lips of flame!  
Yet in tire porches of Athena's halls,  
And in the shadow of her stately walls,  
Lurked the sad bondman, and his tears of woe

Wet the cold marble with unheeded flow;  
And fetters clanked beneath the silver dome  
Of the proud Pantheon of imperious Rome.  
Oh, not for him, the chained and stricken slave,  
By Tiber's shore, or blue Ægina's wave,  
In the thronged forum, or the sages' seat,  
The bold lip pleaded, and the warm heart beat;  
No soul of sorrow melted at his pain,  
No tear of pity rusted on his chain!  
But this fair Hall to Truth and Freedom given,  
Pledged to the Right before all Earth and Heaven,  
A free arena for the strife of mind,  
To caste, or sect, or color unconfined,  
Shall thrill with echoes such as ne'er of old  
From Roman hall or Grecian temple rolled;  
Thoughts shall find utterance such as never yet  
The Propylea or the Forum met.  
Beneath its roof no gladiator's strife  
Shall win applauses with the waste of life;  
No lordly lictor urge the barbarous game,  
No wanton Lais glory in her shame.  
But here the tear of sympathy shall flow,  
As the ear listens to the tale of woe;  
Here in stern judgment of the oppressor's wrong  
Shall strong rebukings thrill on Freedom's tongue,  
No partial justice hold th' unequal scale,  
No pride of caste a brother's rights assail,  
No tyrant's mandates echo from this wall,  
Holy to Freedom and the Rights of All!  
But a fair field, where mind may close with mind,  
Free as the sunshine and the chainless wind;  
Where the high trust is fixed on Truth alone,  
And bonds and fetters from the soul are thrown;  
Where wealth, and rank, and worldly pomp, and might,  
Yield to the presence of the True and Right.  
And fitting is it that this Hall should stand  
Where Pennsylvania's Founder led his band,  
From thy blue waters, Delaware!— to press  
The virgin verdure of the wilderness.  
Here, where all Europe with amazement saw  
The soul's high freedom trammelled by no law;  
Here, where the fierce and warlike forest-men

Gathered, in peace, around the home of Penn,  
Awed by the weapons Love alone had given  
Drawn from the holy armory of Heaven;  
Where Nature's voice against the bondman's wrong  
First found an earnest and indignant tongue;  
Where Lay's bold message to the proud was borne;  
And Keith's rebuke, and Franklin's manly scorn!  
Fitting it is that here, where Freedom first  
From her fair feet shook off the Old World's dust,  
Spread her white pinions to our Western blast,  
And her free tresses to our sunshine cast,  
One Hall should rise redeemed from Slavery's ban,  
One Temple sacred to the Rights of Man!  
Oh! if the spirits of the parted come,  
Visiting angels, to their olden home;  
If the dead fathers of the land look forth  
From their fair dwellings, to the things of earth,  
Is it a dream, that with their eyes of love,  
They gaze now on us from the bowers above?  
Lay's ardent soul, and Benezet the mild,  
Steadfast in faith, yet gentle as a child,  
Meek-hearted Woolman, and that brother-band,  
The sorrowing exiles from their 'Father land,'  
Leaving their homes in Krieshiem's bowers of vine,  
And the blue beauty of their glorious Rhine,  
To seek amidst our solemn depths of wood  
Freedom from man, and holy peace with God;  
Who first of all their testimonial gave  
Against the oppressor, for the outcast slave,  
Is it a dream that such as these look down,  
And with their blessing our rejoicings crown?  
Let us rejoice, that while the pulpit's door  
Is barred against the pleaders for the poor;  
While the Church, wrangling upon points of faith,  
Forgets her bondsmen suffering unto death;  
While crafty Traffic and the lust of Gain  
Unite to forge Oppression's triple chain,  
One door is open, and one Temple free,  
As a resting-place for hunted Liberty!  
Where men may speak, unshackled and unawed,  
High words of Truth, for Freedom and for God.  
And when that truth its perfect work hath done,

And rich with blessings o'er our land hath gone;  
When not a slave beneath his yoke shall pine,  
From broad Potomac to the far Sabine:  
When unto angel lips at last is given  
The silver trump of Jubilee in Heaven;  
And from Virginia's plains, Kentucky's shades,  
And through the dim Floridian everglades,  
Rises, to meet that angel-trumpet's sound,  
The voice of millions from their chains unbound;  
Then, though this Hall be crumbling in decay,  
Its strong walls blending with the common clay,  
Yet, round the ruins of its strength shall stand  
The best and noblest of a ransomed land —  
Pilgrims, like these who throng around the shrine  
Of Mecca, or of holy Palestine!  
A prouder glory shall that ruin own  
Than that which lingers round the Parthenon.  
Here shall the child of after years be taught  
The works of Freedom which his fathers wrought;  
Told of the trials of the present hour,  
Our weary strife with prejudice and power;  
How the high errand quickened woman's soul,  
And touched her lip as with a living coal;  
How Freedom's martyms kept their lofty faith  
True and unwavering, unto bonds and death;  
The pencil's art shall sketch the ruined Hall,  
The Muses' garland crown its aged wall,  
And History's pen for after times record  
Its consecration unto Freedom's God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Pentucket

How sweetly on the wood-girt town  
The mellow light of sunset shone!  
Each small, bright lake, whose waters still  
Mirror the forest and the hill,  
Reflected from its waveless breast  
The beauty of a cloudless west,  
Glorious as if a glimpse were given  
Within the western gates of heaven,  
Left, by the spirit of the star  
Of sunset's holy hour, ajar!

Beside the river's tranquil flood  
The dark and low-walled dwellings stood,  
Where many a rood of open land  
Stretched up and down on either hand,  
With corn-leaves waving freshly green  
The thick and blackened stumps between.  
Behind, unbroken, deep and dread,  
The wild, untravelled forest spread,  
Back to those mountains, white and cold,  
Of which the Indian trapper told,  
Upon whose summits never yet  
Was mortal foot in safety set.

Quiet and calm without a fear,  
Of danger darkly lurking near,  
The weary laborer left his plough,  
The milkmaid carolled by her cow;  
From cottage door and household hearth  
Rose songs of praise, or tones of mirth.

At length the murmur died away,  
And silence on that village lay.  
-So slept Pompeii, tower and hall,  
Ere the quick earthquake swallowed all,  
Undreaming of the fiery fate  
Which made its dwellings desolate.

Hours passed away. By moonlight sped

The Merrimac along his bed.  
Bathed in the pallid lustre, stood  
Dark cottage-wall and rock and wood,  
Silent, beneath that tranquil beam,  
As the hushed grouping of a dream.  
Yet on the still air crept a sound,  
No bark of fox, nor rabbit's bound,  
Nor stir of wings, nor waters flowing,  
Nor leaves in midnight breezes blowing.

Was that the tread of many feet,  
Which downward from the hillside beat?  
What forms were those which darkly stood  
Just on the margin of the wood?-  
Charred tree-stumps in the moonlight dim,  
Or paling rude, or leafless limb?  
No,-through the trees fierce eyeballs glowed,  
Dark human forms in moonshine showed,  
Wild from their native wilderness,  
With painted limbs and battle-dress.

A yell the dead might wake to hear  
Swelled on the night air, far and clear;  
Then smote the Indian tomahawk  
On crashing door and shattering lock;

Then rang the rifle-shot, and then  
The shrill death-scream of stricken men,-  
Sank the red axe in woman's brain,  
And childhood's cry arose in vain.  
Bursting through roof and window came,  
Red, fast, and fierce, the kindled flame,  
And blended fire and moonlight glared  
On still dead men and scalp-knives bared.

The morning sun looked brightly through  
The river willows, wet with dew.  
No sound of combat filled the air,  
No shout was heard, nor gunshot there;  
Yet still the thick and sullen smoke  
From smouldering ruins slowly broke;  
And on the greensward many a stain,

And, here and there, the mangled slain,  
Told how that midnight bolt had sped  
Pentucket, on thy fated head.

Even now the villager can tell  
Where Rolfe beside his hearthstone fell,  
Still show the door of wasting oak,  
Through which the fatal death-shot broke,  
And point the curious stranger where  
De Rouville's corse lay grim and bare;  
Whose hideous head, in death still feared,  
Bore not a trace of hair or beard;  
And still, within the churchyard ground,  
Heaves darkly up the ancient mound,  
Whose grass-grown surface overlies  
The victims of that sacrifice.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Pictures

I.

Light, warmth, and sprouting greenness, and o'er all  
Blue, stainless, steel-bright ether, raining down  
Tranquillity upon the deep-hushed town,  
The freshening meadows, and the hillsides brown;  
Voice of the west-wind from the hills of pine,  
And the brimmed river from its distant fall,  
Low hum of bees, and joyous interlude  
Of bird-songs in the streamlet-skirting wood,--  
Heralds and prophecies of sound and sight,  
Blessed forerunners of the warmth and light,  
Attendant angels to the house of prayer,  
With reverent footsteps keeping pace with mine,--  
Once more, through God's great love, with you I share  
A morn of resurrection sweet and fair  
As that which saw, of old, in Palestine,  
Immortal Love uprising in fresh bloom  
From the dark night and winter of the tomb!

II.

White with its sun-bleached dust, the pathway winds  
Before me; dust is on the shrunken grass,  
And on the trees beneath whose boughs I pass;  
Frail screen against the Hunter of the sky,  
Who, glaring on me with his lidless eye,  
While mounting with his dog-star high and higher  
Ambushed in light intolerable, unbinds  
The burnished quiver of his shafts of fire.  
Between me and the hot fields of his South  
A tremulous glow, as from a furnace-mouth,  
Glimmers and swims before my dazzled sight,  
As if the burning arrows of his ire  
Broke as they fell, and shattered into light;  
Yet on my cheek I feel the western wind,  
And hear it telling to the orchard trees,  
And to the faint and flower-forsaken bees,  
Tales of fair meadows, green with constant streams,  
And mountains rising blue and cool behind,

Where in moist dells the purple orchis gleams,  
And starred with white the virgin's bower is twined.  
So the o'erwearied pilgrim, as he fares  
Along life's summer waste, at times is fanned,  
Even at noontide, by the cool, sweet airs  
Of a serener and a holier land,  
Fresh as the morn, and as the dewfall bland.  
Breath of the blessed Heaven for which we pray,  
Blow from the eternal hills! make glad our earthly way!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Proem

I LOVE the old melodious lays  
Which softly melt the ages through,  
The songs of Spenser's golden days,  
Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,  
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours  
To breathe their marvellous notes I try;  
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers  
In silence feel the dewy showers,  
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,  
The harshness of an untaught ear,  
The jarring words of one whose rhyme  
Beat often Labor's hurried time,  
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,  
No rounded art the lack supplies;  
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,  
Or softer shades of Nature's face,  
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show  
The secrets of the heart and mind;  
To drop the plummet-line below  
Our common world of joy and woe,  
A more intense despair or brighter hope to find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense  
Of human right and weal is shown;  
A hate of tyranny intense,  
And hearty in its vehemence,  
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my own.

O Freedom! if to me belong  
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,  
Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,

Still with a love as deep and strong  
As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy shrine!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Questions Of Life

A bending staff I would not break,  
A feeble faith I would not shake,  
Nor even rashly pluck away  
The error which some truth may stay,  
Whose loss might leave the soul without  
A shield against the shafts of doubt.

And yet, at times, when over all  
A darker mystery seems to fall,  
(May God forgive the child of dust,  
Who seeks to know, where Faith should trust!)  
I raise the questions, old and dark,  
Of Uzdum's tempted patriarch,  
And, speech-confounded, build again  
The baffled tower of Shinar's plain.

I am: how little more I know!  
Whence came I? Whither do I go?  
A centred self, which feels and is;  
A cry between the silences;  
A shadow-birth of clouds at strife  
With sunshine on the hills of life;  
A shaft from Nature's quiver cast  
Into the Future from the Past;  
Between the cradle and the shroud,  
A meteor's flight from cloud to cloud.

Thorough the vastness, arching all,  
I see the great stars rise and fall,  
The rounding seasons come and go,  
The tided oceans ebb and flow;  
The tokens of a central force,  
Whose circles, in their widening course,  
O'erlap and move the universe;  
The workings of the law whence springs  
The rhythmic harmony of things,  
Which shapes in earth the darkling spar,  
And orbs in heaven the morning star.  
Of all I see, in earth and sky,--

Star, flower, beast, bird,--what part have I?  
This conscious life,--is it the same  
Which thrills the universal frame,  
Whereby the caverned crystal shoots,  
And mounts the sap from forest roots,  
Whereby the exiled wood-bird tells  
When Spring makes green her native dells?  
How feels the stone the pang of birth,  
Which brings its sparkling prism forth?  
The forest-tree the throb which gives  
The life-blood to its new-born leaves?  
Do bird and blossom feel, like me,  
Life's many-folded mystery,--  
The wonder which it is to be?  
Or stand I severed and distinct,  
From Nature's 'chain of life' unlinked?  
Allied to all, yet not the less  
Prisoned in separate consciousness,  
Alone o'erburdened with a sense  
Of life, and cause, and consequence?

In vain to me the Sphinx propounds  
The riddle of her sights and sounds;  
Back still the vaulted mystery gives  
The echoed question it receives.  
What sings the brook? What oracle  
Is in the pine-tree's organ swell?  
What may the wind's low burden be?  
The meaning of the moaning sea?  
The hieroglyphics of the stars?  
Or clouded sunset's crimson bars?  
I vainly ask, for mocks my skill  
The trick of Nature's cipher still.

I turn from Nature unto men,  
I ask the stylus and the pen;  
What sang the bards of old? What meant  
The prophets of the Orient?  
The rolls of buried Egypt, hid  
In painted tomb and pyramid?  
What mean Idumea's arrowy lines,  
Or dusk Elora's monstrous signs?

How speaks the primal thought of man  
From the grim carvings of Copan?

Where rests the secret? Where the keys  
Of the old death-bolted mysteries?  
Alas! the dead retain their trust;  
Dust hath no answer from the dust.

The great enigma still unguessed,  
Unanswered the eternal quest;  
I gather up the scattered rays  
Of wisdom in the early days,  
Faint gleams and broken, like the light  
Of meteors in a northern night,  
Betraying to the darkling earth  
The unseen sun which gave them birth;  
I listen to the sibyl's chant,  
The voice of priest and hierophant;  
I know what Indian Kreeshna saith,  
And what of life and what of death  
The demon taught to Socrates;  
And what, beneath his garden-trees  
Slow pacing, with a dream-like tread,--  
The solemn-thoughted Plato said;  
Nor lack I tokens, great or small,  
Of God's clear light in each and all,  
While holding with more dear regard  
The scroll of Hebrew seer and bard,  
The starry pages promise-lit  
With Christ's Evangel over-writ,  
Thy miracle of life and death,  
O Holy One of Nazareth!

On Aztec ruins, gray and lone,  
The circling serpent coils in stone,--  
Type of the endless and unknown;  
Whereof we seek the clue to find,  
With groping fingers of the blind!  
Forever sought, and never found,  
We trace that serpent-symbol round  
Our resting-place, our starting bound  
Oh, thriftlessness of dream and guess!

Oh, wisdom which is foolishness!  
Why idly seek from outward things  
The answer inward silence brings?  
Why stretch beyond our proper sphere  
And age, for that which lies so near?  
Why climb the far-off hills with pain,  
A nearer view of heaven to gain?  
In lowliest depths of bosky dells  
The hermit Contemplation dwells.  
A fountain's pine-hung slope his seat,  
And lotus-twined his silent feet,  
Whence, piercing heaven, with screened sight,  
He sees at noon the stars, whose light  
Shall glorify the coining night.

Here let me pause, my quest forego;  
Enough for me to feel and know  
That He in whom the cause and end,  
The past and future, meet and blend,--  
Who, girt with his Immensities,  
Our vast and star-hung system sees,  
Small as the clustered Pleiades,--  
Moves not alone the heavenly quires,  
But waves the spring-time's grassy spires,  
Guards not archangel feet alone,  
But deigns to guide and keep my own;  
Speaks not alone the words of fate  
Which worlds destroy, and worlds create,  
But whispers in my spirit's ear,  
In tones of love, or warning fear,  
A language none beside may hear.

To Him, from wanderings long and wild,  
I come, an over-wearied child,  
In cool and shade His peace to find,  
Lice dew-fall settling on my mind.  
Assured that all I know is best,  
And humbly trusting for the rest,  
I turn from Fancy's cloud-built scheme,  
Dark creed, and mournful eastern dream  
Of power, impersonal and cold,  
Controlling all, itself controlled,

Maker and slave of iron laws,  
Alike the subject and the cause;  
From vain philosophies, that try  
The sevenfold gates of mystery,  
And, baffled ever, babble still,  
Word-prodigal of fate and will;  
From Nature, and her mockery, Art;  
And book and speech of men apart,  
To the still witness in my heart;  
With reverence waiting to behold  
His Avatar of love untold,  
The Eternal Beauty new and old!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## R. S. S., At Deer Island On The Merrimac

Make, for he loved thee well, our Merrimac,  
From wave and shore a low and long lament  
For him, whose last look sought thee, as he went  
The unknown way from which no step comes back.  
And ye, O ancient pine-trees, at whose feet  
He watched in life the sunset's reddening glow,  
Let the soft south wind through your needles blow  
A fitting requiem tenderly and sweet!  
No fonder lover of all lovely things  
Shall walk where once he walked, no smile more glad  
Greet friends than his who friends in all men had,  
Whose pleasant memory, to that Island clings,  
Where a dear mourner in the home he left  
Of love's sweet solace cannot be bereft.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Rabbi Ismael

THE Rabbi Ishmael, with the woe and sin  
Of the world heavy upon him, entering in  
The Holy of Holies, saw an awful Face  
With terrible splendor filling all the place.  
'O Ishmael Ben Elisha!' said a voice,  
'What seekest thou? What blessing is thy choice?'  
And, knowing that he stood before the Lord,  
Within the shadow of the cherubim,  
Wide-winged between the blinding light and him,  
He bowed himself, and uttered not a word,  
But in the silence of his soul was prayer  
'O Thou Eternal! I am one of all,  
And nothing ask that others may not share.  
Thou art almighty; we are weak and small,  
And yet Thy children: let Thy mercy spare!'  
Trembling, he raised his eyes, and in the place  
Of the insufferable glory, lo! a face  
Of more than mortal tenderness, that bent  
Graciously down in token of assent,  
And, smiling, vanished! With strange joy elate,  
The wondering Rabbi sought the temple's gate.  
Radiant as Moses from the Mount, he stood  
And cried aloud unto the multitude  
'O Israel, hear! The Lord our God is good!  
Mine eyes have seen his glory and his grace;  
Beyond his judgments shall his love endure;  
The mercy of the All Merciful is sure!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Randolph Of Roanoke

O Mother Earth! upon thy lap  
Thy weary ones receiving,  
And o'er them, silent as a dream,  
Thy grassy mantle weaving,  
Fold softly in thy long embrace  
That heart so worn and broken,  
And cool its pulse of fire beneath  
Thy shadows old and oaken.

Shut out from him the bitter word  
And serpent hiss of scorning;  
Nor let the storms of yesterday  
Disturb his quiet morning.  
Breathe over him forgetfulness  
Of all save deeds of kindness,  
And, save to smiles of grateful eyes,  
Press down his lids in blindness.

There, where with living ear and eye  
He heard Potomac's flowing,  
And, through his tall ancestral trees,  
Saw autumn's sunset glowing,  
He sleeps, still looking to the west,  
Beneath the dark wood shadow,  
As if he still would see the sun  
Sink down on wave and meadow.

Bard, Sage, and Tribune! in himself  
All moods of mind contrasting, -  
The tenderest wail of human woe,  
The scorn like lightning blasting;  
The pathos which from rival eyes  
Unwilling tears could summon,  
The stinging taunt, the fiery burst  
Of hatred scarcely human!

Mirth, sparkling like a diamond shower,  
From lips of life-long sadness;  
Clear picturings of majestic thought

Upon a ground of madness;  
And over all Romance and Song  
A classic beauty throwing,  
And laurelled Clio at his side  
Her storied pages showing.

All parties feared him: each in turn  
Beheld its schemes disjointed,  
As right or left his fatal glance  
And spectral finger pointed.  
Sworn foe of Cant, he smote it down  
With trenchant wit unsparing,  
And, mocking, rent with ruthless hand  
The robe Pretence was wearing.

Too honest or too proud to feign  
A love he never cherished,  
Beyond Virginia's border line  
His patriotism perished.  
While others hailed in distant skies  
Our eagle's dusky pinion,  
He only saw the mountain bird  
Stoop o'er his Old Dominion!

Still through each change of fortune strange  
Racked nerve, and brain all burning,  
His loving faith in Mother-land  
Knew never shade of turning;  
By Britain's lakes, by Neva's tide,  
Whatever sky was o'er him,  
He heard her rivers' rushing sound,  
Her blue peaks rose before him.

He held his slaves, yet made withal  
No false and vain pretences,  
Nor paid a lying priest to seek  
For Scriptural defences.  
His harshest words of proud rebuke,  
His bitterest taunt and scorning,  
Fell fire-like on the Northern brow  
That bent to him in fawning.

He held his slaves; yet kept the while  
His reverence for the Human;  
In the dark vassals of his will  
He saw but Man and Woman!  
No hunter of God's outraged poor  
His Roanoke valley entered;  
No trader in the souls of men  
Across his threshold ventured.

And when the old and wearied man  
Lay down for his last sleeping,  
And at his side, a slave no more,  
His brother-man stood weeping,  
His latest thought, his latest breath,  
To Freedom's duty giving,  
With failing tongue and trembling hand  
The dying blest the living.

Oh, never bore his ancient State  
A truer son or braver!  
None trampling with a calmer scorn  
On foreign hate or favor.  
He knew her faults, yet never stooped  
His proud and manly feeling  
To poor excuses of the wrong  
Or meanness of concealing.

But none beheld with clearer eye  
The plague-spot o'er her spreading  
None heard more sure the steps of Doom  
Along her future treading.  
For her as for himself he spake,  
When, his gaunt frame upbracing,  
He traced with dying hand 'Remorse!'  
And perished in the tracing.

As from the grave where Henry sleeps,  
From Vernon's weeping willow,  
And from the grassy pall which hides  
The Sage of Monticello,  
So from the leaf-strewn burial-stone  
Of Randolph's lowly dwelling,

Virginia! o'er thy land of slaves  
A warning voice is swelling!

And hark! from thy deserted fields  
Are sadder warnings spoken,  
From quenched hearths, where thy exiled sons  
Their household gods have broken.  
The curse is on thee, - wolves for men,  
And briers for corn-sheaves giving!  
Oh, more than all thy dead renown  
Were now one hero living!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Rantoul

One day, along the electric wire  
His manly word for Freedom sped;  
We came next morn: that tongue of fire  
Said only, 'He who spake is dead!'

Dead! while his voice was living yet,  
In echoes round the pillared dome!  
Dead! while his blotted page lay wet  
With themes of state and loves of home!

Dead! in that crowning grace of time,  
That triumph of life's zenith hour!  
Dead! while we watched his manhood's prime  
Break from the slow bud into flower!

Dead! he so great, and strong, and wise,  
While the mean thousands yet drew breath;  
How deepened, through that dread surprise,  
The mystery and the awe of death!

From the high place whereon our votes  
Had borne him, clear, calm, earnest, fell  
His first words, like the prelude notes  
Of some great anthem yet to swell.

We seemed to see our flag unfurled,  
Our champion waiting in his place  
For the last battle of the world,  
The Armageddon of the race.

Through him we hoped to speak the word  
Which wins the freedom of a land;  
And lift, for human right, the sword  
Which dropped from Hampden's dying hand.

For he had sat at Sidney's feet,  
And walked with Pym and Vane apart;  
And, through the centuries, felt the beat  
Of Freedom's march in Cromwell's heart.

He knew the paths the worthies held,  
Where England's best and wisest trod;  
And, lingering, drank the springs that welled  
Beneath the touch of Milton's rod.

No wild enthusiast of the right,  
Self-poised and clear, he showed alway  
The coolness of his northern night,  
The ripe repose of autumn's day.

His steps were slow, yet forward still  
He pressed where others paused or failed;  
The calm star clomb with constant will,  
The restless meteor flashed and paled.

Skilled in its subtlest wile, he knew  
And owned the higher ends of Law;  
Still rose majestic on his view  
The awful Shape the schoolman saw.

Her home the heart of God; her voice  
The choral harmonies whereby  
The stars, through all their spheres, rejoice,  
The rhythmic rule of earth and sky.

We saw his great powers misapplied  
To poor ambitions; yet, through all,  
We saw him take the weaker side,  
And right the wronged, and free the thrall.

Now, looking o'er the frozen North,  
For one like him in word and act,  
To call her old, free spirit forth,  
And give her faith the life of fact,--

To break her party bonds of shame,  
And labor with the zeal of him  
To make the Democratic name  
Of Liberty the synonyme,--

We sweep the land from hill to strand,

We seek the strong, the wise, the brave,  
And, sad of heart, return to stand  
In silence by a new-made grave!

There, where his breezy hills of home  
Look out upon his sail-white seas,  
The sounds of winds and waters come,  
And shape themselves to words like these.

'Why, murmuring, mourn that he, whose power  
Was lent to Party over-long,  
Heard the still whisper at the hour  
He set his foot on Party wrong?

'The human life that closed so well  
No lapse of folly now can stain  
The lips whence Freedom's protest fell  
No meaner thought can now profane.

'Mightier than living voice his grave  
That lofty protest utters o'er;  
Through roaring wind and smiting wave  
It speaks his hate of wrong once more.

'Men of the North! your weak regret  
Is wasted here; arise and pay  
To freedom and to him your debt,  
By following where he led the way!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Raphael

I shall not soon forget that sight  
The glow of Autumn's westering day,  
A hazy warmth, a dreamy light,  
On Raphael's picture lay.

It was a simple print I saw,  
The fair face of a musing boy;  
Yet, while I gazed, a sense of awe  
Seemed blending with my joy.

A simple print,--the graceful flow  
Of boyhood's soft and wavy hair,  
And fresh young lip and cheek, and brow  
Unmarked and clear, were there.

Yet through its sweet and calm repose  
I saw the inward spirit shine;  
It was as if before me rose  
The white veil of a shrine.

As if, as Gothland's sage has told,  
The hidden life, the man within,  
Dissevered from its frame and mould,  
By mortal eye were seen.

Was it the lifting of that eye,  
The waving of that pictured hand?  
Loose as a cloud-wreath on the sky,  
I saw the walls expand.

The narrow room had vanished,--space,  
Broad, luminous, remained alone,  
Through which all hues and shapes of grace  
And beauty looked or shone.

Around the mighty master came  
The marvels which his pencil wrought,  
Those miracles of power whose fame  
Is wide as human thought.

There drooped thy more than mortal face,  
O Mother, beautiful and mild  
Enfolding in one dear embrace  
Thy Saviour and thy Child!

The rapt brow of the Desert John;  
The awful glory of that day  
When all the Father's brightness shone  
Through manhood's veil of clay.

And, midst gray prophet forms, and wild  
Dark visions of the days of old,  
How sweetly woman's beauty smiled  
Through locks of brown and gold!

There Fornarina's fair young face  
Once more upon her lover shone,  
Whose model of an angel's grace  
He borrowed from her own.

Slow passed that vision from my view,  
But not the lesson which it taught;  
The soft, calm shadows which it threw  
Still rested on my thought:

The truth, that painter, bard, and sage,  
Even in Earth's cold and changeful clime,  
Plant for their deathless heritage  
The fruits and flowers of time.

We shape ourselves the joy or fear  
Of which the coming life is made,  
And fill our Future's atmosphere  
With sunshine or with shade.

The tissue of the Life to be  
We weave with colors all our own,  
And in the field of Destiny  
We reap as we have sown.

Still shall the soul around it call

The shadows which it gathered here,  
And, painted on the eternal wall,  
The Past shall reappear.

Think ye the notes of holy song  
On Milton's tuneful ear have died?  
Think ye that Raphael's angel throng  
Has vanished from his side?

Oh no!--We live our life again;  
Or warmly touched, or coldly dim,  
The pictures of the Past remain,---  
Man's works shall follow him!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Red Riding Hood

On the wide lawn the snow lay deep,  
Ridged o'er with many a drifted heap;  
The wind that through the pine-trees sung  
The naked elm-boughs tossed and swung;  
While, through the window, frosty-starred,  
Against the sunset purple barred,  
We saw the sombre crow flap by,  
The hawk's gray fleck along the sky,

The crested blue-jay flitting swift,  
The squirrel poising on the drift,  
Erect, alert, his broad gray tail  
Set to the north wind like a sail.  
It came to pass, our little lass,  
With flattened face against the glass,  
And eyes in which the tender dew  
Of pity shone, stood gazing through  
The narrow space her rosy lips  
Had melted from the frost's eclipse:  
"Oh, see," she cried, "the poor blue-jays!  
What is it that the black crow says?  
The squirrel lifts his little legs  
Because he has no hands, and begs;  
He's asking for my nuts, I know;  
May I not feed them on the snow?"

Half lost within her boots, her head  
Warm-sheltered in her hood of red,  
Her plaid skirt close about her drawn,  
She floundered down the wintry lawn;  
Now struggling through the misty veil  
Blown round her by the shrieking gale;  
Now sinking in a drift so low  
Her scarlet hood could scarcely show  
Its dash of color on the snow.

She dropped for bird and beast forlorn  
Her little store of nuts and corn,  
And thus her timid guests bespoke:

“Come, squirrel, from your hollow oak,—  
Come, black old crow,—come, poor blue-jay,  
Before your supper’s blown away!  
Don’t be afraid, we all are good;  
And I’m mamma’s Red Riding-Hood!”

O Thou whose care is over all,  
Who heedest even the sparrow’s fall,  
Keep in the little maiden’s breast  
The pity which is now its guest!  
Let not her cultured years make less  
The childhood charm of tenderness,  
But let her feel as well as know,  
Nor harder with her polish grow!  
Unmoved by sentimental grief  
That wails along some printed leaf,  
But prompt with kindly word and deed  
To own the claims of all who need,  
Let the grown woman’s self make good  
The promise of Red Riding-Hood!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Remembrance

WITH COPIES OF THE AUTHOR'S WRITINGS.

Friend of mine! whose lot was cast  
With me in the distant past;  
Where, like shadows flitting fast,

Fact and fancy, thought and theme,  
Word and work, begin to seem  
Like a half-remembered dream!

Touched by change have all things been,  
Yet I think of thee as when  
We had speech of lip and pen.

For the calm thy kindness lent  
To a path of discontent,  
Rough with trial and dissent;

Gentle words where such were few,  
Softening blame where blame was true,  
Praising where small praise was due;

For a waking dream made good,  
For an ideal understood,  
For thy Christian womanhood;

For thy marvellous gift to cull  
From our common life and dull  
Whatsoe'er is beautiful;

Thoughts and fancies, Hybla's bees  
Dropping sweetness; true heart's-ease  
Of congenial sympathies;--

Still for these I own my debt;  
Memory, with her eyelids wet,  
Fain would thank thee even yet!

And as one who scatters flowers

Where the Queen of May's sweet hours  
Sits, o'ertwined with blossomed bowers,

In superfluous zeal bestowing  
Gifts where gifts are overflowing,  
So I pay the debt I'm owing.

To thy full thoughts, gay or sad,  
Sunny-hued or sober clad,  
Something of my own I add;

Well assured that thou wilt take  
Even the offering which I make  
Kindly for the giver's sake.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Requirement

We live by Faith; but Faith is not the slave  
Of text and legend. Reason's voice and God's,  
Nature's and Duty's, never are at odds.  
What asks our Father of His children, save  
Justice and mercy and humility,  
A reasonable service of good deeds,  
Pure living, tenderness to human needs,  
Reverence and trust, and prayer for light to see  
The Master's footprints in our daily ways?  
No knotted scourge nor sacrificial knife,  
But the calm beauty of an ordered life  
Whose very breathing is unworded praise!--  
A life that stands as all true lives have stood,  
Firm-rooted in the faith that God is Good.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Requital

As Islam's Prophet, when his last day drew  
Nigh to its close, besought all men to say  
Whom he had wronged, to whom he then should pay  
A debt forgotten, or for pardon sue,  
And, through the silence of his weeping friends,  
A strange voice cried: 'Thou owest me a debt,'  
'Allah be praised!' he answered. 'Even yet  
He gives me power to make to thee amends.  
O friend! I thank thee for thy timely word.'  
So runs the tale. Its lesson all may heed,  
For all have sinned in thought, or word, or deed,  
Or, like the Prophet, through neglect have erred.  
All need forgiveness, all have debts to pay  
Ere the night cometh, while it still is day.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Response

Beside that milestone where the level sun,  
Nigh unto setting, sheds his last, low rays  
On word and work irrevocably done,  
Life's blending threads of good and ill outspun,  
I hear, O friends! your words of cheer and praise,  
Half doubtful if myself or otherwise.  
Like him who, in the old Arabian joke,  
A beggar slept and crowned Caliph woke.  
Thanks not the less. With not unglad surprise  
I see my life-work through your partial eyes;  
Assured, in giving to my home-taught songs  
A higher value than of right belongs,  
You do but read between the written lines  
The finer grace of unfulfilled designs.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Revelation

Still, as of old, in Beavor's Vale,  
O man of God! our hope and faith  
The Elements and Stars assail,  
And the awed spirit holds its breath,  
Blown over by a wind of death.

Takes Nature thought for such as we,  
What place her human atom fills,  
The weed-drift of her careless sea,  
The mist on her unheeding hills?  
What reeks she of our helpless wills?

Strange god of Force, with fear, not love,  
Its trembling worshipper! Can prayer  
Reach the shut ear of Fate, or move  
Unpitying Energy to spare?  
What doth the cosmic Vastness care?

In vain to this dread Unconcern  
For the All-Father's love we look;  
In vain, in quest of it, we turn  
The storied leaves of Nature's book,  
The prints her rocky tablets took.

I pray for faith, I long to trust;  
I listen with my heart, and hear  
A Voice without a sound: 'Be just,  
Be true, be merciful, revere  
The Word within thee: God is near!

'A light to sky and earth unknown  
Pales all their lights: a mightier force  
Than theirs the powers of Nature own,  
And, to its goal as at its source,  
His Spirit moves the Universe.

'Believe and trust. Through stars and suns,  
Through life and death, through soul and sense,  
His wise, paternal purpose runs;

The darkness of His providence  
Is star-lit with benign intents.'

O joy supreme! I know the Voice,  
Like none beside on earth or sea;  
Yea, more, O soul of mine, rejoice,  
By all that He requires of me,  
I know what God himself must be.

No picture to my aid I call,  
I shape no image in my prayer;  
I only know in Him is all  
Of life, light, beauty, everywhere,  
Eternal Goodness here and there!

I know He is, and what He is,  
Whose one great purpose is the good  
Of all. I rest my soul on His  
Immortal Love and Fatherhood;  
And trust Him, as His children should.

I fear no more. The clouded face  
Of Nature smiles; through all her things  
Of time and space and sense I trace  
The moving of the Spirit's wings,  
And hear the song of hope she sings.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Revisited

The roll of drums and the bugle's wailing  
Vex the air of our vales-no more;  
The spear is beaten to hooks of pruning,  
The share is the sword the soldier wore!

Sing soft, sing low, our lowland river,  
Under thy banks of laurel bloom;  
Softly and sweet, as the hour beseemeth,  
Sing us the songs of peace and home.

Let all the tenderer voices of nature  
Temper the triumph and chasten mirth,  
Full of the infinite love and pity  
For fallen martyr and darkened hearth.

But to Him who gives us beauty for ashes,  
And the oil of joy for mourning long,  
Let thy hills give thanks, and all thy waters  
Break into jubilant waves of song!

Bring us the airs of hills and forests,  
The sweet aroma of birch and pine,  
Give us a waft of the north-wind laden  
With sweethrier odors and breath of kine!

Bring us the purple of mountain sunsets,  
Shadows of clouds that rake the hills,  
The green repose of thy Plymouth meadows,  
The gleam and ripple of Campton rills.

Lead us away in shadow and sunshine,  
Slaves of fancy, through all thy miles,  
The winding ways of Pemigewasset,  
And Winnepesaukee's hundred isles.

Shatter in sunshine over thy ledges,  
Laugh in thy plunges from fall to fall;  
Play with thy fringes of elms, and darken  
Under the shade of the mountain wall.

The cradle-song of thy hillside fountains  
Here in thy glory and strength repeat;  
Give us a taste of thy upland music,  
Show us the dance of thy silver feet.

Into thy dutiful life of uses  
Pour the music and weave the flowers;  
With the song of birds and bloom of meadows  
Lighten and gladden thy heart and ours.

Sing on! bring down, O lowland river,  
The joy of the hills to the waiting sea;  
The wealth of the vales, the pomp of mountains,  
The breath of the woodlands, bear with thee.

Here, in the calm of thy seaward, valley,  
Mirth and labor shall hold their truce;  
Dance of water and mill of grinding,  
Both are beauty and both are use.

Type of the Northland's strength and glory,  
Pride and hope of our home and race,--  
Freedom lending to rugged labor  
Tints of beauty and lines of grace.

Once again, O beautiful river,  
Hear our greetings and take our thanks;  
Hither we come, as Eastern pilgrims  
Throng to the Jordan's sacred banks.

For though by the Master's feet untrodden,  
Though never His word has stilled thy waves,  
Well for us may thy shores be holy,  
With Christian altars and saintly graves.

And well may we own thy hint and token  
Of fairer valleys and streams than these,  
Where the rivers of God are full of water,  
And full of sap are His healing trees!



# Ritner

THANK God for the token! one lip is still free,  
One spirit untrammelled, unbending one knee!  
Like the oak of the mountain, deep-rooted and firm,  
Erect, when the multitude bends to the storm;  
When traitors to Freedom, and Honor, and God,  
Are bowed at an Idol polluted with blood;  
When the recreant North has forgotten her trust,  
And the lip of her honor is low in the dust, —  
Thank God, that one arm from the shackle has broken!  
Thank God, that one man as a freeman has spoken!  
O'er thy crags, Alleghany, a blast has been blown!  
Down thy tide, Susquehanna, the murmur has gone!  
To the land of the South, of the charter and chain,  
Of Liberty sweetened with Slavery's pain;  
Where the cant of Democracy dwells on the lips  
Of the forgers of fetters, and wielders of whips!  
Where 'chivalric' honor means really no more  
Than scourging of women, and robbing the poor!  
Where the Moloch of Slavery sitteth on high,  
And the words which he utters, are — Worship, or die!  
Right onward, oh, speed it! Wherever the blood  
Of the wronged and the guiltless is crying to God;  
Wherever a slave in his fetters is pining;  
Wherever the lash of the driver is twining;  
Wherever from kindred, torn rudely apart,  
Comes the sorrowful wail of the broken of heart;  
Wherever the shackles of tyranny bind,  
In silence and darkness, the God-given mind;  
There, God speed it onward! its truth will be felt,  
The bonds shall be loosened, the iron shall melt!  
And oh, will the land where the free soul of Penn  
Still lingers and breathes over mountain and glen;  
Will the land where a Benezet's spirit went forth  
To the peeled and the meted, and outcast of Earth;  
Where the words of the Charter of Liberty first  
From the soul of the sage and the patriot burst;  
Where first for the wronged and the weak of their kind,  
The Christian and statesman their efforts combined;  
Will that land of the free and the good wear a chain?

Will the call to the rescue of Freedom be vain?  
No, Ritner! her 'Friends' at thy warning shall stand  
Erect for the truth, like their ancestral band;  
Forgetting the feuds and the strife of past time,  
Counting coldness injustice, and silence a crime;  
Turning back from the cavil of creeds, to unite  
Once again for the poor in defence of the Right;  
Breasting calmly, but firmly, the full tide of Wrong,  
Overwhelmed, but not borne on its surges along;  
Unappalled by the danger, the shame, and the pain,  
And counting each trial for Truth as their gain!  
And that bold-hearted yeomanry, honest and true,  
Who, haters of fraud, give to labor its due;  
Whose fathers, of old, sang in concert with thine,  
On the banks of Swetara, the songs of the Rhine, —  
The German-born pilgrims, who first dared to brave  
The scorn of the proud in the cause of the slave;  
Will the sons of such men yield the lords of the South  
One brow for the brand, for the padlock one mouth?  
They cater to tyrants? They rivet the chain,  
Which their fathers smote off, on the negro again?  
No, never! one voice, like the sound in the cloud,  
When the roar of the storm waxes loud and more loud,  
Wherever the foot of the freeman hath pressed  
From the Delaware's marge to the Lake of the West,  
On the South-going breezes shall deepen and grow  
Till the land it sweeps over shall tremble below!  
The voice of a people, uprisen, awake,  
Pennsylvania's watchword, with Freedom at stake,  
Thrilling up from each valley, flung down from each height,  
'Our Country and Liberty! God for the Right!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Samuel J. Tilden

GREYSTONE, AUG. 4, 1886.

Once more, O all-adjusting Death!  
The nation's Pantheon opens wide;  
Once more a common sorrow saith  
A strong, wise man has died.

Faults doubtless had he. Had we not  
Our own, to question and asperse  
The worth we doubted or forgot  
Until beside his hearse?

Ambitious, cautious, yet the man  
To strike down fraud with resolute hand;  
A patriot, if a partisan,  
He loved his native land.

So let the mourning bells be rung,  
The banner droop its folds half way,  
And while the public pen and tongue  
Their fitting tribute pay,

Shall we not vow above his bier  
To set our feet on party lies,  
And wound no more a living ear  
With words that Death denies?

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Seed-Time And Harvest

As o'er his furrowed fields which lie  
Beneath a coldly dropping sky,  
Yet chill with winter's melted snow,  
The husbandman goes forth to sow,  
Thus, Freedom, on the bitter blast  
The ventures of thy seed we cast,  
And trust to warmer sun and rain  
To swell the germs and fill the grain.  
Who calls thy glorious service hard?  
Who deems it not its own reward?  
Who, for its trials, counts it less  
A cause of praise and thankfulness?  
It may not be our lot to wield  
The sickle in the ripened field;  
Nor ours to hear, on summer eves,  
The reaper's song among the sheaves.  
Yet where our duty's task is wrought  
In unison with God's great thought,  
The near and future blend in one,  
And whatsoever is willed, is done!  
And ours the grateful service whence  
Comes day by day the recompense;  
The hope, the trust, the purpose stayed,  
The fountain and the noonday shade.  
And were this life the utmost span,  
The only end and aim of man,  
Better the toil of fields like these  
Than waking dream and slothful ease.  
But life, though falling like our grain,  
Like that revives and springs again;  
And, early called, how blest are they  
Who wait in heaven their harvest-day!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## Skipper Ireson's Ride

Of all the rides since the birth of time,  
Told in story or sung in rhyme, -  
On Apuleius' Golden Ass,  
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,  
Witch astride of a human back,  
Islam's prophet on Al-Borak, -  
The strangest ride that ever was sped  
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,  
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,  
Feathered and ruffled in every part,  
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.  
Scores of women, old and young,  
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,  
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,  
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:  
'Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!'

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,  
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,  
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase  
Bacchus round some antique vase,  
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,  
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,  
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,  
Over and over the Maenads sang:  
'Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!'

Small pity for him! - He sailed away  
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay, -  
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,

With his own town's-people on her deck!  
'Lay by! lay by!' they called to him.  
Back he answered, 'Sink or swim!  
Brag of your catch of fish again!'  
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur  
That wreck shall lie forevermore.  
Mother and sister, wife and maid,  
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead  
Over the moaning and rainy sea, -  
Looked for the coming that might not be!  
What did the winds and the sea-birds say  
Of the cruel captain who sailed away? -  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,  
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;  
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,  
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.  
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,  
Hulks of old sailors run aground,  
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,  
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:  
'Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!'

Sweetly along the Salem road  
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.  
Little the wicked skipper knew  
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.  
Riding there in his sorry trim,  
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,  
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear  
Of voices shouting, far and near:  
'Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!

'Hear me, neighbors!' at last he cried, -  
'What to me is this noisy ride?  
What is the shame that clothes the skin  
To the nameless horror that lives within?  
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,  
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!  
Hate me and curse me, - I only dread  
The hand of God and the face of the dead!'  
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea  
Said, 'God has touched him! why should we!'  
Said an old wife mourning her only son,  
'Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!'  
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,  
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,  
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,  
And left him alone with his shame and sin.  
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Snow-Bound: A Winter Idyl

To the Memory of the Household It Describes  
This Poem is Dedicated by the Author:

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits, which be Angels of Light, are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common Wood Fire: and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of Wood doth the same." -- Cor. Agrippa, Occult Philosophy,

Book I. ch. v.

"Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,  
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,  
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air  
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,  
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.  
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet  
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit  
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed  
In a tumultuous privacy of storm." EMERSON, The Snow Storm.

The sun that brief December day  
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,  
And, darkly circled, gave at noon  
A sadder light than waning moon.  
Slow tracing down the thickening sky  
Its mute and ominous prophecy,  
A portent seeming less than threat,  
It sank from sight before it set.  
A chill no coat, however stout,  
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,  
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,  
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race  
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,  
The coming of the snow-storm told.  
The wind blew east; we heard the roar  
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,

And felt the strong pulse throbbing there  
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores, --  
Brought in the wood from out of doors,  
Littered the stalls, and from the mows  
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows;  
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;  
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,  
Impatient down the stanchion rows  
The cattle shake their walnut bows;  
While, peering from his early perch  
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,  
The cock his crested helmet bent  
And down his querulous challenge sent.

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

So all night long the storm roared on:  
The morning broke without a sun;  
In tiny spherule traced with lines  
Of Nature's geometric signs,  
In starry flake, and pellicle,  
All day the hoary meteor fell;  
And, when the second morning shone,  
We looked upon a world unknown,  
On nothing we could call our own.  
Around the glistening wonder bent  
The blue walls of the firmament,  
No cloud above, no earth below, --  
A universe of sky and snow!  
The old familiar sights of ours  
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers

Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,  
Or garden-wall, or belt of wood;  
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,  
A fenceless drift what once was road;  
The bridle-post an old man sat  
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;  
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;  
And even the long sweep, high aloof,  
In its slant spendor, seemed to tell  
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath  
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"  
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy  
Count such a summons less than joy?)  
Our buskins on our feet we drew;  
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,  
To guard our necks and ears from snow,  
We cut the solid whiteness through.  
And, where the drift was deepest, made  
A tunnel walled and overlaid  
With dazzling crystal: we had read  
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,  
And to our own his name we gave,  
With many a wish the luck were ours  
To test his lamp's supernal powers.  
We reached the barn with merry din,  
And roused the prisoned brutes within.  
The old horse thrust his long head out,  
And grave with wonder gazed about;  
The cock his lusty greeting said,  
And forth his speckled harem led;  
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,  
And mild reproach of hunger looked;  
The horned patriarch of the sheep,  
Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,  
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,  
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore  
The loosening drift its breath before;  
Low circling round its southern zone,

The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.  
No church-bell lent its Christian tone  
To the savage air, no social smoke  
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.  
A solitude made more intense  
By dreary-voicèd elements,  
The shrieking of the mindless wind,  
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,  
And on the glass the unmeaning beat  
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.  
Beyond the circle of our hearth  
No welcome sound of toil or mirth  
Unbound the spell, and testified  
Of human life and thought outside.  
We minded that the sharpest ear  
The buried brooklet could not hear,  
The music of whose liquid lip  
Had been to us companionship,  
And, in our lonely life, had grown  
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest  
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,  
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank  
From sight beneath the smothering bank,  
We piled, with care, our nightly stack  
Of wood against the chimney-back, --  
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,  
And on its top the stout back-stick;  
The knotty forestick laid apart,  
And filled between with curious art  
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,  
We watched the first red blaze appear,  
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam  
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,  
Until the old, rude-furnished room  
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;  
While radiant with a mimic flame  
Outside the sparkling drift became,  
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree  
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.

The crane and pendent trammels showed,  
The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;  
While childish fancy, prompt to tell  
The meaning of the miracle,  
Whispered the old rhyme: "Under the tree,  
When fire outdoors burns merrily,  
There the witches are making tea."

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

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

With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?  
What matter how the north-wind raved?  
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow  
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.  
O Time and Change! -- with hair as gray  
As was my sire's that winter day,  
How strange it seems, with so much gone  
Of life and love, to still live on!  
Ah, brother! only I and thou  
Are left of all that circle now, --  
The dear home faces whereupon  
That fitful firelight paled and shone.  
Henceforward, listen as we will,  
The voices of that hearth are still;  
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,  
Those lighted faces smile no more.  
We tread the paths their feet have worn,  
    We sit beneath their orchard trees,  
    We hear, like them, the hum of bees  
And rustle of the bladed corn;  
We turn the pages that they read,  
    Their written words we linger o'er,  
But in the sun they cast no shade,  
No voice is heard, no sign is made,  
    No step is on the conscious floor!  
Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust,  
(Since He who knows our need is just,)  
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.  
Alas for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!  
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,  
Nor looks to see the breaking day  
Across the mournful marbles play!  
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,  
    The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever lord of Death,  
    And Love can never lose its own!  
We sped the time with stories old,  
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,

Or stammered from our school-book lore  
"The Chief of Gambia's golden shore."  
How often since, when all the land  
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,  
As if a far-blown trumpet stirred  
The languorous sin-sick air, I heard:  
"Does not the voice of reason cry,  
    Claim the first right which Nature gave,  
From the red scourge of bondage to fly,  
    Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"  
Our father rode again his ride  
On Memphremagog's wooded side;  
Sat down again to moose and samp  
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;  
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease  
Beneath St. François' hemlock-trees;  
Again for him the moonlight shone  
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;  
Again he heard the violin play  
Which led the village dance away.  
And mingled in its merry whirl  
The grandam and the laughing girl.  
Or, nearer home, our steps he led  
Where Salisbury's level marshes spread  
    Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;  
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,  
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along  
    The low green prairies of the sea.  
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,  
    And round the rocky Isles of Shoals  
    The hake-broil on the drift-wood coals;  
The chowder on the sand-beach made,  
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,  
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.  
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,  
And dream and sign and marvel told  
To sleepy listeners as they lay  
Stretched idly on the salted hay,  
Adrift along the winding shores,  
When favoring breezes deigned to blow  
The square sail of the gundelow  
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel  
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,  
Told how the Indian hordes came down  
At midnight on Concheco town,  
And how her own great-uncle bore  
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.  
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,  
    So rich and picturesque and free  
    (The common unrhymed poetry  
Of simple life and country ways,)  
The story of her early days, --  
She made us welcome to her home;  
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;  
We stole with her a frightened look  
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,  
The fame whereof went far and wide  
Through all the simple country side;  
We heard the hawks at twilight play,  
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,  
The loon's weird laughter far away;  
We fished her little trout-brook, knew  
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,  
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown  
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,  
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay,  
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,  
And heard the wild-geese calling loud  
Beneath the gray November cloud.

Then, haply, with a look more grave,  
And soberer tone, some tale she gave  
From painful Sewel's ancient tome,  
Beloved in every Quaker home,  
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,  
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint, --  
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint! --  
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,  
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,  
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued

His portly presence mad for food,  
With dark hints muttered under breath  
Of casting lots for life or death,  
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,  
To be himself the sacrifice.  
Then, suddenly, as if to save  
The good man from his living grave,  
A ripple on the water grew,  
A school of porpoise flashed in view.  
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;  
These fishes in my stead are sent  
By Him who gave the tangled ram  
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,  
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,  
The ancient teachers never dumb  
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.  
In moons and tides and weather wise,  
He read the clouds as prophecies,  
And foul or fair could well divine,  
By many an occult hint and sign,  
Holding the cunning-warded keys  
To all the woodcraft mysteries;  
Himself to Nature's heart so near  
That all her voices in his ear  
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,  
Like Apollonius of old,  
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,  
Or Hermes, who interpreted  
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;  
A simple, guileless, childlike man,  
Content to live where life began;  
Strong only on his native grounds,  
The little world of sights and sounds  
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,  
Whereof his fondly partial pride  
The common features magnified,  
As Surrey hills to mountains grew  
In White of Selborne's loving view, --  
He told how teal and loon he shot,

And how the eagle's eggs he got,  
The feats on pond and river done,  
The prodigies of rod and gun;  
Till, warming with the tales he told,  
Forgotten was the outside cold,  
The bitter wind unheeded blew,  
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,  
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink  
Went fishing down the river-brink.  
In fields with bean or clover gray,  
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,  
    Peered from the doorway of his cell;  
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,  
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;  
And from the shagbark overhead  
    The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer  
And voice in dreams I see and hear, --  
The sweetest woman ever Fate  
Perverse denied a household mate,  
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less  
Found peace in love's unselfishness,  
And welcome wheresoe'er she went,  
A calm and gracious element,  
Whose presence seemed the sweet income  
And womanly atmosphere of home, --  
Called up her girlhood memories,  
The huskings and the apple-bees,  
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,  
Weaving through all the poor details  
And homespun warp of circumstance  
A golden woof-thread of romance.  
For well she kept her genial mood  
And simple faith of maidenhood;  
Before her still a cloud-land lay,  
The mirage loomed across her way;  
The morning dew, that dries so soon  
With others, glistened at her noon;  
Through years of toil and soil and care,  
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,

All unprofaned she held apart  
The virgin fancies of the heart.  
Be shame to him of woman born  
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied  
Her evening task the stand beside;  
A full, rich nature, free to trust,  
Truthful and almost sternly just,  
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,  
And make her generous thought a fact,  
Keeping with many a light disguise  
The secret of self-sacrifice.  
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best  
That Heaven itself could give thee, -- rest,  
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!  
How many a poor one's blessing went  
With thee beneath the low green tent  
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part  
Of all she saw, and let her heart  
Against the household bosom lean,  
Upon the motley-braided mat  
Our youngest and our dearest sat,  
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,  
Now bathed in the unfading green  
And holy peace of Paradise.  
Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,  
Or from the shade of saintly palms,  
Or silver reach of river calms,  
Do those large eyes behold me still?  
With me one little year ago: --  
The chill weight of the winter snow  
For months upon her grave has lain;  
And now, when summer south-winds blow  
And brier and harebell bloom again,  
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,  
I see the violet-sprinkled sod  
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak

The hillside flowers she loved to seek,  
Yet following me where'er I went  
With dark eyes full of love's content.  
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills  
The air with sweetness; all the hills  
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;  
But still I wait with ear and eye  
For something gone which should be nigh,  
A loss in all familiar things,  
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.  
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,  
    Am I not richer than of old?  
Safe in thy immortality,  
    What change can reach the wealth I hold?  
    What chance can mar the pearl and gold  
Thy love hath left in trust with me?  
And while in life's late afternoon,  
    Where cool and long the shadows grow,  
I walk to meet the night that soon  
    Shall shape and shadow overflow,  
I cannot feel that thou art far,  
Since near at need the angels are;  
And when the sunset gates unbar,  
    Shall I not see thee waiting stand,  
And, white against the evening star,  
    The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,  
The master of the district school  
Held at the fire his favored place,  
Its warm glow lit a laughing face  
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared  
The uncertain prophecy of beard.  
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,  
Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,  
Sang songs, and told us what befalls  
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.  
Born the wild Northern hills among,  
From whence his yeoman father wrung  
By patient toil subsistence scant,  
Not competence and yet not want,

He early gained the power to pay  
His cheerful, self-reliant way;  
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown  
To peddle wares from town to town;  
Or through the long vacation's reach  
In lonely lowland districts teach,  
Where all the droll experience found  
At stranger hearths in boarding round,  
The moonlit skater's keen delight,  
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,  
The rustic party, with its rough  
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,  
And whirling-plate, and forfeits paid,  
His winter task a pastime made.  
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein  
He tuned his merry violin,  
Or played the athlete in the barn,  
Or held the good dame's winding-yarn,  
Or mirth-provoking versions told  
Of classic legends rare and old,  
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome  
Had all the commonplace of home,  
And little seemed at best the odds  
'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;  
Where Pindus-born Arachthus took  
The guise of any grist-mill brook,  
And dread Olympus at his will  
Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed;  
But at his desk he had the look  
And air of one who wisely schemed,  
And hostage from the future took  
In trained thought and lore of book.  
Large-brained, clear-eyed, of such as he  
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,  
Who, following in War's bloody trail,  
Shall every lingering wrong assail;  
All chains from limb and spirit strike,  
Uplift the black and white alike;  
Scatter before their swift advance

The darkness and the ignorance,  
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,  
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,  
Made murder pastime, and the hell  
Of prison-torture possible;  
The cruel lie of caste refute,  
Old forms remould, and substitute  
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,  
For blind routine, wise-handed skill;  
A school-house plant on every hill,  
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence  
The quick wires of intelligence;  
Till North and South together brought  
Shall own the same electric thought,  
In peace a common flag salute,  
And, side by side in labor's free  
And unresentful rivalry,  
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest that winter night  
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.  
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,  
The honeyed music of her tongue  
And words of meekness scarcely told  
A nature passionate and bold,  
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,  
Its milder features dwarfed beside  
Her unbent will's majestic pride.  
She sat among us, at the best,  
A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,  
Rebuking with her cultured phrase  
Our homeliness of words and ways.  
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace  
Swayed the lithe limbs and drooped the lash,  
Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;  
And under low brows, black with night,  
Rayed out at times a dangerous light;  
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face  
Presaging ill to him whom Fate  
Condemned to share her love or hate.  
A woman tropical, intense

In thought and act, in soul and sense,  
She blended in a like degree  
The vixen and the devotee,  
Revealing with each freak or feint  
    The temper of Petruchio's Kate,  
The raptures of Siena's saint.  
Her tapering hand and rounded wrist  
Had facile power to form a fist;  
The warm, dark languish of her eyes  
Was never safe from wrath's surprise.  
Brows saintly calm and lips devout  
Knew every change of scowl and pout;  
And the sweet voice had notes more high  
And shrill for social battle-cry.

Since then what old cathedral town  
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,  
What convent-gate has held its lock  
Against the challenge of her knock!  
Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thoroughfares,  
Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,  
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem  
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,  
Or startling on her desert throne  
The crazy Queen of Lebanon  
With claims fantastic as her own,  
Her tireless feet have held their way;  
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,  
She watches under Eastern skies,  
    With hope each day renewed and fresh,  
    The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,  
Whereof she dreams and prophecies!

Where'er her troubled path may be,  
    The Lord's sweet pity with her go!  
The outward wayward life we see,  
    The hidden springs we may not know.  
Nor is it given us to discern  
    What threads the fatal sisters spun,  
    Through what ancestral years has run

The sorrow with the woman born,  
What forged her cruel chain of moods,  
What set her feet in solitudes,  
And held the love within her mute,  
What mingled madness in the blood,  
    A life-long discord and annoy,  
    Water of tears with oil of joy,  
And hid within the folded bud  
    Perversities of flower and fruit.  
It is not ours to separate  
The tangled skein of will and fate,  
To show what metes and bounds should stand  
Upon the soul's debatable land,  
And between choice and Providence  
Divide the circle of events;  
But He who knows our frame is just,  
Merciful and compassionate,  
And full of sweet assurances  
And hope for all the language is,  
That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low,  
Sent out a dull and duller glow,  
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,  
Ticking its weary circuit through,  
Pointed with mutely warning sign  
Its black hand to the hour of nine.  
That sign the pleasant circle broke:  
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,  
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,  
And laid it tenderly away;  
Then roused himself to safely cover  
The dull red brands with ashes over.  
And while, with care, our mother laid  
The work aside, her steps she stayed  
One moment, seeking to express  
Her grateful sense of happiness  
For food and shelter, warmth and health,  
And love's contentment more than wealth,  
With simple wishes (not the weak,  
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,

But such as warm the generous heart,  
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)  
That none might lack, that bitter night,  
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard  
The wind that round the gables roared,  
With now and then a ruder shock,  
Which made our very bedsteads rock.  
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,  
The board-nails snapping in the frost;  
And on us, through the unplastered wall,  
Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall.  
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do  
When hearts are light and life is new;  
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,  
Till in the summer-land of dreams  
They softened to the sound of streams,  
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,  
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout  
Of merry voices high and clear;  
And saw the teamsters drawing near  
To break the drifted highways out.  
Down the long hillside treading slow  
We saw the half-buried oxen go,  
Shaking the snow from heads uptost,  
Their straining nostrils white with frost.  
Before our door the straggling train  
Drew up, an added team to gain.  
The elders threshed their hands a-cold,  
    Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes  
    From lip to lip; the younger folks  
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,  
Then toiled again the cavalcade  
    O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,  
    And woodland paths that wound between  
Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.  
From every barn a team afoot,

At every house a new recruit,  
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,  
Haply the watchful young men saw  
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls  
And curious eyes of merry girls,  
Lifting their hands in mock defence  
Against the snow-ball's compliments,  
And reading in each missive tost  
The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;  
And, following where the teamsters led,  
The wise old Doctor went his round,  
Just pausing at our door to say,  
In the brief autocratic way  
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,  
Was free to urge her claim on all,  
That some poor neighbor sick abed  
At night our mother's aid would need.  
For, one in generous thought and deed,  
What mattered in the sufferer's sight  
The Quaker matron's inward light,  
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?  
All hearts confess the saints elect  
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,  
And melt not in an acid sect  
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed  
Since the great world was heard from last.  
The Almanac we studied o'er,  
Read and reread our little store  
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;  
One harmless novel, mostly hid  
From younger eyes, a book forbid,  
And poetry, (or good or bad,  
A single book was all we had,)  
Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,  
A stranger to the heathen Nine,  
Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,

The wars of David and the Jews.  
At last the floundering carrier bore  
The village paper to our door.  
Lo! broadening outward as we read,  
To warmer zones the horizon spread  
In panoramic length unrolled  
We saw the marvels that it told.  
Before us passed the painted Creeks,  
    And daft McGregor on his raids  
    In Costa Rica's everglades.  
And up Taygetos winding slow  
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,  
A Turk's head at each saddle-bow!  
Welcome to us its week-old news,  
Its corner for the rustic Muse,  
    Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,  
Its record, mingling in a breath  
The wedding bell and dirge of death:  
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,  
The latest culprit sent to jail;  
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,  
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,  
    And traffic calling loud for gain.  
We felt the stir of hall and street,  
The pulse of life that round us beat;  
The chill embargo of the snow  
Was melted in the genial glow;  
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,  
And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look  
    And folded wings of ashen gray  
    And voice of echoes far away,  
The brazen covers of thy book;  
The weird palimpsest old and vast,  
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;  
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow  
The characters of joy and woe;  
The monographs of outlived years,  
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,  
    Green hills of life that slope to death,

And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees  
Shade off to mournful cypresses  
    With the white amaranths underneath.  
Even while I look, I can but heed  
    The restless sands' incessant fall,  
Importunate hours that hours succeed,  
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,  
    And duty keeping pace with all.  
Shut down and clasp with heavy lids;  
I hear again the voice that bids  
The dreamer leave his dream midway  
For larger hopes and graver fears:  
Life greatens in these later years,  
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,  
Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,  
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,  
    Dreaming in throngful city ways  
Of winter joys his boyhood knew;  
And dear and early friends -- the few  
Who yet remain -- shall pause to view  
    These Flemish pictures of old days;  
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,  
And stretch the hands of memory forth  
    To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!  
And thanks untraced to lips unknown  
Shall greet me like the odors blown  
From unseen meadows newly mown,  
Or lilies floating in some pond,  
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;  
The traveller owns the grateful sense  
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,  
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare  
The benediction of the air.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Somehow not only for Christmas

Somehow not only for Christmas  
But all the long year through,  
The joy that you give to others  
Is the joy that comes back to you.

And the more you spend in blessing  
The poor and lonely and sad,  
The more of your heart's possessing  
Returns to make you glad.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Song Of Slaves In The Desert

WHERE are we going? where are we going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
Lord of peoples, lord of lands,  
Look across these shining sands,  
Through the furnace of the noon,  
Through the white light of the moon.  
Strong the Ghiblee wind is blowing,  
Strange and large the world is growing!  
Speak and tell us where we are going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
Bornou land was rich and good,  
Wells of water, fields of food,  
Dourra fields, and bloom of bean,  
And the palm-tree cool and green:  
Bornou land we see no longer,  
Here we thirst and here we hunger,  
Here the Moor-man smites in anger:  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
When we went from Bornou land,  
We were like the leaves and sand,  
We were many, we are few;  
Life has one, and death has two:  
Whitened bones our path are showing,  
Thou All-seeing, thou All-knowing!  
Hear us, tell us, where are we going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
Moons of marches from our eyes  
Bornou land behind us lies;  
Stranger round us day by day  
Bends the desert circle gray;  
Wild the waves of sand are flowing,  
Hot the winds above them blowing, —  
Lord of all things! where are we going?  
Where are we going, Rubee?  
We are weak, but Thou art strong.;  
Short our lives, but Thine is long;  
We are blind, but Thou hast eyes;  
We are fools, but Thou art wise!  
Thou, our morrow's pathway knowing

Through the strange world round us growing,  
Hear us, tell us where are we going,  
Where are we going, Rubee?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Song Of The Negro Boatman

Oh, praise an' tanks! De Lord he come  
To set de people free;  
An' massa tink it day ob doom,  
An' we ob jubilee.  
De Lord dat heap de Red Sea waves  
He jus' as 'trong as den;  
He say de word: we las' night slaves;  
To-day, de Lord's freemen.  
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,  
We'll hab de rice an' corn;  
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear  
De driver blow his horn!  
Ole massa on he trabbels gone;  
He leaf de land behind:  
De Lord's breff blow him furder on,  
Like corn-shuck in de wind.  
We own de hoe, we own de plough,  
We own de hands dat hold;  
We sell de pig, we sell de cow,  
But nebber chile be sold.  
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,  
We'll hab de rice an' corn;  
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear  
De driver blow his horn!  
We pray de Lord: he gib us signs  
Dat some clay we be free;  
De norf-wind tell it to de pines,  
De wild-duck to de sea;  
We tink it when de church-bell ring,  
We dream it in de dream;  
De rice-bird mean it when he sing,  
De eagle when he scream.  
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,  
We'll hab de rice an' corn:  
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear  
De driver blow his horn!  
We know de promise nebber fail,  
An' nebber lie de word;  
So like de 'postles in de jail,

We waited for de Lord  
An' now he open ebery door,  
An' trow away de key;  
He tink we lub him so before,  
We lub him better free.  
De yam will grow, de cotton blow,  
He'll gib de rice an' corn;  
Oh nebber you fear, if nebber you hear  
De driver blow his horn!  
So sing our dusky gondoliers;  
And with a secret pain,  
And smiles that seem akin to tears,  
We hear the wild refrain.  
We dare not share the negro's trust,  
Nor yet his hope deny;  
We only know that God is just,  
And every wrong shall die.  
Rude seems the song; each swarthy face,  
Flame-lighted, ruder still:  
We start to think that hapless race  
Must shape our good or ill;  
That laws of changeless justice bind  
Oppressor with oppressed;  
And, close as sin and suffering joined,  
We march to Fate abreast.  
Sing on, poor hearts! your chant shall be  
Our sign of blight or bloom,  
The Vala-song of Liberty,  
Or death-rune of our doom!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## St. John. 1647

'To the winds give our banner!  
Bear homeward again!'  
Cried the Lord of Acadia,  
Cried Charles of Estienne;  
From the prow of his shallop  
He gazed, as the sun,  
From its bed in the ocean,  
Streamed up the St. John.

O'er the blue western waters  
That shallop had passed,  
Where the mists of Penobscot  
Clung damp on her mast.  
St. Saviour had looked  
On the heretic sail,  
As the songs of the Huguenot  
Rose on the gale.

The pale, ghostly fathers  
Remembered her well,  
And had cursed her while passing,  
With taper and bell;  
But the men of Monhegan,  
Of Papists abhorred,  
Had welcomed and feasted  
The heretic Lord.

They had loaded his shallop  
With dun-fish and ball,  
With stores for his larder,  
And steel for his wall.  
Pemaquid, from her bastions  
And turrets of stone,  
Had welcomed his coming  
With banner and gun.

And the prayers of the elders  
Had followed his way,  
As homeward he glided,

Down Pentecost Bay.  
Oh, well sped La Tour  
For, in peril and pain,  
His lady kept watch,  
For his coming again.

O'er the Isle of the Pheasant  
The morning sun shone,  
On the plane-trees which shaded  
The shores of St. John.  
'Now, why from yon battlements  
Speaks not my love!  
Why waves there no banner  
My fortress above?'

Dark and wild, from his deck  
St. Estienne gazed about,  
On fire-wasted dwellings,  
And silent redoubt;  
From the low, shattered walls  
Which the flame had o'errun,  
There floated no banner,  
There thundered no gun!

But beneath the low arch  
Of its doorway there stood  
A pale priest of Rome,  
In his cloak and his hood.  
With the bound of a lion,  
La Tour sprang to land,  
On the throat of the Papist  
He fastened his hand.

'Speak, son of the Woman  
Of scarlet and sin!  
What wolf has been prowling  
My castle within?'  
From the grasp of the soldier  
The Jesuit broke,  
Half in scorn, half in sorrow,  
He smiled as he spoke:

'No wolf, Lord of Estienne,  
Has ravaged thy hall,  
But thy red-handed rival,  
With fire, steel, and ball!  
On an errand of mercy  
I hitherward came,  
While the walls of thy castle  
Yet spouted with flame.

'Pentagoet's dark vessels  
Were moored in the bay,  
Grim sea-lions, roaring  
Aloud for their prey.'  
'But what of my lady?'  
Cried Charles of Estienne.  
'On the shot-crumbled turret  
Thy lady was seen:

'Half-veiled in the smoke-cloud,  
Her hand grasped thy pennon,  
While her dark tresses swayed  
In the hot breath of cannon!  
But woe to the heretic,  
Evermore woe!  
When the son of the church  
And the cross is his foe!

'In the track of the shell,  
In the path of the ball,  
Pentagoet swept over  
The breach of the wall!  
Steel to steel, gun to gun,  
One moment,-and then  
Alone stood the victor,  
Alone with his men!

'Of its sturdy defenders,  
Thy lady alone  
Saw the cross-blazoned banner  
Float over St. John.'  
'Let the dastard look to it!'  
Cried fiery Estienne,

'Were D'Aulnay King Louis,  
I'd free her again!'

'Alas for thy lady!  
No service from thee  
Is needed by her  
Whom the Lord hath set free;  
Nine days, in stern silence,  
Her thraldom she bore,  
But the tenth morning came,  
And Death opened her door!'

As if suddenly smitten  
La Tour staggered back;  
His hand grasped his sword-hilt,  
His forehead grew black.  
He sprang on the deck  
Of his shallop again.  
'We cruise now for vengeance!  
Give way!' cried Estienne.

'Massachusetts shall hear  
Of the Huguenot's wrong,  
And from island and creekside  
Her fishers shall throng!  
Pentagoet shall rue  
What his Papists have done,  
When his palisades echo  
The Puritan's gun!'

Oh, the loveliest of heavens  
Hung tenderly o'er him,  
There were waves in the sunshine,  
And green isles before him:  
But a pale hand was beckoning  
The Huguenot on;  
And in blackness and ashes  
Behind was St. John!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# St. Martin's Summer

Though flowers have perished at the touch  
Of Frost, the early comer,  
I hail the season loved so much,  
The good St. Martin's summer.

O gracious morn, with rose-red dawn,  
And thin moon curving o'er it!  
The old year's darling, latest born,  
More loved than all before it!

How flamed the sunrise through the pines!  
How stretched the birchen shadows,  
Braiding in long, wind-wavered lines  
The westward sloping meadows!

The sweet day, opening as a flower  
Unfolds its petals tender,  
Renews for us at noontide's hour  
The summer's tempered splendor.

The birds are hushed; alone the wind,  
That through the woodland searches,  
The red-oak's lingering leaves can find,  
And yellow plumes of larches.

But still the balsam-breathing pine  
Invites no thought of sorrow,  
No hint of loss from air like wine  
The earth's content can borrow.

The summer and the winter here  
Midway a truce are holding,  
A soft, consenting atmosphere  
Their tents of peace enfolding.

The silent woods, the lonely hills,  
Rise solemn in their gladness;  
The quiet that the valley fills  
Is scarcely joy or sadness.

How strange! The autumn yesterday  
In winter's grasp seemed dying;  
On whirling winds from skies of gray  
The early snow was flying.

And now, while over Nature's mood  
There steals a soft relenting,  
I will not mar the present good,  
Forecasting or lamenting.

My autumn time and Nature's hold  
A dreamy tryst together,  
And, both grown old, about us fold  
The golden-tissued weather.

I lean my heart against the day  
To feel its bland caressing;  
I will not let it pass away  
Before it leaves its blessing.

God's angels come not as of old  
The Syrian shepherds knew them;  
In reddening dawns, in sunset gold,  
And warm noon lights I view them.

Nor need there is, in times like this  
When heaven to earth draws nearer,  
Of wing or song as witnesses  
To make their presence clearer.

O stream of life, whose swifter flow  
Is of the end forewarning,  
Methinks thy sundown afterglow  
Seems less of night than morning!

Old cares grow light; aside I lay  
The doubts and fears that troubled;  
The quiet of the happy day  
Within my soul is doubled.

That clouds must veil this fair sunshine

Not less a joy I find it;  
Nor less yon warm horizon line  
That winter lurks behind it.

The mystery of the untried days  
I close my eyes from reading;  
His will be done whose darkest ways  
To light and life are leading!

Less drear the winter night shall be,  
If memory cheer and hearten  
Its heavy hours with thoughts of thee,  
Sweet summer of St. Martin!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## ry's Guest

A TALE for Roman guides to tell  
To careless, sight-worn travellers still,  
Who pause beside the narrow cell  
Of Gregory on the Caelian Hill.

One day before the monk's door came  
A beggar, stretching empty palms,  
Fainting and fast-sick, in the name  
Of the Most Holy asking alms.

And the monk answered, 'All I have  
In this poor cell of mine I give,  
The silver cup my mother gave;  
In Christ's name take thou it, and live.'

Years passed; and, called at last to bear  
The pastoral crook and keys of Rome,  
The poor monk, in Saint Peter's chair,  
Sat the crowned lord of Christendom.

'Prepare a feast,' Saint Gregory cried,  
'And let twelve beggars sit thereat.'  
The beggars came, and one beside,  
An unknown stranger, with them sat.

'I asked thee not,' the Pontiff spake,  
'O stranger; but if need be thine,  
I bid thee welcome, for the sake  
Of Him who is thy Lord and mine.'

A grave, calm face the stranger raised,  
Like His who on Gennesaret trod,  
Or His on whom the Chaldeans gazed,  
Whose form was as the Son of God.

'Know'st thou,' he said, 'thy gift of old?'  
And in the hand he lifted up  
The Pontiff marvelled to behold  
Once more his mother's silver cup.

'Thy prayers and alms have risen, and bloom  
Sweetly among the flowers of heaven.  
I am The Wonderful, through whom  
Whate'er thou askest shall be given.'

He spake and vanished. Gregory fell  
With his twelve guests in mute accord  
Prone on their faces, knowing well  
Their eyes of flesh had seen the Lord.

The old-time legend is not vain;  
Nor vain thy art, Verona's Paul,  
Telling it o'er and o'er again  
On gray Vicenza's frescoed wall.

Still wheresoever pity shares  
Its bread with sorrow, want, and sin,  
And love the beggar's feast prepares,  
The uninvited Guest comes in.

Unheard, because our ears are dull,  
Unseen, because our eyes are dim,  
He walks our earth, The Wonderful,  
And all good deeds are done to Him.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Stanzas For The Times

Is this the land our fathers loved,  
The freedom which they toiled to win?  
Is this the soil whereon they moved?  
Are these the graves they slumber in?  
Are we the sons by whom are borne  
The mantles which the dead have worn?

And shall we crouch above these graves,  
With craven soul and fettered lip?  
Yoke in with marked and branded slaves,  
And tremble at the driver's whip?  
Bend to the earth our pliant knees,  
And speak but as our masters please?

Shall outraged Nature cease to feel?  
Shall Mercy's tears no longer flow?  
Shall ruffian threats of cord and steel,  
The dungeon's gloom, the assassin's blow,  
Turn back the spirit roused to save  
The Truth, our Country, and the slave?

Of human skulls that shrine was made,  
Round which the priests of Mexico  
Before their loathsome idol prayed;  
Is Freedom's altar fashioned so?  
And must we yield to Freedom's God,  
As offering meet, the negro's blood?

Shall tongue be mute, when deeds are wrought  
Which well might shame extremest hell?  
Shall freemem lock the indignant thought?  
Shall Pity's bosom cease to swell?  
Shall Honor bleed?- shall Truth succumb?  
Shall pen, and press, and soul be dumb?

No; by each spot of haunted ground,  
Where Freedom weeps her children's fall;  
By Plymouth's rock, and Bunker's mound;  
By Griswold's stained and shattered wall;

By Warren's ghost, by Langdon's shade;  
By all the memories of our dead!

By their enlarging souls, which burst  
The bands and fetters round them set;  
By the free Pilgrim spirit nursed  
Within our inmost bosoms, yet,  
By all above, around, below,  
Be ours the indignant answer,- No!

No; guided by our country's laws,  
For truth, and right, and suffering man,  
Be ours to strive in Freedom's cause,  
As Christians may, as freemen can!  
Still pouring on unwilling ears  
That truth oppression only fears.

What! shall we guard our neighbor still,  
While woman shrieks beneath his rod,  
And while he trampels down at will  
The image of a common God?  
Shall watch and ward be round him set,  
Of Northern nerve and bayonet?

And shall we know and share with him  
The danger and the growing shame?  
And see our Freedom's light grow dim,  
Which should have filled the world with flame?  
And, writhing, feel, where'er we turn,  
A world's reproach around us burn?

Is't not enough that this is borne?  
And asks our haughty neighbor more?  
Must fetters which his slaves have worn  
Clank round the Yankee farmer's door?  
Must he be told, beside his plough,  
What he must speak, and when, and how?

Must he be told his freedom stands  
On Slavery's dark foundations strong;  
On breaking hearts and fettered hands,  
On robbery, and crime, and wrong?

That all his fathers taught is vain,-  
That Freedom's emblem is the chain?

Its life, its soul, from slavery drawn!  
False, foul, profane! Go, teach as well  
Of holy Truth from Falsehood born!  
Of Heaven refreshed by airs from Hell!  
Of Virtue in the arms of Vice!  
Of Demons planting Paradise!

Rail on, then, brethren of the South,  
Ye shall not hear the truth the less;  
No seal is on the Yankee's mouth,  
No fetter on the Yankee's press!  
From our Green Mountains to the sea,  
One voice shall thunder, We are free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Storm On Lake Asquam

A cloud, like that the old-time Hebrew saw  
On Carmel prophesying rain, began  
To lift itself o'er wooded Cardigan,  
Growing and blackening. Suddenly, a flaw

Of chill wind menaced; then a strong blast beat  
Down the long valley's murmuring pines, and woke  
The noon-dream of the sleeping lake, and broke  
Its smooth steel mirror at the mountains' feet.

Thunderous and vast, a fire-veined darkness swept  
Over the rough pine-bearded Asquam range;  
A wraith of tempest, wonderful and strange,  
From peak to peak the cloudy giant stepped.

One moment, as if challenging the storm,  
Chocorua's tall, defiant sentinel  
Looked from his watch-tower; then the shadow fell,  
And the wild rain-drift blotted out his form.

And over all the still unhidden sun,  
Weaving its light through slant-blown veils of rain,  
Smiled on the trouble, as hope smiles on pain;  
And, when the tumult and the strife were done,

With one foot on the lake and one on land,  
Framing within his crescent's tinted streak  
A far-off picture of the Melvin peak,  
Spent broken clouds the rainbow's angel spanned.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Summer By The Lakeside: Lake Winnepesaukee

I. NOON.

White clouds, whose shadows haunt the deep,  
Light mists, whose soft embraces keep  
The sunshine on the hills asleep!

O isles of calm! O dark, still wood!  
And stiller skies that overbrood  
Your rest with deeper quietude!

O shapes and hues, dim beckoning, through  
Yon mountain gaps, my longing view  
Beyond the purple and the blue,

To stiller sea and greener land,  
And softer lights and airs more bland,  
And skies,--the hollow of God's hand!

Transfused through you, O mountain friends!  
With mine your solemn spirit blends,  
And life no more hath separate ends.

I read each misty mountain sign,  
I know the voice of wave and pine,  
And I am yours, and ye are mine.

Life's burdens fall, its discords cease,  
I lapse into the glad release  
Of Nature's own exceeding peace.

O welcome calm of heart and mind!  
As falls yon fir-tree's loosened rind  
To leave a tenderer growth behind,

So fall the weary years away;  
A child again, my head I lay  
Upon the lap of this sweet day.

This western wind hath Lethean powers,  
Yon noonday cloud nepenthe showers,

The lake is white with lotus-flowers!

Even Duty's voice is faint and low,  
And slumberous Conscience, waking slow,  
Forgets her blotted scroll to show.

The Shadow which pursues us all,  
Whose ever-nearing steps appall,  
Whose voice we hear behind us call,--

That Shadow blends with mountain gray,  
It speaks but what the light waves say,--  
Death walks apart from Fear to-day!

Rocked on her breast, these pines and I  
Alike on Nature's love rely;  
And equal seems to live or die.

Assured that He whose presence fills  
With light the spaces of these hills  
No evil to His creatures wills,

The simple faith remains, that He  
Will do, whatever that may be,  
The best alike for man and tree.

What mosses over one shall grow,  
What light and life the other know,  
Unanxious, leaving Him to show.

## II. EVENING.

Yon mountain's side is black with night,  
While, broad-orbed, o'er its gleaming crown  
The moon, slow-rounding into sight,  
On the hushed inland sea looks down.

How start to light the clustering isles,  
Each silver-hemmed! How sharply show  
The shadows of their rocky piles,  
And tree-tops in the wave below!

How far and strange the mountains seem,  
Dim-looming through the pale, still light  
The vague, vast grouping of a dream,  
They stretch into the solemn night.

Beneath, lake, wood, and peopled vale,  
Hushed by that presence grand and grave,  
Are silent, save the cricket's wail,  
And low response of leaf and wave.

Fair scenes! whereto the Day and Night  
Make rival love, I leave ye soon,  
What time before the eastern light  
The pale ghost of the setting moon

Shall hide behind yon rocky spines,  
And the young archer, Morn, shall break  
His arrows on the mountain pines,  
And, golden-sandalled, walk the lake!

Farewell! around this smiling bay  
Gay-hearted Health, and Life in bloom,  
With lighter steps than mine, may stray  
In radiant summers yet to come.

But none shall more regretful leave  
These waters and these hills than I  
Or, distant, fonder dream how e'er  
Or dawn is painting wave and sky;

How rising moons shine sad and mild  
On wooded isle and silvering bay;  
Or setting suns beyond the piled  
And purple mountains lead the day;

Nor laughing girl, nor bearding boy,  
Nor full-pulsed manhood, lingering here,  
Shall add, to life's abounding joy,  
The charmed repose to suffering dear.

Still waits kind Nature to impart  
Her choicest gifts to such as gain

An entrance to her loving heart  
Through the sharp discipline of pain.

Forever from the Hand that takes  
One blessing from us others fall;  
And, soon or late, our Father makes  
His perfect recompense to all!

Oh, watched by Silence and the Night,  
And folded in the strong embrace  
Of the great mountains, with the light  
Of the sweet heavens upon thy face,

Lake of the Northland! keep thy dower  
Of beauty still, and while above  
Thy solemn mountains speak of power,  
Be thou the mirror of God's love.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Sumner

O Mother State! the winds of March  
Blew chill o'er Auburn's Field of God,  
Where, slow, beneath a leaden arch  
Of sky, thy mourning children trod.

And now, with all thy woods in leaf,  
Thy fields in flower, beside thy dead  
Thou sittest, in thy robes of grief,  
A Rachel yet uncomforted!

And once again the organ swells,  
Once more the flag is half-way hung,  
And yet again the mournful bells  
In all thy steeple-towers are rung.

And I, obedient to thy will,  
Have come a simple wreath to lay,  
Superfluous, on a grave that still  
Is sweet with all the flowers of May.

I take, with awe, the task assigned;  
It may be that my friend might miss,  
In his new sphere of heart and mind,  
Some token from my band in this.

By many a tender memory moved,  
Along the past my thought I send;  
The record of the cause he loved  
Is the best record of its friend.

No trumpet sounded in his ear,  
He saw not Sinai's cloud and flame,  
But never yet to Hebrew seer  
A clearer voice of duty came.

God said: 'Break thou these yokes; undo  
These heavy burdens. I ordain  
A work to last thy whole life through,  
A ministry of strife and pain.

'Forego thy dreams of lettered ease,  
Put thou the scholar's promise by,  
The rights of man are more than these.'  
He heard, and answered: 'Here am I!'

He set his face against the blast,  
His feet against the flinty shard,  
Till the hard service grew, at last,  
Its own exceeding great reward.

Lifted like Saul's above the crowd,  
Upon his kingly forehead fell  
The first sharp bolt of Slavery's cloud,  
Launched at the truth he urged so well.

Ah! never yet, at rack or stake,  
Was sorer loss made Freedom's gain,  
Than his, who suffered for her sake  
The beak-torn Titan's lingering pain!

The fixed star of his faith, through all  
Loss, doubt, and peril, shone the same;  
As through a night of storm, some tall,  
Strong lighthouse lifts its steady flame.

Beyond the dust and smoke he saw  
The sheaves of Freedom's large increase,  
The holy fanes of equal law,  
The New Jerusalem of peace.

The weak might fear, the worldling mock,  
The faint and blind of heart regret;  
All knew at last th' eternal rock  
On which his forward feet were set.

The subtlest scheme of compromise  
Was folly to his purpose bold;  
The strongest mesh of party lies  
Weak to the simplest truth he told.

One language held his heart and lip,

Straight onward to his goal he trod,  
And proved the highest statesmanship  
Obedience to the voice of God.

No wail was in his voice,--none heard,  
When treason's storm-cloud blackest grew,  
The weakness of a doubtful word;  
His duty, and the end, he knew.

The first to smite, the first to spare;  
When once the hostile ensigns fell,  
He stretched out hands of generous care  
To lift the foe he fought so well.

For there was nothing base or small  
Or craven in his soul's broad plan;  
Forgiving all things personal,  
He hated only wrong to man.

The old traditions of his State,  
The memories of her great and good,  
Took from his life a fresher date,  
And in himself embodied stood.

How felt the greed of gold and place,  
The venal crew that schemed and planned,  
The fine scorn of that haughty face,  
The spurning of that bribeless hand!

If than Rome's tribunes statelier  
He wore his senatorial robe,  
His lofty port was all for her,  
The one dear spot on all the globe.

If to the master's plea he gave  
The vast contempt his manhood felt,  
He saw a brother in the slave,--  
With man as equal man he dealt.

Proud was he? If his presence kept  
Its grandeur wheresoe'er he trod,  
As if from Plutarch's gallery stepped

The hero and the demigod,

None failed, at least, to reach his ear,  
Nor want nor woe appealed in vain;  
The homesick soldier knew his cheer,  
And blessed him from his ward of pain.

Safely his dearest friends may own  
The slight defects he never hid,  
The surface-blemish in the stone  
Of the tall, stately pyramid.

Suffice it that he never brought  
His conscience to the public mart;  
But lived himself the truth he taught,  
White-souled, clean-handed, pure of heart.

What if he felt the natural pride  
Of power in noble use, too true  
With thin humilities to hide  
The work he did, the lore he knew?

Was he not just? Was any wronged  
By that assured self-estimate?  
He took but what to him belonged,  
Unenvious of another's state.

Well might he heed the words he spake,  
And scan with care the written page  
Through which he still shall warm and wake  
The hearts of men from age to age.

Ah! who shall blame him now because  
He solaced thus his hours of pain!  
Should not the o'erworn thresher pause,  
And hold to light his golden grain?

No sense of humor dropped its oil  
On the hard ways his purpose went;  
Small play of fancy lightened toil;  
He spake alone the thing he meant.

He loved his books, the Art that hints  
A beauty veiled behind its own,  
The graver's line, the pencil's tints,  
The chisel's shape evoked from stone.

He cherished, void of selfish ends,  
The social courtesies that bless  
And sweeten life, and loved his friends  
With most unworldly tenderness.

But still his tired eyes rarely learned  
The glad relief by Nature brought;  
Her mountain ranges never turned  
His current of persistent thought.

The sea rolled chorus to his speech  
Three-banked like Latium's' tall trireme,  
With laboring oars; the grove and beach  
Were Forum and the Academe.

The sensuous joy from all things fair  
His strenuous bent of soul repressed,  
And left from youth to silvered hair  
Few hours for pleasure, none for rest.

For all his life was poor without,  
O Nature, make the last amends  
Train all thy flowers his grave about,  
And make thy singing-birds his friends!

Revive again, thou summer rain,  
The broken turf upon his bed  
Breathe, summer wind, thy tenderest strain  
Of low, sweet music overhead!

With calm and beauty symbolize  
The peace which follows long annoy,  
And lend our earth-bent, mourning eyes,  
Some hint of his diviner joy.

For safe with right and truth he is,  
As God lives he must live alway;

There is no end for souls like his,  
No night for children of the day!

Nor cant nor poor solitudes  
Made weak his life's great argument;  
Small leisure his for frames and moods  
Who followed Duty where she went.

The broad, fair fields of God he saw  
Beyond the bigot's narrow bound;  
The truths he moulded into law  
In Christ's beatitudes he found.

His state-craft was the Golden Rule,  
His right of vote a sacred trust;  
Clear, over threat and ridicule,  
All heard his challenge: 'Is it just?'

And when the hour supreme had come,  
Not for himself a thought he gave;  
In that last pang of martyrdom,  
His care was for the half-freed slave.

Not vainly dusky hands upbore,  
In prayer, the passing soul to heaven  
Whose mercy to His suffering poor  
Was service to the Master given.

Long shall the good State's annals tell,  
Her children's children long be taught,  
How, praised or blamed, he guarded well  
The trust he neither shunned nor sought.

If for one moment turned thy face,  
O Mother, from thy son, not long  
He waited calmly in his place  
The sure remorse which follows wrong.

Forgiven be the State he loved  
The one brief lapse, the single blot;  
Forgotten be the stain removed,  
Her righted record shows it not!

The lifted sword above her shield  
With jealous care shall guard his fame;  
The pine-tree on her ancient field  
To all the winds shall speak his name.

The marble image of her son  
Her loving hands shall yearly crown,  
And from her pictured Pantheon  
His grand, majestic face look down.

O State so passing rich before,  
Who now shall doubt thy highest claim?  
The world that counts thy jewels o'er  
Shall longest pause at Sumner's name!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Sunset On The Bearcamp

A gold fringe on the purpling hem  
Of hills the river runs,  
As down its long, green valley falls  
The last of summer's suns.

Along its tawny gravel-bed  
Broad-flowing, swift, and still,  
As if its meadow levels felt  
The hurry of the hill,  
Noiseless between its banks of green  
From curve to curve it slips;  
The drowsy maple-shadows rest  
Like fingers on its lips.

A waif from Carroll's wildest hills,  
Unstoried and unknown;  
The ursine legend of its name  
Prowls on its banks alone.  
Yet flowers as fair its slopes adorn  
As ever Yarrow knew,  
Or, under rainy Irish skies,  
By Spenser's Mulla grew;  
And through the gaps of leaning trees  
Its mountain cradle shows  
The gold against the amethyst,  
The green against the rose.

Touched by a light that hath no name,  
A glory never sung,  
Aloft on sky and mountain wall  
Are God's great pictures hung.  
How changed the summits vast and old!  
No longer granite-browed,  
They melt in rosy mist; the rock  
Is softer than the cloud;  
The valley holds its breath; no leaf  
Of all its elms is twirled  
The silence of eternity  
Seems falling on the world.

The pause before the breaking seals  
Of mystery is this;  
Yon miracle-play of night and day  
Makes dumb its witnesses.  
What unseen altar crowns the hills  
That reach up stair on stair?  
What eyes look through, what white wings fan  
These purple veils of air?  
What Presence from the heavenly heights  
To those of earth stoops down?  
Not vainly Hellas dreamed of gods  
On Ida's snowy crown!

Slow fades the vision of the sky,  
The golden water pales,  
And over all the valley-land  
A gray-winged vapor sails.  
I go the common way of all;  
The sunset fires will burn,  
The flowers will blow, the river flow,  
When I no more return.  
No whisper from the mountain pine  
Nor lapsing stream shall tell  
The stranger, treading where I tread,  
Of him who loved them well.

But beauty seen is never lost,  
God's colors all are fast;  
The glory of this sunset heaven  
Into my soul has passed,  
A sense of gladness unconfined  
To mortal date or clime;  
As the soul liveth, it shall live  
Beyond the years of time.  
Beside the mystic asphodels  
Shall bloom the home-born flowers,  
And new horizons flush and glow  
With sunset hues of ours.

Farewell! these smiling hills must wear  
Too soon their wintry frown,

And snow-cold winds from off them shake  
The maple's red leaves down.  
But I shall see a summer sun  
Still setting broad and low;  
The mountain slopes shall blush and bloom,  
The golden water flow.  
A lover's claim is mine on all  
I see to have and hold,--  
The rose-light of perpetual hills,  
And sunsets never cold!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Sweet Fern

The subtle power in perfume found  
Nor priest nor sibyl vainly learned;  
On Grecian shrine or Aztec mound  
No censer idly burned.

That power the old-time worships knew,  
The Corybantes' frenzied dance,  
The Pythian priestess swooning through  
The wonderland of trance.

And Nature holds, in wood and field,  
Her thousand sunlit censers still;  
To spells of flower and shrub we yield  
Against or with our will.

I climbed a hill path strange and new  
With slow feet, pausing at each turn;  
A sudden waft of west wind blew  
The breath of the sweet fern.

That fragrance from my vision swept  
The alien landscape; in its stead,  
Up fairer hills of youth I stepped,  
As light of heart as tread.

I saw my boyhood's lakelet shine  
Once more through rifts of woodland shade;  
I knew my river's winding line  
By morning mist betrayed.

With me June's freshness, lapsing brook,  
Murmurs of leaf and bee, the call  
Of birds, and one in voice and look  
In keeping with them all.

A fern beside the way we went  
She plucked, and, smiling, held it up,  
While from her hand the wild, sweet scent  
I drank as from a cup.

O potent witchery of smell!  
The dust-dry leaves to life return,  
And she who plucked them owns the spell  
And lifts her ghostly fern.

Or sense or spirit? Who shall say  
What touch the chord of memory thrills?  
It passed, and left the August day  
Ablaze on lonely hills.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Tauler

Tauler, the preacher, walked, one autumn day,  
Without the walls of Strasburg, by the Rhine,  
Pondering the solemn Miracle of Life;  
As one who, wandering in a starless night,  
Feels momentarily the jar of unseen waves,  
And hears the thunder of an unknown sea,  
Breaking along an unimagined shore.

And as he walked he prayed. Even the same  
Old prayer with which, for half a score of years,  
Morning, and noon, and evening, lip and heart  
Had groaned: 'Have pity upon me, Lord!  
Thou seest, while teaching others, I am blind.  
Send me a man who can direct my steps!'

Then, as he mused, he heard along his path  
A sound as of an old man's staff among  
The dry, dead linden-leaves; and, looking up,  
He saw a stranger, weak, and poor, and old.

'Peace be unto thee, father!' Tauler said,  
'God give thee a good day!' The old man raised  
Slowly his calm blue eyes. 'I thank thee, son;  
But all my days are good, and none are ill.'

Wondering thereat, the preacher spake again,  
'God give thee happy life.' The old man smiled,  
'I never am unhappy.'

Tauler laid  
His hand upon the stranger's coarse gray sleeve  
'Tell me, O father, what thy strange words mean.  
Surely man's days are evil, and his life  
Sad as the grave it leads to.' 'Nay, my son,  
Our times are in God's hands, and all our days  
Are as our needs; for shadow as for sun,  
For cold as heat, for want as wealth, alike  
Our thanks are due, since that is best which is;  
And that which is not, sharing not His life,

Is evil only as devoid of good.  
And for the happiness of which I spake,  
I find it in submission to his will,  
And calm trust in the holy Trinity  
Of Knowledge, Goodness, and Almighty Power.'

Silently wondering, for a little space,  
Stood the great preacher; then he spake as one  
Who, suddenly grappling with a haunting thought  
Which long has followed, whispering through the dark  
Strange terrors, drags it, shrieking, into light  
'What if God's will consign thee hence to Hell?'

'Then,' said the stranger, cheerily, 'be it so.  
What Hell may be I know not; this I know,-  
I cannot lose the presence of the Lord.  
One arm, Humility, takes hold upon  
His dear Humanity; the other, Love,  
Clasps his Divinity. So where I go  
He goes; and better fire-walled Hell with Him  
Than golden-gated Paradise without.'

Tears sprang in Tauler's eyes. A sudden light,  
Like the first ray which fell on chaos, clove  
Apart the shadow wherein he had walked  
Darkly at noon. And, as the strange old man  
Went his slow way, until his silver hair  
Set like the white moon where the hills of vine  
Slope to the Rhine, he bowed his head and said  
'My prayer is answered. God hath sent the man  
Long sought, to teach me, by his simple trust,  
Wisdom the weary schoolmen never knew.'

So, entering with a changed and cheerful step  
The city gates, he saw, far down the street,  
A mighty shadow break the light of noon,  
Which tracing backward till its airy lines  
Hardened to stony plinths, he raised his eyes  
O'er broad facade and lofty pediment,  
O'er architrave and frieze and sainted niche,  
Up the stone lace-work chiselled by the wise  
Erwin of Steinbach, dizzily up to where

In the noon-brightness the great Minster's tower,  
Jewelled with sunbeams on its mural crown,  
Rose like a visible prayer. 'Behold!' he said,  
'The stranger's faith made plain before mine eyes.  
As yonder tower outstretches to the earth  
The dark triangle of its shade alone  
When the clear day is shining on its top,  
So, darkness in the pathway of Man's life  
Is but the shadow of God's providence,  
By the great Sun of Wisdom cast thereon;  
And what is dark below is light in Heaven.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Telling The Bees

Here is the place; right over the hill  
Runs the path I took;  
You can see the gap in the old wall still,  
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,  
And the poplars tall;  
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,  
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;  
And down by the brink  
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,  
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,  
Heavy and slow;  
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,  
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There 's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;  
And the June sun warm  
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,  
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care  
From my Sunday coat  
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,  
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed, --  
To love, a year;  
Down through the beeches I looked at last  
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now, -- the slantwise rain  
Of light through the leaves,  
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,  
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before, --  
The house and the trees,  
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door, --  
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,  
Forward and back,  
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,  
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun  
Had the chill of snow;  
For I knew she was telling the bees of one  
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps  
For the dead to-day:  
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps  
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,  
With his cane to his chin,  
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still  
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since  
In my ear sounds on: --  
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!  
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The

Weary of jangling noises never stilled,  
The skeptic's sneer, the bigot's hate, the din  
Of clashing texts, the webs of creed men spin  
Round simple truth, the children grown who build  
With gilded cards their new Jerusalem,  
Busy, with sacerdotal tailorings  
And tinsel gauds, bedizening holy things,  
I turn, with glad and grateful heart, from them  
To the sweet story of the Florentine  
Immortal in her blameless maidenhood,  
Beautiful as God's angels and as good;  
Feeling that life, even now, may be divine  
With love no wrong can ever change to hate,  
No sin make less than all-compassionate!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Angel Of Patience

A FREE PARAPHRASE OF THE GERMAN.

To weary hearts, to mourning homes,  
God's meekest Angel gently comes  
No power has he to banish pain,  
Or give us back our lost again;  
And yet in tenderest love, our dear  
And Heavenly Father sends him here.

There's quiet in that Angel's glance,  
There 's rest in his still countenance!  
He mocks no grief with idle cheer,  
Nor wounds with words the mourner's ear;  
But ills and woes he may not cure  
He kindly trains us to endure.

Angel of Patience! sent to calm  
Our feverish brows with cooling palm;  
To lay the storms of hope and fear,  
And reconcile life's smile and tear;  
The throbs of wounded pride to still,  
And make our own our Father's will.

O thou who mournest on thy way,  
With longings for the close of day;  
He walks with thee, that Angel kind,  
And gently whispers, 'Be resigned  
Bear up, bear on, the end shall tell  
The dear Lord ordereth all things well!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Angels Of Buena Vista

Speak and tell us, our Ximena, looking northward far away,  
O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the Mexican array,  
Who is losing? who is winning? are they far or come they near?  
Look abroad, and tell us, sister, whither rolls the storm we hear.

Down the hills of Angostura still the storm of battle rolls;  
Blood is flowing, men are dying; God have mercy on their souls!  
'Who is losing? who is winning?' Over hill and over plain,  
I see but smoke of cannon clouding through the mountain rain.'

Holy Mother! keep our brothers! Look, Ximena, look once more.  
'Still I see the fearful whirlwind rolling darkly as before,  
Bearing on, in strange confusion, friend and foeman, foot and horse,  
Like some wild and troubled torrent sweeping down its mountain course.'

Look forth once more, Ximena! 'Ah! the smoke has rolled away;  
And I see the Northern rifles gleaming down the ranks of gray.  
Hark! that sudden blast of bugles! there the troop of Minon wheels;  
There the Northern horses thunder, with the cannon at their heels.

'Jesu, pity I how it thickens I now retreat and now advance!  
Bight against the blazing cannon shivers Puebla's charging lance!  
Down they go, the brave young riders; horse and foot together fall;  
Like a ploughshare in the fallow, through them ploughs the Northern ball.'

Nearer came the storm and nearer, rolling fast and frightful on!  
Speak, Ximena, speak and tell us, who has lost, and who has won?  
Alas! alas! I know not; friend and foe together fall,  
O'er the dying rush the living: pray, my sisters, for them all!

'Lo! the wind the smoke is lifting. Blessed Mother, save my brain!  
I can see the wounded crawling slowly out from heaps of slain.  
Now they stagger, blind and bleeding; now they fall, and strive to rise;  
Hasten, sisters, haste and save them, lest they die before our eyes!

'O my hearts love! O my dear one! lay thy poor head on my knee;  
Dost thou know the lips that kiss thee? Canst thou hear me? canst thou see?  
O my husband, brave and gentle! O my Bernal, look once more  
On the blessed cross before thee! Mercy! all is o'er!'

Dry thy tears, my poor Ximena; lay thy dear one down to rest;  
Let his hands be meekly folded, lay the cross upon his breast;  
Let his dirge be sung hereafter, and his funeral masses said;  
To-day, thou poor bereaved one, the living ask thy aid.

Close beside her, faintly moaning, fair and young, a soldier lay,  
Torn with shot and pierced with lances, bleeding slow his life away;  
But, as tenderly before him the lorn Ximena knelt,  
She saw the Northern eagle shining on his pistol-belt.

With a stifled cry of horror straight she turned away her head;  
With a sad and bitter feeling looked she back upon her dead;  
But she heard the youth's low moaning, and his struggling breath of pain,  
And she raised the cooling water to his parching lips again.

Whispered low the dying soldier, pressed her hand and faintly smiled;  
Was that pitying face his mother's? did she watch beside her child?  
All his stranger words with meaning her woman's heart supplied;  
With her kiss upon his forehead, 'Mother!' murmured he, and died!

'A bitter curse upon them, poor boy, who led thee forth,  
From some gentle, sad-eyed mother, weeping, lonely, in the North!'  
Spake the mournful Mexic woman, as she laid him with her dead,  
And turned to soothe the living, and bind the wounds which bled.

'Look forth once more, Ximena!' Like a cloud before the wind  
Rolls the battle down the mountains, leaving blood and death behind;  
Ah! they plead in vain for mercy; in the dust the wounded strive;  
'Hide your faces, holy angels! O thou Christ of God, forgive!'

Sink, O Night, among thy mountains! let the cool, gray shadows fall;  
Dying brothers, fighting demons, drop thy curtain over all!  
Through the thickening winter twilight, wide apart the battle rolled,  
In its sheath the sabre rested, and the cannon's lips grew cold.

But the noble Mexic women still their holy task pursued,  
Through that long, dark night of sorrow, worn and faint and lacking food.  
Over weak and suffering brothers, with a tender care they hung,  
And the dying foeman blessed them in a strange and Northern tongue.

Not wholly lost, O Father! is this evil world of ours;

Upward, through its blood and ashes, spring afresh the Eden flowers;  
From its smoking hell of battle, Love and Pity send their prayer,  
And still thy white-winged angels hover dimly in our air!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Answer

Spare me, dread angel of reproof,  
And let the sunshine weave to-day  
Its gold-threads in the warp and woof  
Of life so poor and gray.

Spare me awhile; the flesh is weak.  
These lingering feet, that fain would stray  
Among the flowers, shall some day seek  
The strait and narrow way.

Take off thy ever-watchful eye,  
The awe of thy rebuking frown;  
The dullest slave at times must sigh  
To fling his burdens down;

To drop his galley's straining oar,  
And press, in summer warmth and calm,  
The lap of some enchanted shore  
Of blossom and of balm.

Grudge not my life its hour of bloom,  
My heart its taste of long desire;  
This day be mine: be those to come  
As duty shall require.

The deep voice answered to my own,  
Smiting my selfish prayers away;  
'To-morrow is with God alone,  
And man hath but to-day.

'Say not, thy fond, vain heart within,  
The Father's arm shall still be wide,  
When from these pleasant ways of sin  
Thou turn'st at eventide.

'Cast thyself down,' the tempter saith,  
'And angels shall thy feet upbear.'  
He bids thee make a lie of faith,  
And blasphemy of prayer.

'Though God be good and free be heaven,  
No force divine can love compel;  
And, though the song of sins forgiven  
May sound through lowest hell,

'The sweet persuasion of His voice  
Respects thy sanctity of will.  
He giveth day: thou hast thy choice  
To walk in darkness still;

'As one who, turning from the light,  
Watches his own gray shadow fall,  
Doubting, upon his path of night,  
If there be day at all!

'No word of doom may shut thee out,  
No wind of wrath may downward whirl,  
No swords of fire keep watch about  
The open gates of pearl;

'A tenderer light than moon or sun,  
Than song of earth a sweeter hymn,  
May shine and sound forever on,  
And thou be deaf and dim.

'Forever round the Mercy-seat  
The guiding lights of Love shall burn;  
But what if, habit-bound, thy feet  
Shall lack the will to turn?

'What if thine eye refuse to see,  
Thine ear of Heaven's free welcome fail,  
And thou a willing captive be,  
Thyself thy own dark jail?

'Oh, doom beyond the saddest guess,  
As the long years of God unroll,  
To make thy dreary selfishness  
The prison of a soul!

'To doubt the love that fain would break

The fetters from thy self-bound limb;  
And dream that God can thee forsake  
As thou forsakest Him!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Barefoot Boy

Blessings on thee, little man,  
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!  
With thy turned-up pantaloons,  
And thy merry whistled tunes;  
With thy red lip, redder still  
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;  
With the sunshine on thy face,  
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;  
From my heart I give thee joy, -  
I was once a barefoot boy!  
Prince thou art, - the grown-up man  
Only is republican.  
Let the million-dollared ride!  
Barefoot, trudging at his side,  
Thou hast more than he can buy  
In the reach of ear and eye, -  
Outward sunshine, inward joy:  
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,  
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,  
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,  
Knowledge never learned of schools,  
Of the wild bee's morning chase,  
Of the wild-flower's time and place,  
Flight of fowl and habitude  
Of the tenants of the wood;  
How the tortoise bears his shell,  
How the woodchuck digs his cell,  
And the ground-mole sinks his well;  
How the robin feeds her young,  
How the oriole's nest is hung;  
Where the whitest lilies blow,  
Where the freshest berries grow,  
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,  
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;  
Of the black wasp's cunning way,  
Mason of his walls of clay,  
And the architectural plans

Of gray hornet artisans!  
For, eschewing books and tasks,  
Nature answers all he asks;  
Hand in hand with her he walks,  
Face to face with her he talks,  
Part and parcel of her joy, -  
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,  
Crowding years in one brief moon,  
When all things I heard or saw,  
Me, their master, waited for.  
I was rich in flowers and trees,  
Humming-birds and honey-bees;  
For my sport the squirrel played,  
Plied the snouted mole his spade;  
For my taste the blackberry cone  
Purpled over hedge and stone;  
Laughed the brook for my delight  
Through the day and through the night,  
Whispering at the garden wall,  
Talked with me from fall to fall;  
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,  
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,  
Mine, on bending orchard trees,  
Apples of Hesperides!  
Still as my horizon grew,  
Larger grew my riches too;  
All the world I saw or knew  
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,  
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,  
Like my bowl of milk and bread;  
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,  
On the door-stone, gray and rude!  
O'er me, like a regal tent,  
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,  
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,  
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;  
While for music came the play  
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;

And, to light the noisy choir,  
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.  
I was monarch: pomp and joy  
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,  
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!  
Though the flinty slopes be hard,  
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,  
Every morn shall lead thee through  
Fresh baptisms of the dew;  
Every evening from thy feet  
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:  
All too soon these feet must hide  
In the prison cells of pride,  
Lose the freedom of the sod,  
Like a colt's for work be shod,  
Made to tread the mills of toil,  
Up and down in ceaseless moil:  
Happy if their track be found  
Never on forbidden ground;  
Happy if they sink not in  
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.  
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,  
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Bartholdi Statue

The land, that, from the rule of kings,  
In freeing us, itself made free,  
Our Old World Sister, to us brings  
Her sculptured Dream of Liberty,

Unlike the shapes on Egypt's sands  
Uplifted by the toil-worn slave,  
On Freedom's soil with freemen's hands  
We rear the symbol free hands gave.

O France, the beautiful! to thee  
Once more a debt of love we owe  
In peace beneath thy Colors Three,  
We hail a later Rochambeau!

Rise, stately Symbol! holding forth  
Thy light and hope to all who sit  
In chains and darkness! Belt the earth  
With watch-fires from thy torch uplift!

Reveal the primal mandate still  
Which Chaos heard and ceased to be,  
Trace on mid-air th' Eternal Will  
In signs of fire: 'Let man be free!'

Shine far, shine free, a guiding light  
To Reason's ways and Virtue's aim,  
A lightning-flash the wretch to smite  
Who shields his license with thy name!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Battle Autumn Of 1862

The flags of war like storm birds fly,  
The charging trumpets blow;  
Yet rolls no thunder in the sky,  
No earthquake strives below.

And, calm and patient, Nature keeps  
Her ancient promises well,  
Though o'er her bloom and greenness sweeps,  
The battle's breath of hell.

And still she walks in golden hours,  
Through harvest-happy farms,  
And still she wears her fruits and flowers  
Like jewels on her arms.

What means the gladness of the plain,  
This joy of eve and morn,  
The mirth that shakes the bread of grain  
And yellow locks of corn?

Ah! eyes may well be full of tears,  
And hearts with hate are hot;  
But even-paced come round the years,  
And nature changes not.

She meets with smiles our bitter grief,  
With songs our groans of pain;  
She mocks with tints of flowers and leaf,  
The war-field's crimson stain.

Still, in the cannon's pause, we hear  
Her sweet thanksgiving psalm;  
Too near to God for doubt or fear,  
She shares the eternal calm.

She knows the seed lies safe below  
The fires that blast and burn;  
For all the tears of blood we sow  
She waits the rich return.

She sees with clearer eye than ours  
The good of suffering born,  
The hearts that blossom like her flowers  
And ripen like her corn.

Oh, give to us, in times like these,  
The vision of her eyes;  
And make her fields and fruited trees  
Our golden prophecies.

Oh, give to us her finer ear;  
Above this stormy din,  
We, too, would hear the bells of cheer  
Ring peace and freedom in.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Bay Of Seven Islands

FROM the green Amesbury hill which bears the name  
Of that half mythic ancestor of mine  
Who trod its slopes two hundred years ago,  
Down the long valley of the Merrimac,  
Midway between me and the river's mouth,  
I see thy home, set like an eagle's nest  
Among Deer Island's immemorial pines,  
Crowning the crag on which the sunset breaks  
Its last red arrow. Many a tale and song,  
Which thou hast told or sung, I call to mind,  
Softening with silvery mist the woods and hills,  
The out-thrust headlands and inreaching bays  
Of our northeastern coast-line, trending where  
The Gulf, midsummer, feels the chill blockade  
Of icebergs stranded at its northern gate.

To thee the echoes of the Island Sound  
Answer not vainly, nor in vain the moan  
Of the South Breaker prophesying storm.  
And thou hast listened, like myself, to men  
Sea-periled oft where Anticosti lies  
Like a fell spider in its web of fog,  
Or where the Grand Bank shallows with the wrecks  
Of sunken fishers, and to whom strange isles  
And frost-rimmed bays and trading stations seem  
Familiar as Great Neck and Kettle Cove,  
Nubble and Boon, the common names of home.  
So let me offer thee this lay of mine,  
Simple and homely, lacking much thy play  
Of color and of fancy. If its theme  
And treatment seem to thee befitting youth  
Rather than age, let this be my excuse  
It has beguiled some heavy hours and called  
Some pleasant memories up; and, better still,  
Occasion lent me for a kindly word  
To one who is my neighbor and my friend.

.....

The skipper sailed out of the harbor mouth,  
Leaving the apple-bloom of the South  
For the ice of the Eastern seas,  
In his fishing schooner Breeze.

Handsome and brave and young was he,  
And the maids of Newbury sighed to see  
His lessening white sail fall  
Under the sea's blue wall.

Through the Northern Gulf and the misty screen  
Of the isles of Mingan and Madeleine,  
St. Paul's and Blanc Sablon,  
The little Breeze sailed on,

Backward and forward, along the shore  
Of lorn and desolate Labrador,  
And found at last her way  
To the Seven Islands Bay.

The little hamlet, nestling below  
Great hills white with lingering snow,  
With its tin-roofed chapel stood  
Half hid in the dwarf spruce wood;

Green-turfed, flower-sown, the last outpost  
Of summer upon the dreary coast,  
With its gardens small and spare,  
Sad in the frosty air.

Hard by where the skipper's schooner lay,  
A fisherman's cottage looked away  
Over isle and bay, and behind  
On mountains dim-defined.

And there twin sisters, fair and young,  
Laughed with their stranger guest, and sung  
In their native tongue the lays  
Of the old Provencal days.

Alike were they, save the faint outline  
Of a scar on Suzette's forehead fine;

And both, it so befell,  
Loved the heretic stranger well.

Both were pleasant to look upon,  
But the heart of the skipper clave to one;  
Though less by his eye than heart  
He knew the twain apart.

Despite of alien race and creed,  
Well did his wooing of Marguerite speed;  
And the mother's wrath was vain  
As the sister's jealous pain.

The shrill-tongued mistress her house forbade,  
And solemn warning was sternly said  
By the black-robed priest, whose word  
As law the hamlet heard.

But half by voice and half by signs  
The skipper said, 'A warm sun shines  
On the green-banked Merrimac;  
Wait, watch, till I come back.

'And when you see, from my mast head,  
The signal fly of a kerchief red,  
My boat on the shore shall wait;  
Come, when the night is late.'

Ah! weighed with childhood's haunts and friends,  
And all that the home sky overbends,  
Did ever young love fail  
To turn the trembling scale?

Under the night, on the wet sea sands,  
Slowly unclasped their plighted hands  
One to the cottage hearth,  
And one to his sailor's berth.

What was it the parting lovers heard?  
Nor leaf, nor ripple, nor wing of bird,  
But a listener's stealthy tread  
On the rock-moss, crisp and dead.

He weighed his anchor, and fished once more  
By the black coast-line of Labrador;  
And by love and the north wind driven,  
Sailed back to the Islands Seven.

In the sunset's glow the sisters twain  
Saw the Breeze come sailing in again;  
Said Suzette, 'Mother dear,  
The heretic's sail is here.'

'Go, Marguerite, to your room, and hide;  
Your door shall be bolted!' the mother cried:  
While Suzette, ill at ease,  
Watched the red sign of the Breeze.

At midnight, down to the waiting skiff  
She stole in the shadow of the cliff;  
And out of the Bay's mouth ran  
The schooner with maid and man.

And all night long, on a restless bed,  
Her prayers to the Virgin Marguerite said  
And thought of her lover's pain  
Waiting for her in vain.

Did he pace the sands? Did he pause to hear  
The sound of her light step drawing near?  
And, as the slow hours passed,  
Would he doubt her faith at last?

But when she saw through the misty pane,  
The morning break on a sea of rain,  
Could even her love avail  
To follow his vanished sail?

Meantime the Breeze, with favoring wind,  
Left the rugged Moistic hills behind,  
And heard from an unseen shore  
The falls of Manitou roar.

On the morrow's morn, in the thick, gray weather

They sat on the reeling deck together,  
Lover and counterfeit,  
Of hapless Marguerite.

With a lover's hand, from her forehead fair  
He smoothed away her jet-black hair.  
What was it his fond eyes met?  
The scar of the false Suzette!

Fiercely he shouted: 'Bear away  
East by north for Seven Isles Bay!'  
The maiden wept and prayed,  
But the ship her helm obeyed.

Once more the Bay of the Isles they found  
They heard the bell of the chapel sound,  
And the chant of the dying sung  
In the harsh, wild Indian tongue.

A feeling of mystery, change, and awe  
Was in all they heard and all they saw  
Spell-bound the hamlet lay  
In the hush of its lonely bay.

And when they came to the cottage door,  
The mother rose up from her weeping sore,  
And with angry gestures met  
The scared look of Suzette.

'Here is your daughter,' the skipper said;  
'Give me the one I love instead.'  
But the woman sternly spake;  
'Go, see if the dead will wake!'

He looked. Her sweet face still and white  
And strange in the noonday taper light,  
She lay on her little bed,  
With the cross at her feet and head.

In a passion of grief the strong man bent  
Down to her face, and, kissing it, went  
Back to the waiting Breeze,

Back to the mournful seas.

Never again to the Merrimac  
And Newbury's homes that bark came back.  
Whether her fate she met  
On the shores of Carraquette,

Miscou, or Tracadie, who can say?  
But even yet at Seven Isles Bay  
Is told the ghostly tale  
Of a weird, unspoken sail,

In the pale, sad light of the Northern day  
Seen by the blanketed Montagnais,  
Or squaw, in her small kyack,  
Crossing the spectre's track.

On the deck a maiden wrings her hands;  
Her likeness kneels on the gray coast sands;  
One in her wild despair,  
And one in the trance of prayer.

She flits before no earthly blast,  
The red sign fluttering from her mast,  
Over the solemn seas,  
The ghost of the schooner Breeze!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Birthday Wreath

Blossom and greenness, making all  
The winter birthday tropical,  
And the plain Quaker parlors gay,  
Have gone from bracket, stand, and wall;  
We saw them fade, and droop, and fall,  
And laid them tenderly away.

White virgin lilies, mignonette,  
Blown rose, and pink, and violet,  
A breath of fragrance passing by;  
Visions of beauty and decay,  
Colors and shapes that could not stay,  
The fairest, sweetest, first to die.

But still this rustic wreath of mine,  
Of acorned oak and needled pine,  
And lighter growths of forest lands,  
Woven and wound with careful pains,  
And tender thoughts, and prayers, remains,  
As when it dropped from love's dear hands.

And not unfitly garlanded,  
Is he, who, country-born and bred,  
Welcomes the sylvan ring which gives  
A feeling of old summer days,  
The wild delight of woodland ways,  
The glory of the autumn leaves.

And, if the flowery meed of song  
To other bards may well belong,  
Be his, who from the farm-field spoke  
A word for Freedom when her need  
Was not of dulcimer and reed.  
This Isthmian wreath of pine and oak.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Book

Gallery of sacred pictures manifold,  
A minster rich in holy effigies,  
And bearing on entablature and frieze  
The hieroglyphic oracles of old.  
Along its transept aureoled martyrs sit;  
And the low chancel side-lights half acquaint  
The eye with shrines of prophet, bard, and saint,  
Their age-dimmed tablets traced in doubtful writ!  
But only when on form and word obscure  
Falls from above the white supernal light  
We read the mystic characters aright,  
And life informs the silent portraiture,  
Until we pause at last, awe-held, before  
The One ineffable Face, love, wonder, and adore.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Branded Hand

WELCOME home again, brave seaman! with thy thoughtful brow and gray,  
And the old heroic spirit of our earlier, better day;  
With that front of calm endurance, on whose steady nerve in vain  
Pressed the iron of the prison, smote the fiery shafts of pain!  
Is the tyrant's brand upon thee? Did the brutal cravens aim  
To make God's truth thy falsehood, His holiest work thy shame?  
When, all blood-quenched, from the torture the iron was withdrawn,  
How laughed their evil angel the baffled fools to scorn!  
They change to wrong the duty which God hath written out  
On the great heart of humanity, too legible for doubt!  
They, the loathsome moral lepers, blotched from footsole up to crown,  
Give to shame what God hath given unto honor and renown!  
Why, that brand is highest honor! than its traces never yet  
Upon old armorial hatchments was a prouder blazon set;  
And thy unborn generations, as they tread our rocky strand,  
Shall tell with pride the story of their father's branded hand!  
As the Templar home was welcome, bearing back from Syrian wars  
The scars of Arab lances and of Paynim scimitars,  
The pallor of the prison, and the shackle's crimson span,  
So we meet thee, so we greet thee, truest friend of God and man.  
He suffered for the ransom of the dear Redeemer's grave,  
Thou for His living presence in the bound and bleeding slave;  
He for a soil no longer by the feet of angels trod,  
Thou for the true Shechinah, the present home of God!  
For, while the jurist, sitting with the slave-whip o'er him swung,  
From the tortured truths of freedom the lie of slavery wrung,  
And the solemn priest to Moloch, on each God-deserted shrine,  
Broke the bondman's heart for bread, poured the bondman's blood for wine;  
While the multitude in blindness to a far-off Saviour knelt  
And spurned, the while, the temple where a present Saviour dwelt;  
Thou beheld'st Him in the task-field, in the prison shadows dim,  
And thy mercy to the bondman, it was mercy unto Him!  
In thy lone and long night-watches, sky above and wave below,  
Thou didst learn a higher wisdom than the babbling schoolmen know;  
God's stars and silence taught thee, as His angels only can,  
That the one sole sacred thing beneath the cope of heaven is Man!  
That he who treads profanely on the scrolls of law and creed,  
In the depth of God's great goodness may find mercy in his need;  
But woe to him who crushes the soul with chain and rod,

And herds with lower natures the awful form of God!  
Then lift that manly right-hand, bold ploughman of the wave!  
Its branded palm shall prophesy, 'Salvation to the Slave!'  
Hold up its fire-wrought language, that whoso reads may feel  
His heart swell strong within him, his sinews change to steel.  
Hold it up before our sunshine, up against our Northern air;  
Ho! men of Massachusetts, for the love of God, look there!  
Take it henceforth for your standard, like the Bruce's heart of yore,  
In the dark strife closing round ye, let that hand be seen before!  
And the masters of the slave-land shall tremble at that sign,  
When it points its finger Southward along the Puritan line  
Can the craft of State avail them? Can a Christless church withstand,  
In the van of Freedom's onset, the coming of that hand?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Brewing Of Soma

The fagots blazed, the caldron's smoke  
Up through the green wood curled;  
'Bring honey from the hollow oak,  
Bring milky sap,' the brewers spoke,  
In the childhood of the world.

And brewed they well or brewed they ill,  
The priests thrust in their rods,  
First tasted, and then drank their fill,  
And shouted, with one voice and will,  
'Behold the drink of gods!'

They drank, and to! in heart and brain  
A new, glad life began;  
The gray of hair grew young again,  
The sick man laughed away his pain,  
The cripple leaped and ran.

'Drink, mortals, what the gods have sent,  
Forget your long annoy.'  
So sang the priests. From tent to tent  
The Soma's sacred madness went,  
A storm of drunken joy.

Then knew each rapt inebriate  
A winged and glorious birth,  
Soared upward, with strange joy elate,  
Beat, with dazed head, Varuna's gate,  
And, sobered, sank to earth.

The land with Soma's praises rang;  
On Gihon's banks of shade  
Its hymns the dusky maidens sang;  
In joy of life or mortal pang  
All men to Soma prayed.

The morning twilight of the race  
Sends down these matin psalms;  
And still with wondering eyes we trace

The simple prayers to Soma's grace,  
That Vedic verse embalms.

As in that child-world's early year,  
Each after age has striven  
By music, incense, vigils drear,  
And trance, to bring the skies more near,  
Or lift men up to heaven!

Some fever of the blood and brain,  
Some self-exalting spell,  
The scourger's keen delight of pain,  
The Dervish dance, the Orphic strain,  
The wild-haired Bacchant's yell,--

The desert's hair-grown hermit sunk  
The saner brute below;  
The naked Santon, hashish-drunk,  
The cloister madness of the monk,  
The fakir's torture-show!

And yet the past comes round again,  
And new doth old fulfil;  
In sensual transports wild as vain  
We brew in many a Christian fane  
The heathen Soma still!

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,  
Forgive our foolish ways!  
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,  
In purer lives Thy service find,  
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard  
Beside the Syrian sea  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us, like them, without a word,  
Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!  
O calm of hills above,  
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee

The silence of eternity  
Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all  
Our words and works that drown  
The tender whisper of Thy call,  
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall  
As fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire  
Thy coolness and Thy balm;  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still, small voice of calm!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Bridal Of Pennacook

We had been wandering for many days  
Through the rough northern country. We had seen  
The sunset, with its bars of purple cloud,  
Like a new heaven, shine upward from the lake  
Of Winnepiseogee; and had felt  
The sunrise breezes, midst the leafy isles  
Which stoop their summer beauty to the lips  
Of the bright waters. We had checked our steeds,  
Silent with wonder, where the mountain wall  
Is piled to heaven; and, through the narrow rift  
Of the vast rocks, against whose rugged feet  
Beats the mad torrent with perpetual roar,  
Where noonday is as twilight, and the wind  
Comes burdened with the everlasting moan  
Of forests and of far-off waterfalls,  
We had looked upward where the summer sky,  
Tasselled with clouds light-woven by the sun,  
Sprung its blue arch above the abutting crags  
O'er-roofing the vast portal of the land  
Beyond the wall of mountains. We had passed  
The high source of the Saco; and bewildered  
In the dwarf spruce-belts of the Crystal Hills,  
Had heard above us, like a voice in the cloud,  
The horn of Fabyan sounding; and atop  
Of old Agiochook had seen the mountains'  
Piled to the northward, shagged with wood, and thick  
As meadow mole-hills,—the far sea of Casco,  
A white gleam on the horizon of the east;  
Fair lakes, embosomed in the woods and hills;  
Moosehillock's mountain range, and Kearsarge  
Lifting his granite forehead to the sun!

And we had rested underneath the oaks  
Shadowing the bank, whose grassy spires are shaken  
By the perpetual beating of the falls  
Of the wild Ammonoosuc. We had tracked  
The winding Pemigewasset, overhung  
By beechen shadows, whitening down its rocks,  
Or lazily gliding through its intervals,

From waving rye-fields sending up the gleam  
Of sunlit waters. We had seen the moon  
Rising behind Umbagog's eastern pines,  
Like a great Indian camp-fire; and its beams  
At midnight spanning with a bridge of silver  
The Merrimac by Uncanoonuc's falls.

There were five souls of us whom travel's chance  
Had thrown together in these wild north hills  
A city lawyer, for a month escaping  
From his dull office, where the weary eye  
Saw only hot brick walls and close thronged streets;  
Briefless as yet, but with an eye to see  
Life's sunniest side, and with a heart to take  
Its chances all as godsend; and his brother,  
Pale from long pulpit studies, yet retaining  
The warmth and freshness of a genial heart,  
Whose mirror of the beautiful and true,  
In Man and Nature, was as yet undimmed  
By dust of theologic strife, or breath  
Of sect, or cobwebs of scholastic lore;  
Like a clear crystal calm of water, taking  
The hue and image of o'erleaning flowers,  
Sweet human faces, white clouds of the noon,  
Slant starlight glimpses through the dewy leaves,  
And tenderest moonrise. 'Twas, in truth, a study,  
To mark his spirit, alternating between  
A decent and professional gravity  
And an irreverent mirthfulness, which often  
Laughed in the face of his divinity,  
Plucked off the sacred ephod, quite unshrined  
The oracle, and for the pattern priest  
Left us the man. A shrewd, sagacious merchant,  
To whom the soiled sheet found in Crawford's inn,  
Giving the latest news of city stocks  
And sales of cotton, had a deeper meaning  
Than the great presence of the awful mountains  
Glorified by the sunset; and his daughter,  
A delicate flower on whom had blown too long  
Those evil winds, which, sweeping from the ice  
And winnowing the fogs of Labrador,  
Shed their cold blight round Massachusetts Bay,

With the same breath which stirs Spring's opening leaves  
And lifts her half-formed flower-bell on its stem,  
Poisoning our seaside atmosphere.

It chanced that as we turned upon our homeward way,  
A drear northeastern storm came howling up  
The valley of the Saco; and that girl  
Who had stood with us upon Mount Washington,  
Her brown locks ruffled by the wind which whirled  
In gusts around its sharp, cold pinnacle,  
Who had joined our gay trout-fishing in the streams  
Which lave that giant's feet; whose laugh was heard  
Like a bird's carol on the sunrise breeze  
Which swelled our sail amidst the lake's green islands,  
Shrank from its harsh, chill breath, and visibly drooped  
Like a flower in the frost. So, in that quiet inn  
Which looks from Conway on the mountains piled  
Heavily against the horizon of the north,  
Like summer thunder-clouds, we made our home  
And while the mist hung over dripping hills,  
And the cold wind-driven rain-drops all day long  
Beat their sad music upon roof and pane,  
We strove to cheer our gentle invalid.

The lawyer in the pauses of the storm  
Went angling down the Saco, and, returning,  
Recounted his adventures and mishaps;  
Gave us the history of his scaly clients,  
Mingling with ludicrous yet apt citations  
Of barbarous law Latin, passages  
From Izaak Walton's Angler, sweet and fresh  
As the flower-skirted streams of Staffordshire,  
Where, under aged trees, the southwest wind  
Of soft June mornings fanned the thin, white hair  
Of the sage fisher. And, if truth be told,  
Our youthful candidate forsook his sermons,  
His commentaries, articles and creeds,  
For the fair page of human loveliness,  
The missal of young hearts, whose sacred text  
Is music, its illumining, sweet smiles.  
He sang the songs she loved; and in his low,  
Deep, earnest voice, recited many a page

Of poetry, the holiest, tenderest lines  
Of the sad bard of Olney, the sweet songs,  
Simple and beautiful as Truth and Nature,  
Of him whose whitened locks on Rydal Mount  
Are lifted yet by morning breezes blowing  
From the green hills, immortal in his lays.  
And for myself, obedient to her wish,  
I searched our landlord's proffered library,—  
A well-thumbed Bunyan, with its nice wood pictures  
Of scaly fiends and angels not unlike them;  
Watts' unmelodious psalms; Astrology's  
Last home, a musty pile of almanacs,  
And an old chronicle of border wars  
And Indian history. And, as I read  
A story of the marriage of the Chief  
Of Saugus to the dusky Weetamoo,  
Daughter of Passaconaway, who dwelt  
In the old time upon the Merrimac,  
Our fair one, in the playful exercise  
Of her prerogative,—the right divine  
Of youth and beauty,—bade us versify  
The legend, and with ready pencil sketched  
Its plan and outlines, laughingly assigning  
To each his part, and barring our excuses  
With absolute will. So, like the cavaliers  
Whose voices still are heard in the Romance  
Of silver-tongued Boccaccio, on the banks  
Of Arno, with soft tales of love beguiling  
The ear of languid beauty, plague-exiled  
From stately Florence, we rehearsed our rhymes  
To their fair auditor, and shared by turns  
Her kind approval and her playful censure.

It may be that these fragments owe alone  
To the fair setting of their circumstances,—  
The associations of time, scene, and audience,—  
Their place amid the pictures which fill up  
The chambers of my memory. Yet I trust  
That some, who sigh, while wandering in thought,  
Pilgrims of Romance o'er the olden world,  
That our broad land,—our sea-like lakes and mountains  
Piled to the clouds, our rivers overhung

By forests which have known no other change  
For ages than the budding and the fall  
Of leaves, our valleys lovelier than those  
Which the old poets sang of,—should but figure  
On the apocryphal chart of speculation  
As pastures, wood-lots, mill-sites, with the privileges,  
Rights, and appurtenances, which make up  
A Yankee Paradise, unsung, unknown,  
To beautiful tradition; even their names,  
Whose melody yet lingers like the last  
Vibration of the red man's requiem,  
Exchanged for syllables significant,  
Of cotton-mill and rail-car, will look kindly  
Upon this effort to call up the ghost  
Of our dim Past, and listen with pleased ear  
To the responses of the questioned Shade.

## I. THE MERRIMAC

O child of that white-crested mountain whose springs  
Gush forth in the shade of the cliff-eagle's wings,  
Down whose slopes to the lowlands thy wild waters shine,  
Leaping gray walls of rock, flashing through the dwarf pine;  
From that cloud-curtained cradle so cold and so lone,  
From the arms of that wintry-locked mother of stone,  
By hills hung with forests, through vales wide and free,  
Thy mountain-born brightness glanced down to the sea.

No bridge arched thy waters save that where the trees  
Stretched their long arms above thee and kissed in the breeze:  
No sound save the lapse of the waves on thy shores,  
The plunging of otters, the light dip of oars.

Green-tufted, oak-shaded, by Amoskeag's fall  
Thy twin Uncanoonucs rose stately and tall,  
Thy Nashua meadows lay green and unshorn,  
And the hills of Pentucket were tasselled with corn.  
But thy Pennacook valley was fairer than these,  
And greener its grasses and taller its trees,  
Ere the sound of an axe in the forest had rung,  
Or the mower his scythe in the meadows had swung.

In their sheltered repose looking out from the wood  
The bark-built wigwams of Pennacook stood;  
There glided the corn-dance, the council-fire shone,  
And against the red war-post the hatchet was thrown.

There the old smoked in silence their pipes, and the young  
To the pike and the white-perch their baited lines flung;  
There the boy shaped his arrows, and there the shy maid  
Wove her many-hued baskets and bright wampum braid.

O Stream of the Mountains! if answer of thine  
Could rise from thy waters to question of mine,  
Methinks through the din of thy thronged banks a moan  
Of sorrow would swell for the days which have gone.

Not for thee the dull jar of the loom and the wheel,  
The gliding of shuttles, the ringing of steel;  
But that old voice of waters, of bird and of breeze,  
The dip of the wild-fowl, the rustling of trees.

## II. THE BASHABA

Lift we the twilight curtains of the Past,  
And, turning from familiar sight and sound,  
Sadly and full of reverence let us cast  
A glance upon Tradition's shadowy ground,  
Led by the few pale lights which, glimmering round  
That dim, strange land of Eld, seem dying fast;  
And that which history gives not to the eye,  
The faded coloring of Time's tapestry,  
Let Fancy, with her dream-dipped brush, supply.

Roof of bark and walls of pine,  
Through whose chinks the sunbeams shine,  
Tracing many a golden line  
On the ample floor within;  
Where, upon that earth-floor stark,  
Lay the gaudy mats of bark,  
With the bear's hide, rough and dark,  
And the red-deer's skin.

Window-tracery, small and slight,  
Woven of the willow white,  
Lent a dimly checkered light;  
And the night-stars glimmered down,  
Where the lodge-fire's heavy smoke,  
Slowly through an opening broke,  
In the low roof, ribbed with oak,  
Sheathed with hemlock brown.

Gloomed behind the changeless shade  
By the solemn pine-wood made;  
Through the rugged palisade,  
In the open foreground planted,  
Glimpses came of rowers rowing,  
Stir of leaves and wild-flowers blowing,  
Steel-like gleams of water flowing,  
In the sunlight slanted.

Here the mighty Bashaba  
Held his long-unquestioned sway,  
From the White Hills, far away,  
To the great sea's sounding shore;  
Chief of chiefs, his regal word  
All the river Sachems heard,  
At his call the war-dance stirred,  
Or was still once more.

There his spoils of chase and war,  
Jaw of wolf and black bear's paw,  
Panther's skin and eagle's claw,  
Lay beside his axe and bow;  
And, adown the roof-pole hung,  
Loosely on a snake-skin strung,  
In the smoke his scalp-locks swung  
Grimly to and fro.

Nightly down the river going,  
Swifter was the hunter's rowing,  
When he saw that lodge-fire, glowing  
O'er the waters still and red;  
And the squaw's dark eye burned brighter,  
And she drew her blanket tighter,

As, with quicker step and lighter,  
From that door she fled.

For that chief had magic skill,  
And a Panisee's dark will,  
Over powers of good and ill,  
Powers which bless and powers which ban;  
Wizard lord of Pennacook,  
Chiefs upon their war-path shook,  
When they met the steady look  
Of that wise dark man.

Tales of him the gray squaw told,  
When the winter night-wind cold  
Pierced her blanket's thickest fold,  
And her fire burned low and small,  
Till the very child abed,  
Drew its bear-skin over bead,  
Shrinking from the pale lights shed  
On the trembling wall.

All the subtle spirits hiding  
Under earth or wave, abiding  
In the caverned rock, or riding  
Misty clouds or morning breeze;  
Every dark intelligence,  
Secret soul, and influence  
Of all things which outward sense  
Feels, or bears, or sees,—

These the wizard's skill confessed,  
At his bidding banned or blessed,  
Stormful woke or lulled to rest  
Wind and cloud, and fire and flood;  
Burned for him the drifted snow,  
Bade through ice fresh lilies blow,  
And the leaves of summer grow  
Over winter's wood!

Not untrue that tale of old!  
Now, as then, the wise and bold  
All the powers of Nature hold

Subject to their kingly will;  
From the wondering crowds ashore,  
Treading life's wild waters o'er,  
As upon a marble floor,  
Moves the strong man still.

Still, to such, life's elements  
With their sterner laws dispense,  
And the chain of consequence  
Broken in their pathway lies;  
Time and change their vassals making,  
Flowers from icy pillows waking,  
Tresses of the sunrise shaking  
Over midnight skies.

Still, to th' earnest soul, the sun  
Rests on towered Gibeon,  
And the moon of Ajalon  
Lights the battle-grounds of life;  
To his aid the strong reverses  
Hidden powers and giant forces,  
And the high stars, in their courses,  
Mingle in his strife!

### III. THE DAUGHTER

The soot-black brows of men, the yell  
Of women thronging round the bed,  
The tinkling charm of ring and shell,  
The Powah whispering o'er the dead!

All these the Sachem's home had known,  
When, on her journey long and wild  
To the dim World of Souls, alone,  
In her young beauty passed the mother of his child.

Three bow-shots from the Sachem's dwelling  
They laid her in the walnut shade,  
Where a green hillock gently swelling  
Her fitting mound of burial made.  
There trailed the vine in summer hours,  
The tree-perched squirrel dropped his shell,—

On velvet moss and pale-hued flowers,  
Woven with leaf and spray, the softened sunshine fell!

The Indian's heart is hard and cold,  
It closes darkly o'er its care,  
And formed in Nature's sternest mould,  
Is slow to feel, and strong to bear.  
The war-paint on the Sachem's face,  
Unwet with tears, shone fierce and red,  
And still, in battle or in chase,  
Dry leaf and snow-rime crisped beneath his foremost tread.

Yet when her name was heard no more,  
And when the robe her mother gave,  
And small, light moccasin she wore,  
Had slowly wasted on her grave,  
Unmarked of him the dark maids sped  
Their sunset dance and moonlit play;  
No other shared his lonely bed,  
No other fair young head upon his bosom lay.

A lone, stern man. Yet, as sometimes  
The tempest-smitten tree receives  
From one small root the sap which climbs  
Its topmost spray and crowning leaves,  
So from his child the Sachem drew  
A life of Love and Hope, and felt  
His cold and rugged nature through  
The softness and the warmth of her young being melt.

A laugh which in the woodland rang  
Bemocking April's gladdest bird,—  
A light and graceful form which sprang  
To meet him when his step was heard,—  
Eyes by his lodge-fire flashing dark,  
Small fingers stringing bead and shell  
Or weaving mats of bright-hued bark,—  
With these the household-god had graced his wigwam well.

Child of the forest! strong and free,  
Slight-robed, with loosely flowing hair,  
She swam the lake or climbed the tree,

Or struck the flying bird in air.  
O'er the heaped drifts of winter's moon  
Her snow-shoes tracked the hunter's way;  
And dazzling in the summer noon  
The blade of her light oar threw off its shower of spray!

Unknown to her the rigid rule,  
The dull restraint, the chiding frown,  
The weary torture of the school,  
The taming of wild nature down.  
Her only lore, the legends told  
Around the hunter's fire at night;  
Stars rose and set, and seasons rolled,  
Flowers bloomed and snow-flakes fell, unquestioned in her sight.

Unknown to her the subtle skill  
With which the artist-eye can trace  
In rock and tree and lake and hill  
The outlines of divinest grace;  
Unknown the fine soul's keen unrest,  
Which sees, admires, yet yearns always;  
Too closely on her mother's breast  
To note her smiles of love the child of Nature lay!

It is enough for such to be  
Of common, natural things a part,  
To feel, with bird and stream and tree,  
The pulses of the same great heart;  
But we, from Nature long exiled,  
In our cold homes of Art and Thought  
Grieve like the stranger-tended child,  
Which seeks its mother's arms, and sees but feels them not.

The garden rose may richly bloom  
In cultured soil and genial air,  
To cloud the light of Fashion's room  
Or droop in Beauty's midnight hair;  
In lonelier grace, to sun and dew  
The sweetbrier on the hillside shows  
Its single leaf and fainter hue,  
Untrained and wildly free, yet still a sister rose!

Thus o'er the heart of Weetamoo  
Their mingling shades of joy and ill  
The instincts of her nature threw;  
The savage was a woman still.  
Midst outlines dim of maiden schemes,  
Heart-colored prophecies of life,  
Rose on the ground of her young dreams  
The light of a new home, the lover and the wife.

#### IV. THE WEDDING

Cool and dark fell the autumn night,  
But the Bashaba's wigwam glowed with light,  
For down from its roof, by green withes hung,  
Flaring and smoking the pine-knots swung.

And along the river great wood-fires  
Shot into the night their long, red spires,  
Showing behind the tall, dark wood,  
Flashing before on the sweeping flood.

In the changeful wind, with shimmer and shade,  
Now high, now low, that firelight played,  
On tree-leaves wet with evening dews,  
On gliding water and still canoes.

The trapper that night on Turee's brook,  
And the weary fisher on Contoocook,  
Saw over the marshes, and through the pine,  
And down on the river, the dance-lights shine.  
For the Saugus Sachem had come to woo  
The Bashaba's daughter Weetamoo,  
And laid at her father's feet that night  
His softest furs and wampum white.

From the Crystal Hills to the far southeast  
The river Sagamores came to the feast;  
And chiefs whose homes the sea-winds shook  
Sat down on the mats of Pennacook.

They came from Sunapee's shore of rock,

From the snowy sources of Snooganock,  
And from rough Coos whose thick woods shake  
Their pine-cones in Umbagog Lake.

From Ammonoosuc's mountain pass,  
Wild as his home, came Chepewass;  
And the Keenomps of the bills which throw  
Their shade on the Smile of Manito.

With pipes of peace and bows unstrung,  
Glowing with paint came old and young,  
In wampum and furs and feathers arrayed,  
To the dance and feast the Bashaba made.

Bird of the air and beast of the field,  
All which the woods and the waters yield,  
On dishes of birch and hemlock piled,  
Garnished and graced that banquet wild.

Steaks of the brown bear fat and large  
From the rocky slopes of the Kearsarge;  
Delicate trout from Babboosuck brook,  
And salmon speared in the Contoocook;

Squirrels which fed where nuts fell thick  
in the gravelly bed of the Otternic;  
And small wild-hens in reed-snares caught  
from the banks of Sondagardee brought;

Pike and perch from the Suncook taken,  
Nuts from the trees of the Black Hills shaken,  
Cranberries picked in the Squamscot bog,  
And grapes from the vines of Piscataquog:

And, drawn from that great stone vase which stands  
In the river scooped by a spirit's hands,  
Garnished with spoons of shell and horn,  
Stood the birchen dishes of smoking corn.

Thus bird of the air and beast of the field,  
All which the woods and the waters yield,  
Furnished in that olden day

The bridal feast of the Bashaba.

And merrily when that feast was done  
On the fire-lit green the dance begun,  
With squaws' shrill stave, and deeper hum  
Of old men beating the Indian drum.

Painted and plumed, with scalp-locks flowing,  
And red arms tossing and black eyes glowing,  
Now in the light and now in the shade  
Around the fires the dancers played.

The step was quicker, the song more shrill,  
And the beat of the small drums louder still  
Whenever within the circle drew  
The Saugus Sachem and Weetamoo.

The moons of forty winters had shed  
Their snow upon that chieftain's head,  
And toil and care and battle's chance  
Had seamed his hard, dark countenance.

A fawn beside the bison grim,—  
Why turns the bride's fond eye on him,  
In whose cold look is naught beside  
The triumph of a sullen pride?

Ask why the graceful grape entwines  
The rough oak with her arm of vines;  
And why the gray rock's rugged cheek  
The soft lips of the mosses seek.

Why, with wise instinct, Nature seems  
To harmonize her wide extremes,  
Linking the stronger with the weak,  
The haughty with the soft and meek!

## V. THE NEW HOME

A wild and broken landscape, spiked with firs,  
Roughening the bleak horizon's northern edge;

Steep, cavernous hillsides, where black hemlock spurs  
And sharp, gray splinters of the wind-swept ledge  
Pierced the thin-glazed ice, or bristling rose,  
Where the cold rim of the sky sunk down upon the snows.

And eastward cold, wide marshes stretched away,  
Dull, dreary flats without a bush or tree,  
O'er-crossed by icy creeks, where twice a day  
Gurgled the waters of the moon-struck sea;  
And faint with distance came the stifled roar,  
The melancholy lapse of waves on that low shore.

No cheerful village with its mingling smokes,  
No laugh of children wrestling in the snow,  
No camp-fire blazing through the hillside oaks,  
No fishers kneeling on the ice below;  
Yet midst all desolate things of sound and view,  
Through the long winter moons smiled dark-eyed Weetamoo.

Her heart had found a home; and freshly all  
Its beautiful affections overgrew  
Their rugged prop. As o'er some granite wall  
Soft vine-leaves open to the moistening dew  
And warm bright sun, the love of that young wife  
Found on a hard cold breast the dew and warmth of life.

The steep, bleak hills, the melancholy shore,  
The long, dead level of the marsh between,  
A coloring of unreal beauty wore  
Through the soft golden mist of young love seen.  
For o'er those hills and from that dreary plain,  
Nightly she welcomed home her hunter chief again.

No warmth of heart, no passionate burst of feeling,  
Repaid her welcoming smile and parting kiss,  
No fond and playful dalliance half concealing,  
Under the guise of mirth, its tenderness;

But, in their stead, the warrior's settled pride,  
And vanity's pleased smile with homage satisfied.

Enough for Weetamoo, that she alone

Sat on his mat and slumbered at his side;  
That he whose fame to her young ear had flown  
Now looked upon her proudly as his bride;  
That he whose name the Mohawk trembling heard  
Vouchsafed to her at times a kindly look or word.

For she had learned the maxims of her race,  
Which teach the woman to become a slave,  
And feel herself the pardonless disgrace  
Of love's fond weakness in the wise and brave,—  
The scandal and the shame which they incur,  
Who give to woman all which man requires of her.

So passed the winter moons. The sun at last  
Broke link by link the frost chain of the rills,  
And the warm breathings of the southwest passed  
Over the hoar rime of the Saugus hills;  
The gray and desolate marsh grew green once more,  
And the birch-tree's tremulous shade fell round the Sachem's door.

Then from far Pennacook swift runners came,  
With gift and greeting for the Saugus chief;  
Beseeching him in the great Sachem's name,  
That, with the coming of the flower and leaf,  
The song of birds, the warm breeze and the rain,  
Young Weetamoo might greet her lonely sire again.

And Winnepurkit called his chiefs together,  
And a grave council in his wigwam met,  
Solemn and brief in words, considering whether  
The rigid rules of forest etiquette  
Permitted Weetamoo once more to look  
Upon her father's face and green-banked Pennacook.

With interludes of pipe-smoke and strong water,  
The forest sages pondered, and at length,  
Concluded in a body to escort her  
Up to her father's home of pride and strength,  
Impressing thus on Pennacook a sense  
Of Winnepurkit's power and regal consequence.

So through old woods which Aukeetamit's hand,

A soft and many-shaded greenness lent,  
Over high breezy hills, and meadow land  
Yellow with flowers, the wild procession went,  
Till, rolling down its wooded banks between,  
A broad, clear, mountain stream, the Merrimac was seen.

The hunter leaning on his bow undrawn,  
The fisher lounging on the pebbled shores,  
Squaws in the clearing dropping the seed-corn,  
Young children peering through the wigwam doors,  
Saw with delight, surrounded by her train  
Of painted Saugus braves, their Weetamoo again.

## VI. AT PENNACOOK

The hills are dearest which our childish feet  
Have climbed the earliest; and the streams most sweet  
Are ever those at which our young lips drank,  
Stooped to their waters o'er the grassy bank.

Midst the cold dreary sea-watch, Home's hearth-light  
Shines round the helmsman plunging through the night;  
And still, with inward eye, the traveller sees  
In close, dark, stranger streets his native trees.

The home-sick dreamer's brow is nightly fanned  
By breezes whispering of his native land,  
And on the stranger's dim and dying eye  
The soft, sweet pictures of his childhood lie.

Joy then for Weetamoo, to sit once more  
A child upon her father's wigwam floor!  
Once more with her old fondness to beguile  
From his cold eye the strange light of a smile.

The long, bright days of summer swiftly passed,  
The dry leaves whirled in autumn's rising blast,  
And evening cloud and whitening sunrise rime  
Told of the coming of the winter-time.

But vainly looked, the while, young Weetamoo,

Down the dark river for her chief's canoe;  
No dusky messenger from Saugus brought  
The grateful tidings which the young wife sought.

At length a runner from her father sent,  
To Winnepurkit's sea-cooled wigwam went  
'Eagle of Saugus,—in the woods the dove  
Mourns for the shelter of thy wings of love.'

But the dark chief of Saugus turned aside  
In the grim anger of hard-hearted pride;  
I bore her as became a chieftain's daughter,  
Up to her home beside the gliding water.

If now no more a mat for her is found  
Of all which line her father's wigwam round,  
Let Pennacook call out his warrior train,  
And send her back with wampum gifts again.'

The baffled runner turned upon his track,  
Bearing the words of Winnepurkit back.  
'Dog of the Marsh,' cried Pennacook, 'no more  
Shall child of mine sit on his wigwam floor.

'Go, let him seek some meaner squaw to spread  
The stolen bear-skin of his beggar's bed;  
Son of a fish-hawk! let him dig his clams  
For some vile daughter of the Agawams,

'Or coward Nipmucks! may his scalp dry black  
In Mohawk smoke, before I send her back.'  
He shook his clenched hand towards the ocean wave,  
While hoarse assent his listening council gave.

Alas poor bride! can thy grim sire impart  
His iron hardness to thy woman's heart?  
Or cold self-torturing pride like his atone  
For love denied and life's warm beauty flown?

On Autumn's gray and mournful grave the snow  
Hung its white wreaths; with stifled voice and low  
The river crept, by one vast bridge o'er-crossed,

Built by the boar-locked artisan of Frost.

And many a moon in beauty newly born  
Pierced the red sunset with her silver horn,  
Or, from the east, across her azure field  
Rolled the wide brightness of her full-orbed shield.

Yet Winnepurkit came not,—on the mat  
Of the scorned wife her dusky rival sat;  
And he, the while, in Western woods afar,  
Urged the long chase, or trod the path of war.

Dry up thy tears, young daughter of a chief!  
Waste not on him the sacredness of grief;  
Be the fierce spirit of thy sire thine own,  
His lips of scorning, and his heart of stone.

What heeds the warrior of a hundred fights,  
The storm-worn watcher through long hunting nights,  
Cold, crafty, proud of woman's weak distress,  
Her home-bound grief and pining loneliness?

## VII. THE DEPARTURE

The wild March rains had fallen fast and long  
The snowy mountains of the North among,  
Making each vale a watercourse, each hill  
Bright with the cascade of some new-made rill.

Gnawed by the sunbeams, softened by the rain,  
Heaved underneath by the swollen current's strain,  
The ice-bridge yielded, and the Merrimac  
Bore the huge ruin crashing down its track.

On that strong turbid water, a small boat  
Guided by one weak hand was seen to float;  
Evil the fate which loosed it from the shore,  
Too early voyager with too frail an oar!

Down the vexed centre of that rushing tide,  
The thick huge ice-blocks threatening either side,

The foam-white rocks of Amoskeag in view,  
With arrowy swiftness sped that light canoe.

The trapper, moistening his moose's meat  
On the wet bank by Uncanoonuc's feet,  
Saw the swift boat flash down the troubled stream;  
Slept he, or waked he? was it truth or dream?

The straining eye bent fearfully before,  
The small hand clenching on the useless oar,  
The bead-wrought blanket trailing o'er the water—  
He knew them all—woe for the Sachem's daughter!

Sick and aweary of her lonely life,  
Heedless of peril, the still faithful wife  
Had left her mother's grave, her father's door,  
To seek the wigwam of her chief once more.

Down the white rapids like a sear leaf whirled,  
On the sharp rocks and piled-up ices hurled,  
Empty and broken, circled the canoe  
In the vexed pool below—but where was Weetamoo.

#### VIII. SONG OF INDIAN WOMEN

The Dark eye has left us,  
The Spring-bird has flown;  
On the pathway of spirits  
She wanders alone.  
The song of the wood-dove has died on our shore  
Mat wonck kunna-monee! We hear it no more!

O dark water Spirit  
We cast on thy wave  
These furs which may never  
Hang over her grave;  
Bear down to the lost one the robes that she wore  
Mat wonck kunna-monee! We see her no more!

Of the strange land she walks in  
No Powah has told:  
It may burn with the sunshine,

Or freeze with the cold.  
Let us give to our lost one the robes that she wore:  
Mat wonck kunna-monee! We see her no more!

The path she is treading  
Shall soon be our own;  
Each gliding in shadow  
Unseen and alone!  
In vain shall we call on the souls gone before:  
Mat wonck kunna-monee! They hear us no more!

O mighty Sowanna!  
Thy gateways unfold,  
From thy wigwam of sunset  
Lift curtains of gold!

Take home the poor Spirit whose journey is o'er  
Mat wonck kunna-monee! We see her no more!

So sang the Children of the Leaves beside  
The broad, dark river's coldly flowing tide;  
Now low, now harsh, with sob-like pause and swell,  
On the high wind their voices rose and fell.  
Nature's wild music,—sounds of wind-swept trees,  
The scream of birds, the wailing of the breeze,  
The roar of waters, steady, deep, and strong,—  
Mingled and murmured in that farewell song.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Brother Of Mercy

Piero Luca, known of all the town  
As the gray porter by the Pitti wall  
Where the noon shadows of the gardens fall,  
Sick and in dolor, waited to lay down  
His last sad burden, and beside his mat  
The barefoot monk of La Certosa sat.

Unseen, in square and blossoming garden drifted,  
Soft sunset lights through green Val d'Arno sifted;  
Unheard, below the living shuttles shifted  
Backward and forth, and wove, in love or strife,  
In mirth or pain, the mottled web of life  
But when at last came upward from the street  
Tinkle of bell and tread of measured feet,  
The sick man started, strove to rise in vain,  
Sinking back heavily with a moan of pain.  
And the monk said, 'T is but the Brotherhood  
Of Mercy going on some errand good  
Their black masks by the palace-wall I see.'  
Piero answered faintly, 'Woe is me!  
This day for the first time in forty years  
In vain the bell hath sounded in my ears,  
Calling me with my brethren of the mask,  
Beggar and prince alike, to some new task  
Of love or pity,--haply from the street  
To bear a wretch plague-stricken, or, with feet  
Hushed to the quickened ear and feverish brain,  
To tread the crowded lazaretto's floors,  
Down the long twilight of the corridors,  
Midst tossing arms and faces full of pain.  
I loved the work: it was its own reward.  
I never counted on it to offset  
My sins, which are many, or make less my debt  
To the free grace and mercy of our Lord;  
But somehow, father, it has come to be  
In these long years so much a part of me,  
I should not know myself, if lacking it,  
But with the work the worker too would die,  
And in my place some other self would sit

Joyful or sad,--what matters, if not I?  
And now all's over. Woe is me!--'My son,'  
The monk said soothingly, 'thy work is done;  
And no more as a servant, but the guest  
Of God thou enterest thy eternal rest.  
No toil, no tears, no sorrow for the lost,  
Shall mar thy perfect bliss. Thou shalt sit down  
Clad in white robes, and wear a golden crown  
Forever and forever.'--Piero tossed  
On his sick-pillow: 'Miserable me!  
I am too poor for such grand company;  
The crown would be too heavy for this gray  
Old head; and God forgive me if I say  
It would be hard to sit there night and day,  
Like an image in the Tribune, doing naught  
With these hard hands, that all my life have wrought,  
Not for bread only, but for pity's sake.  
I'm dull at prayers: I could not keep awake,  
Counting my beads. Mine's but a crazy head,  
Scarce worth the saving, if all else be dead.  
And if one goes to heaven without a heart,  
God knows he leaves behind his better part.  
I love my fellow-men: the worst I know  
I would do good to. Will death change me so  
That I shall sit among the lazy saints,  
Turning a deaf ear to the sore complaints  
Of souls that suffer? Why, I never yet  
Left a poor dog in the strada hard beset,  
Or ass o'erladen! Must I rate man less  
Than dog or ass, in holy selfishness?  
Methinks (Lord, pardon, if the thought be sin!)  
The world of pain were better, if therein  
One's heart might still be human, and desires  
Of natural pity drop upon its fires  
Some cooling tears.'

Thereat the pale monk crossed  
His brow, and, muttering, 'Madman! thou art lost!'  
Took up his pyx and fled; and, left alone,  
The sick man closed his eyes with a great groan  
That sank into a prayer, 'Thy will be done!'  
Then was he made aware, by soul or ear,

Of somewhat pure and holy bending o'er him,  
And of a voice like that of her who bore him,  
Tender and most compassionate: 'Never fear!  
For heaven is love, as God himself is love;  
Thy work below shall be thy work above.'  
And when he looked, lo! in the stern monk's place  
He saw the shining of an angel's face!

. . . . .

The Traveller broke the pause. 'I've seen  
The Brothers down the long street steal,  
Black, silent, masked, the crowd between,  
And felt to doff my hat and kneel  
With heart, if not with knee, in prayer,  
For blessings on their pious care.'

Reader wiped his glasses: 'Friends of mine,  
I'll try our home-brewed next, instead of foreign wine.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Brown Dwarf Of Rügen (From Narrative And Legendary Poems )

THE pleasant isle of Rügen looks the Baltic water o'er,  
To the silver-sanded beaches of the Pomeranian shore;

And in the town of Rambin a little boy and maid  
Plucked the meadow-flowers together and in the sea-surf played.

Alike were they in beauty if not in their degree:  
He was the Amptman's first-born, the miller's child was she.

Now of old the isle of Rügen was full of Dwarfs and Trolls,  
The brown-faced little Earth-men, the people without souls;

And for every man and woman in Rügen's island found  
Walking in air and sunshine, a Troll was underground.

It chanced the little maiden, one morning, strolled away  
Among the haunted Nine Hills, where the elves and goblins play.

That day, in barley fields below, the harvesters had known  
Of evil voices in the air, and heard the small horns blown.

She came not back; the search for her in field and wood was vain:  
They cried her east, they cried her west, but she came not again.

"She's down among the Brown Dwarfs," said the dream-wives wise and old,  
And prayers were made, and masses said, and Rambin's church bell tolled.

Five years her father mourned her; and then John Deitrich said:  
"I will find my little playmate, be she alive or dead."

He watched among the Nine Hills, he heard the Brown Dwarfs sing,  
And saw them dance by moonlight merrily in a ring.

And when their gay-robed leader tossed up his cap of red,  
Young Deitrich caught it as it fell, and thrust it on his head.

The Troll came crouching at his feet and wept for lack of it.

"Oh, give me back my magic cap, for your great head unfit!"

"Nay," Deitrich said; "the Dwarf who throws his charm'd cap away,  
Must serve its finder at his will, and for his folly pay.

"You stole my pretty Lisbeth, and hid her in the earth;  
And you shall ope the door of glass and let me lead her forth."

"She will not come; she's one of us; she's mine!" the Brown Dwarf said;  
"The day is set, the cake is baked, to-morrow we shall wed."

"The fell fiend fetch thee!" Deitrich cried, "and keep thy foul tongue still.  
Quick! open, to thy evil world, the glass door of the hill!"

The Dwarf obeyed; and youth and Troll down the long stairway passed,  
And saw in dim and sunless light a country strange and vast.

Weird, rich, and wonderful, he saw the elfin under-land, --  
Its palaces of precious stones, its streets of golden sand.

He came unto a banquet-hall with tables richly spread,  
Where a young maiden served to him the red wine and the bread.

How fair she seemed among the Trolls so ugly and so wild!  
Yet pale and very sorrowful, like one who never smiled!

Her low, sweet voice, her gold-brown hair, her tender blue eyes seemed  
Like something he had seen elsewhere or something he had dreamed.

He looked; he clasped her in his arms; he knew the long-lost one;  
"O Lisbeth! See thy playmate -- I am the Amptman's son!"

She leaned her fair head on his breast, and through her sobs she spoke:  
"Oh, take me from this evil place, and from the elfin folk!

"And let me tread the grass-green fields and smell the flowers again,  
And feel the soft wind on my cheek and hear the dropping rain!

"And oh, to hear the singing bird, the rustling of the tree,  
The lowing cows, the bleat of sheep, the voices of the sea;

"And oh, upon my father's knee to set beside the door,

And hear the bell of vespers ring in Rambin church once more!"

He kissed her cheek, he kissed her lips; the Brown Dwarf groaned to see,  
And tore his tangled hair and ground his long teeth angrily.

But Deitrich said: "For five long years this tender Christian maid  
Has served you in your evil world, and well must she be paid!

"Haste! -- hither bring me precious gems, the richest in your store;  
Then when we pass the gate of glass, you'll take your cap once more."

No choice was left the baffled Troll, and, murmuring, he obeyed,  
And filled the pockets of the youth and apron of the maid.

They left the dreadful under-land and passed the gate of glass;  
They felt the sunshine's warm caress, they trod the soft, green grass.

And when, beneath, they saw the Dwarf stretch up to them his brown  
And crooked claw-like fingers, they tossed his red cap down.

Oh, never shone so bright a sun, was never sky so blue,  
As hand in hand they homeward walked the pleasant meadows through!

And never sang the birds so sweet in Rambin's woods before,  
And never washed the waves so soft along the Baltic shore;

And when beneath his door-yard trees the father met his child,  
The bells rung out their merriest peal, the folks with joy ran wild.

And soon from Rambin's holy church the twain came forth as one,  
The Amptman kissed a daughter, the miller blest a son.

John Deitrich's fame went far and wide, and nurse and maid crooned o'er  
Their cradle song: "Sleep on, sleep well, the Trolls shall come no more!"

for in the haunted Nine Hills he set a cross of stone;  
And Elf and Brown Dwarf sought in vain a door where door was none.

The tower he built in Rambin, fair Rügen's pride and boast,  
Looked o'er the Baltic water to the Pomeranian coast;

And, for his worth ennobled, and rich beyond compare,

Count Deitrich and his lovely bride dwelt long and happy there.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Cable Hymn

O lonely bay of Trinity,  
O dreary shores, give ear!  
Lean down unto the white-lipped sea  
The voice of God to hear!

From world to world His couriers fly,  
Thought-winged and shod with fire;  
The angel of His stormy sky  
Rides down the sunken wire.

What saith the herald of the Lord?  
'The world's long strife is done;  
Close wedded by that mystic cord,  
Its continents are one.

'And one in heart, as one in blood,  
Shall all her peoples be;  
The hands of human brotherhood  
Are clasped beneath the sea.

'Through Orient seas, o'er Afric's plain  
And Asian mountains borne,  
The vigor of the Northern brain  
Shall nerve the world outworn.

'From clime to clime, from shore to shore,  
Shall thrill the magic thread;  
The new Prometheus steals once more  
The fire that wakes the dead.'

Throb on, strong pulse of thunder! beat  
From answering beach to beach;  
Fuse nations in thy kindly heat,  
And melt the chains of each!

Wild terror of the sky above,  
Glide tamed and dumb below!  
Bear gently, Ocean's carrier-dove,  
Thy errands to and fro.

Weave on, swift shuttle of the Lord,  
Beneath the deep so far,  
The bridal robe of earth's accord,  
The funeral shroud of war!

For lo! the fall of Ocean's wall  
Space mocked and time outrun;  
And round the world the thought of all  
Is as the thought of one!

The poles unite, the zones agree,  
The tongues of striving cease;  
As on the Sea of Galilee  
The Christ is whispering, Peace!

. . . . .

'Glad prophecy! to this at last,'  
The Reader said, 'shall all things come.  
Forgotten be the bugle's blast,  
And battle-music of the drum.

'A little while the world may run  
Its old mad way, with needle-gun  
And iron-clad, but truth, at last, shall reign  
The cradle-song of Christ was never sung in vain!'

Shifting his scattered papers, 'Here,'  
He said, as died the faint applause,  
'Is something that I found last year  
Down on the island known as Orr's.  
I had it from a fair-haired girl  
Who, oddly, bore the name of Pearl,  
(As if by some droll freak of circumstance,)  
Classic, or wellnigh so, in Harriet Stowe's romance.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Call Of The Christian

Not always as the whirlwind's rush  
On Horeb's mount of fear,  
Not always as the burning bush  
To Midian's shepherd seer,  
Nor as the awful voice which came  
To Israel's prophet bards,  
Nor as the tongues of cloven flame,  
Nor gift of fearful words,--

Not always thus, with outward sign  
Of fire or voice from Heaven,  
The message of a truth divine,  
The call of God is given!  
Awaking in the human heart  
Love for the true and right,--  
Zeal for the Christian's better part,  
Strength for the Christian's fight.

Nor unto manhood's heart alone  
The holy influence steals  
Warm with a rapture not its own,  
The heart of woman feels!  
As she who by Samaria's wall  
The Saviour's errand sought,--  
As those who with the fervent Paul  
And meek Aquila wrought:

Or those meek ones whose martyrdom  
Rome's gathered grandeur saw  
Or those who in their Alpine home  
Braved the Crusader's war,  
When the green Vaudois, trembling, heard,  
Through all its vales of death,  
The martyr's song of triumph poured  
From woman's failing breath.

And gently, by a thousand things  
Which o'er our spirits pass,  
Like breezes o'er the harp's fine strings,

Or vapors o'er a glass,  
Leaving their token strange and new  
Of music or of shade,  
The summons to the right and true  
And merciful is made.

Oh, then, if gleams of truth and light  
Flash o'er thy waiting mind,  
Unfolding to thy mental sight  
The wants of human-kind;  
If, brooding over human grief,  
The earnest wish is known  
To soothe and gladden with relief  
An anguish not thine own;

Though heralded with naught of fear,  
Or outward sign or show;  
Though only to the inward ear  
It whispers soft and low;  
Though dropping, as the manna fell,  
Unseen, yet from above,  
Noiseless as dew-fall, heed it well,---  
Thy Father's call of love!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Captain's Well

From pain and peril, by land and main,  
The shipwrecked sailor came back again;

And like one from the dead, the threshold cross'd  
Of his wondering home, that had mourned him lost.

Where he sat once more with his kith and kin,  
And welcomed his neighbors thronging in.

But when morning came he called for his spade.  
'I must pay my debt to the Lord,' he said.

'Why dig you here?' asked the passer-by;  
'Is there gold or silver the road so nigh?'

'No, friend,' he answered: 'but under this sod  
Is the blessed water, the wine of God.'

'Water! the Powow is at your back,  
And right before you the Merrimac,

'And look you up, or look you down,  
There 's a well-sweep at every door in town.'

'True,' he said, 'we have wells of our own;  
But this I dig for the Lord alone.'

Said the other: 'This soil is dry, you know.  
I doubt if a spring can be found below;

'You had better consult, before you dig,  
Some water-witch, with a hazel twig.'

'No, wet or dry, I will dig it here,  
Shallow or deep, if it takes a year.

'In the Arab desert, where shade is none,  
The waterless land of sand and sun,

'Under the pitiless, brazen sky  
My burning throat as the sand was dry;

'My crazed brain listened in fever dreams  
For splash of buckets and ripple of streams;

'And opening my eyes to the blinding glare,  
And my lips to the breath of the blistering air,

'Tortured alike by the heavens and earth,  
I cursed, like Job, the day of my birth.

'Then something tender, and sad, and mild  
As a mother's voice to her wandering child,

'Rebuked my frenzy; and bowing my head,  
I prayed as I never before had prayed:

'Pity me, God! for I die of thirst;  
Take me out of this land accurst;

'And if ever I reach my home again,  
Where earth has springs, and the sky has rain,

'I will dig a well for the passers-by,  
And none shall suffer from thirst as I.

'I saw, as I prayed, my home once more,  
The house, the barn, the elms by the door,

'The grass-lined road, that riverward wound,  
The tall slate stones of the burying-ground,

'The belfry and steeple on meeting-house hill,  
The brook with its dam, and gray grist mill,

'And I knew in that vision beyond the sea,  
The very place where my well must be.

'God heard my prayer in that evil day;  
He led my feet in their homeward way,

'From false mirage and dried-up well,  
And the hot sand storms of a land of hell,

'Till I saw at last through the coast-hill's gap,  
A city held in its stony lap,

'The mosques and the domes of scorched Muscat,  
And my heart leaped up with joy thereat;

'For there was a ship at anchor lying,  
A Christian flag at its mast-head flying,

'And sweetest of sounds to my homesick ear  
Was my native tongue in the sailor's cheer.

'Now the Lord be thanked, I am back again,  
Where earth has springs, and the skies have rain,

'And the well I promised by Oman's Sea,  
I am digging for him in Amesbury.'

His kindred wept, and his neighbors said  
'The poor old captain is out of his head.'

But from morn to noon, and from noon to night,  
He toiled at his task with main and might;

And when at last, from the loosened earth,  
Under his spade the stream gushed forth,

And fast as he climbed to his deep well's brim,  
The water he dug for followed him,

He shouted for joy: 'I have kept my word,  
And here is the well I promised the Lord!'

The long years came and the long years went,  
And he sat by his roadside well content;

He watched the travellers, heat-oppressed,  
Pause by the way to drink and rest,

And the sweltering horses dip, as they drank,  
Their nostrils deep in the cool, sweet tank,

And grateful at heart, his memory went  
Back to that waterless Orient,

And the blessed answer of prayer, which came  
To the earth of iron and sky of flame.

And when a wayfarer weary and hot,  
Kept to the mid road, pausing not

For the well's refreshing, he shook his head;  
'He don't know the value of water,' he said;

'Had he prayed for a drop, as I have done,  
In the desert circle of sand and sun,

'He would drink and rest, and go home to tell  
That God's best gift is the wayside well!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Changeling ( From The Tent On The Beach )

FOR the fairest maid in Hampton  
They needed not to search,  
Who saw young Anna favor  
Come walking into church,--

Or bringing from the meadows,  
At set of harvest-day,  
The frolic of the blackbirds,  
The sweetness of the hay.

Now the weariest of all mothers,  
The saddest two years' bride,  
She scowls in the face of her husband,  
And spurns her child aside.

"Rake out the red coals, goodman,--  
For there the child shall lie,  
Till the black witch comes to fetch her  
And both up chimney fly.

"It's never my own little daughter,  
It's never my own," she said;  
"The witches have stolen my Anna,  
And left me an imp instead.

"Oh, fair and sweet was my baby,  
Blue eyes, and hair of gold;  
But this is ugly and wrinkled,  
Cross, and cunning, and old.

"I hate the touch of her fingers,  
I hate the feel of her skin;  
It's not the milk from my bosom,  
But my blood, that she sucks in.

"My face grows sharp with the torment;  
Look! my arms are skin and bone!  
Rake open the red coals, goodman,  
And the witch shall have her own.

"She'll come when she hears it crying,  
In the shape of an owl or bat,  
And she'll bring us our darling Anna  
In place of her screeching brat."

Then the goodman, Ezra Dalton,  
Laid his hand upon her head:  
Thy sorrow is great, O woman!  
I sorrow with thee," he said.

"The paths to trouble are many  
And never but one sure way  
Leads out to the light beyond it:  
My poor wife, let us pray."

Then he said to the great All-Father,  
"Thy daughter is weak and blind;  
Let her sight come back, and clothe her  
Once more in her right mind.

"Lead her out of this evil shadow,  
Out of these fancies wild;  
Let the holy love of the mother  
Turn again to her child.

"Make her lips like the lips of Mary  
Kissing her blessed Son;  
Let her hands, like the hands of Jesus,  
Rest on her little one.

"Comfort the soul of thy handmaid,  
Open her prison-door,  
And thine shall be all the glory  
And praise forevermore."

Then into the face of its mother  
The baby looked up and smiled;  
And the cloud of her soul was lifted,  
And she knew her little child.

A beam of the slant west sunshine

Made the wan face almost fair,  
Lit the blue eyes' patient wonder  
And the rings of pale gold hair.

She kissed it on lip and forehead,  
She kissed it on cheek and chin  
And she bared her snow-white bosom  
To the lips so pale and thin.

Oh, fair on her bridal morning  
Was the maid who blushed and smiled,  
But fairer to Ezra Dalton  
Looked the mother of his child.

With more than a lover's fondness  
He stooped to her worn young face,  
And the nursing child and the mother  
He folded in one embrace.

"Blessed be God!" he murmured.  
"Blessed be God!" she said;  
"For I see, who once was blinded,--  
I live, who once was dead.

"Now mount and ride, my goodman,  
As thou lovest thy own soul!  
Woe's me, if my wicked fancies  
Be the death of Goody Cole!"

His horse he saddled and bridled,  
And into the night rode he,  
Now through the great black woodland,  
Now by the white-beached sea.

He rode through the silent clearings,  
He came to the ferry wide,  
And thrice he called to the boatman  
Asleep on the other side.

He set his horse to the river,  
He swam to Newbury town,  
And he called up Justice Sewall

In his nightcap and his gown.

And the grave and worshipful justice  
(Upon whose soul be peace!)  
Set his name to the jailer's warrant  
For Goodwife Cole's release.

Then through the night the hoof-beats  
Went sounding like a flail;  
And Goody Cole at cockcrow  
Came forth from Ipswich jail.

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John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Chapel Of The Hermits

'I do believe, and yet, in grief,  
I pray for help to unbelief;  
For needful strength aside to lay  
The daily cumberings of my way.

'I 'm sick at heart of craft and cant,  
Sick of the crazed enthusiast's rant,  
Profession's smooth hypocrisies,  
And creeds of iron, and lives of ease.

'I ponder o'er the sacred word,  
I read the record of our Lord;  
And, weak and troubled, envy them  
Who touched His seamless garment's hem;

'Who saw the tears of love He wept  
Above the grave where Lazarus slept;  
And heard, amidst the shadows dim  
Of Olivet, His evening hymn.

'How blessed the swineherd's low estate,  
The beggar crouching at the gate,  
The leper loathly and abhorred,  
Whose eyes of flesh beheld the Lord!

'O sacred soil His sandals pressed!  
Sweet fountains of His noonday rest!  
O light and air of Palestine,  
Impregnate with His life divine!

'Oh, bear me thither! Let me look  
On Siloa's pool, and Kedron's brook;  
Kneel at Gethsemane, and by  
Gennesaret walk, before I die!

'Methinks this cold and northern night  
Would melt before that Orient light;  
And, wet by Hermon's dew and rain,  
My childhood's faith revive again!'

So spake my friend, one autumn day,  
Where the still river slid away  
Beneath us, and above the brown  
Red curtains of the woods shut down.

Then said I,-for I could not brook  
The mute appealing of his look,-  
'I, too, am weak, and faith is small,  
And blindness happeneth unto all.

'Yet, sometimes glimpses on my sight,  
Through present wrong, the eternal right;  
And, step by step, since time began,  
I see the steady gain of man;

'That all of good the past hath had  
Remains to make our own time glad,  
Our common daily life divine,  
And every land a Palestine.

'Thou weariest of thy present state;  
What gain to thee time's holiest date?  
The doubter now perchance had been  
As High Priest or as Pilate then!

'What thought Chorazin's scribes? What faith  
In Him had Nain and Nazareth?  
Of the few followers whom He led  
One sold Him,-all forsook and fled.

'O friend! we need nor rock nor sand,  
Nor storied stream of Morning-Land;  
The heavens are glassed in Merrimac,-  
What more could Jordan render back?

'We lack but open eye and ear  
To find the Orient's marvels here;  
The still small voice in autumn's hush,  
Yon maple wood the burning bush.

'For still the new transcends the old,

In signs and tokens manifold;  
Slaves rise up men; the olive waves,  
With roots deep set in battle graves!

'Through the harsh noises of our day  
A low, sweet prelude finds its way;  
Through clouds of doubt, and creeds of fear,  
A light is breaking, calm and clear.

'That song of Love, now low and far,  
Erelong shall swell from star to star!  
That light, the breaking day, which tips  
The golden-spined Apocalypse!'

Then, when my good friend shook his head,  
And, sighing, sadly smiled, I said:  
'Thou mind'st me of a story told  
In rare Bernardin's leaves of gold.'

And while the slanted sunbeams wove  
The shadows of the frost-stained grove,  
And, picturing all, the river ran  
O'er cloud and wood, I thus began:-

.....

In Mount Valerien's chestnut wood  
The Chapel of the Hermits stood;  
And thither, at the close of day,  
Came two old pilgrims, worn and gray.

One, whose impetuous youth defied  
The storms of Baikal's wintry side,  
And mused and dreamed where tropic day  
Flamed o'er his lost Virginia's bay.

His simple tale of love and woe  
All hearts had melted, high or low;-  
A blissful pain, a sweet distress,  
Immortal in its tenderness.

Yet, while above his charmed page

Beat quick the young heart of his age,  
He walked amidst the crowd unknown,  
A sorrowing old man, strange and lone.

A homeless, troubled age,-the gray  
Pale setting of a weary day;  
Too dull his ear for voice of praise,  
Too sadly worn his brow for bays.

Pride, lust of power and glory, slept;  
Yet still his heart its young dream kept,  
And, wandering like the deluge-dove,  
Still sought the resting-place of love.

And, mateless, childless, envied more  
The peasant's welcome from his door  
By smiling eyes at eventide,  
Than kingly gifts or lettered pride.

Until, in place of wife and child,  
All-pitying Nature on him smiled,  
And gave to him the golden keys  
To all her inmost sanctities.

Mild Druid of her wood-paths dim!  
She laid her great heart bare to him,  
Its loves and sweet accords;-he saw  
The beauty of her perfect law.

The language of her signs he knew,  
What notes her cloudy clarion blew;  
The rhythm of autumn's forest dyes,  
The hymn of sunset's painted skies.

And thus he seemed to hear the song  
Which swept, of old, the stars along;  
And to his eyes the earth once more  
Its fresh and primal beauty wore.

Who sought with him, from summer air,  
And field and wood, a balm for care;  
And bathed in light of sunset skies

His tortured nerves and weary eyes?

His fame on all the winds had flown;  
His words had shaken crypt and throne;  
Like fire, on camp and court and cell  
They dropped, and kindled as they fell.

Beneath the pomps of state, below  
The mitred juggler's masque and show,  
A prophecy, a vague hope, ran  
His burning thought from man to man.

For peace or rest too well he saw  
The fraud of priests, the wrong of law,  
And felt how hard, between the two,  
Their breath of pain the millions drew.

A prophet-utterance, strong and wild,  
The weakness of an unweaned child,  
A sun-bright hope for human-kind,  
And self-despair, in him combined.

He loathed the false, yet lived not true  
To half the glorious truths he knew;  
The doubt, the discord, and the sin,  
He mourned without, he felt within.

Untrod by him the path he showed,  
Sweet pictures on his easel glowed  
Of simple faith, and loves of home,  
And virtue's golden days to come.

But weakness, shame, and folly made  
The foil to all his pen portrayed;  
Still, where his dreamy splendors shone,  
The shadow of himself was thrown.

Lord, what is man, whose thought, at times,  
Up to Thy sevenfold brightness climbs,  
While still his grosser instinct clings  
To earth, like other creeping things!

So rich in words, in acts so mean;  
So high, so low; chance-swung between  
The foulness of the penal pit  
And Truth's clear sky, millennium-lit!

Vain, pride of star-lent genius!-vain,  
Quick fancy and creative brain,  
Unblest by prayerful sacrifice,  
Absurdly great, or weakly wise!

Midst yearnings for a truer life,  
Without were fears, within was strife;  
And still his wayward act denied  
The perfect good for which he sighed.

The love he sent forth void returned;  
The fame that crowned him scorched and burned,  
Burning, yet cold and drear and lone,-  
A fire-mount in a frozen zone!

Like that the gray-haired sea-king passed,  
Seen southward from his sleety mast,  
About whose brows of changeless frost  
A wreath of flame the wild winds tossed.

Far round the mournful beauty played  
Of lambent light and purple shade,  
Lost on the fixed and dumb despair  
Of frozen earth and sea and air!

A man apart, unknown, unloved  
By those whose wrongs his soul had moved,  
He bore the ban of Church and State,  
The good man's fear, the bigot's hate!

Forth from the city's noise and throng,  
Its pomp and shame, its sin and wrong,  
The twain that summer day had strayed  
To Mount Valerien's chestnut shade.

To them the green fields and the wood  
Lent something of their quietude,

And golden-tinted sunset seemed  
Prophetical of all they dreamed.

The hermits from their simple cares  
The bell was calling home to prayers,  
And, listening to its sound, the twain  
Seemed lapped in childhood's trust again.

Wide open stood the chapel door;  
A sweet old music, swelling o'er  
Low prayerful murmurs, issued thence,-  
The Litanies of Providence!

Then Rousseau spake: 'Where two or three  
In His name meet, He there will be!'  
And then, in silence, on their knees  
They sank beneath the chestnut-trees.

As to the blind returning light,  
As daybreak to the Arctic night,  
Old faith revived; the doubts of years  
Dissolved in reverential tears.

That gush of feeling overpast,  
'Ah me!' Bernardin sighed at last,  
I would thy bitterest foes could see  
Thy heart as it is seen of me!

'No church of God hast thou denied;  
Thou hast but spurned in scorn aside  
A bare and hollow counterfeit,  
Profaning the pure name of it!

'With dry dead moss and marish weeds  
His fire the western herdsman feeds,  
And greener from the ashen plain  
The sweet spring grasses rise again.

'Nor thunder-peal nor mighty wind  
Disturb the solid sky behind;  
And through the cloud the red bolt rends  
The calm, still smile of Heaven descends.

'Thus through the world, like bolt and blast,  
And scourging fire, thy words have passed.  
Clouds break,-the steadfast heavens remain;  
Weeds burn,-the ashes feed the grain!

'But whoso strives with wrong may find  
Its touch pollute, its darkness blind;  
And learn, as latent fraud is shown  
In others' faith, to doubt his own.

'With dream and falsehood, simple trust  
And pious hope we tread in dust;  
Lost the calm faith in goodness,-lost  
The baptism of the Pentecost!

'Alas!-the blows for error meant  
Too oft on truth itself are spent,  
As through the false and vile and base  
Looks forth her sad, rebuking face.

'Not ours the Theban's charmed life;  
We come not scathless from the strife!  
The Python's coil about us clings,  
The trampled Hydra bites and stings!

'Meanwhile, the sport of seeming chance,  
The plastic shapes of circumstance,  
What might have been we fondly guess,  
If earlier born, or tempted less.

'And thou, in these wild, troubled days,  
Misjudged alike in blame and praise,  
Unsought and undeserved the same  
The skeptic's praise, the bigot's blame;-

'I cannot doubt, if thou hadst been  
Among the highly favored men  
Who walked on earth with Fenelon,  
He would have owned thee as his son;

'And, bright with wings of cherubim

Visibly waving over him,  
Seen through his life, the Church had seemed  
All that its old confessors dreamed.'

'I would have been,' Jean Jaques replied,  
'The humblest servant at his side,  
Obscure, unknown, content to see  
How beautiful man's life may be!

'Oh, more than thrice-blest relic, more  
Than solemn rite or sacred lore,  
The holy life of one who trod  
The foot-marks of the Christ of God!

'Amidst a blinded world he saw  
The oneness of the Dual law;  
That Heaven's sweet peace on Earth began,  
And God was loved through love of man.

'He lived the Truth which reconciled  
The strong man Reason, Faith the child;  
In him belief and act were one,  
The homilies of duty done!'

So speaking, through the twilight gray  
The two old pilgrims went their way.  
What seeds of life that day were sown,  
The heavenly watchers knew alone.

Time passed, and Autumn came to fold  
Green Summer in her brown and gold;  
Time passed, and Winter's tears of snow  
Dropped on the grave-mound of Rousseau.

'The tree remaineth where it fell,  
The pained on earth is pained in hell!'  
So priestcraft from its altars cursed  
The mournful doubts its falsehood nursed.

Ah! well of old the Psalmist prayed,  
'Thy hand, not man's, on me be laid!'  
Earth frowns below, Heaven weeps above,

And man is hate, but God is love!

No Hermits now the wanderer sees,  
Nor chapel with its chestnut-trees;  
A morning dream, a tale that's told,  
The wave of change o'er all has rolled.

Yet lives the lesson of that day;  
And from its twilight cool and gray  
Comes up a low, sad whisper, 'Make  
The truth thine own, for truth's own sake.

'Why wait to see in thy brief span  
Its perfect flower and fruit in man?  
No saintly touch can save; no balm  
Of healing hath the martyr's palm.

'Midst soulless forms, and false pretence  
Of spiritual pride and pampered sense,  
A voice saith, 'What is that to thee?  
Be true thyself, and follow Me!

'In days when throne and altar heard  
The wanton's wish, the bigot's word,  
And pomp of state and ritual show  
Scarce hid the loathsome death below,-

'Midst fawning priests and courtiers foul,  
The losel swarm of crown and cowl,  
White-robed walked Francois Fenelon,  
Stainless as Uriel in the sun!

'Yet in his time the stake blazed red,  
The poor were eaten up like bread  
Men knew him not; his garment's hem  
No healing virtue had for them.

'Alas! no present saint we find;  
The white cymar gleams far behind,  
Revealed in outline vague, sublime,  
Through telescopic mists of time!

'Trust not in man with passing breath,  
But in the Lord, old Scripture saith;  
The truth which saves thou mayst not blend  
With false professor, faithless friend.

'Search thine own heart. What paineth thee  
In others in thyself may be;  
All dust is frail, all flesh is weak;  
Be thou the true man thou dost seek!

'Where now with pain thou treadest, trod  
The whitest of the saints of God!  
To show thee where their feet were set,  
the light which led them shineth yet.

'The footprints of the life divine,  
Which marked their path, remain in thine;  
And that great Life, transfused in theirs,  
Awaits thy faith, thy love, thy prayers!

A lesson which I well may heed,  
A word of fitness to my need;  
So from that twilight cool and gray  
Still saith a voice, or seems to say.

We rose, and slowly homeward turned,  
While down the west the sunset burned;  
And, in its light, hill, wood, and tide,  
And human forms seemed glorified.

The village homes transfigured stood,  
And purple bluffs, whose belting wood  
Across the waters leaned to hold  
The yellow leaves like lamps of hold.

Then spake my friend: 'Thy words are true;  
Forever old, forever new,  
These home-seen splendors are the same  
Which over Eden's sunsets came.

'To these bowed heavens let wood and hill  
Lift voiceless praise and anthem still;

Fall, warm with blessing, over them,  
Light of the New Jerusalem!

'Flow on, sweet river, like the stream  
Of John's Apocalyptic dream  
This mapled ridge shall Horeb be,  
Yon green-banked lake our Galilee!

'Henceforth my heart shall sigh no more  
For olden time and holier shore;  
God's love and blessing, then and there,  
Are now and here and everywhere.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Christian Slave

A CHRISTIAN! going, gone!  
Who bids for God's own image? for his grace,  
Which that poor victim of the market-place  
Hath in her suffering won?  
My God! can such things be?  
Hast Thou not said that whatsoe'er is done  
Unto Thy weakest and Thy humblest one  
Is even done to Thee?  
In that sad victim, then,  
Child of Thy pitying love, I see Thee stand;  
Once more the jest-word of a mocking band,  
Bound, sold, and scourged again!  
A Christian up for sale!  
Wet with her blood your whips, o'ertask her frame,  
Make her life loathsome with your wrong and shame, Her patience shall not fail!  
A heathen hand might deal  
Back on your heads the gathered wrong of years:  
But her low, broken prayer and nightly tears,  
Ye neither heed nor feel.  
Con well thy lesson o'er,  
Thou prudent teacher, tell the toiling slave  
No dangerous tale of Him who came to save  
The outcast and the poor.  
But wisely shut the ray  
Of God's free Gospel from her simple heart,  
And to her darkened mind alone impart  
One stern command, Obey!<sup>3</sup>  
So shalt thou deftly raise  
The market price of human flesh; and while  
On thee, their pampered guest, the planters smile,  
Thy church shall praise.  
Grave, reverend men shall tell  
From Northern pulpits how thy work was blest,  
While in that vile South Sodom first and best,  
Thy poor disciples. sell.  
Oh, shame! the Moslem thrall,  
Who, with his master, to the Prophet kneels,  
While turning to the sacred Kebla feels  
His fetters break and fall.

Cheers for the turbaned Bey  
Of robber-peopled Tunis! he hath torn  
The dark slave-dungeons open, and hath borne  
Their inmates into day:  
But our poor slave in vain.  
Turns to the Christian shrine his aching eyes;  
Its rites will only swell his market price,  
And rivet on his chain.  
God of all right! how long  
Shall priestly robbers at Thine altar stand,  
Lifting in prayer to Thee, the bloody hand  
And haughty brow of wrong?  
Oh, from the fields of cane,  
From the low rice-swamp, from the trader's cell;  
From the black slave-ship's foul and loathsome hell,  
And coffer's weary chain;  
Hoarse, horrible, and strong,  
Rises to Heaven that agonizing cry,  
Filling the arches of the hollow sky,  
How long, O God, how long?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Christian Tourists

No aimless wanderers, by the fiend Unrest  
Goaded from shore to shore;  
No schoolmen, turning, in their classic quest,  
The leaves of empire o'er.  
Simple of faith, and bearing in their hearts  
The love of man and God,  
Isles of old song, the Moslem's ancient marts,  
And Scythia's steppes, they trod.  
Where the long shadows of the fir and pine  
In the night sun are cast,  
And the deep heart of many a Norland mine  
Quakes at each riving blast;  
Where, in barbaric grandeur, Moskwa stands,  
A baptized Scythian queen,  
With Europe's arts and Asia's jewelled hands,  
The North and East between!  
Where still, through vales of Grecian fable, stray  
The classic forms of yore,  
And beauty smiles, new risen from the spray,  
And Dian weeps once more;  
Where every tongue in Smyrna's mart resounds;  
And Stamboul from the sea  
Lifts her tall minarets over burial-grounds  
Black with the cypress-tree!  
From Malta's temples to the gates of Rome,  
Following the track of Paul,  
And where the Alps gird round the Switzer's home  
Their vast, eternal wall;  
They paused not by the ruins of old time,  
They scanned no pictures rare,  
Nor lingered where the snow-locked mountains climb  
The cold abyss of air!  
But unto prisons, where men lay in chains,  
To haunts where Hunger pined,  
To kings and courts forgetful of the pains  
And wants of human-kind,  
Scattering sweet words, and quiet deeds of good,  
Along their way, like flowers,  
Or pleading, as Christ's freemen only could,

With princes and with powers;  
Their single aim the purpose to fulfil  
Of Truth, from day to day,  
Simply obedient to its guiding will,  
They held their pilgrim way.  
Yet dream not, hence, the beautiful and old  
Were wasted on their sight,  
Who in the school of Christ had learned to hold  
All outward things aright.  
Not less to them the breath of vineyards blown  
From off the Cyprian shore,  
Not less for them the Alps in sunset shone,  
That man they valued more.  
A life of beauty lends to all it sees  
The beauty of its thought;  
And fairest forms and sweetest harmonies  
Make glad its way, unsought.  
In sweet accordancy of praise and love,  
The singing waters run;  
And sunset mountains wear in light above  
The smile of duty done;  
Sure stands the promise, — ever to the meek  
A heritage is given;  
Nor lose they Earth who, single-hearted, seek  
The righteousness of Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Christmas Of 1888

Low in the east, against a white, cold dawn,  
The black-lined silhouette of the woods was drawn,  
And on a wintry waste  
Of frosted streams and hillsides bare and brown,  
Through thin cloud-films, a pallid ghost looked down,  
The waning moon half-faced!

In that pale sky and sere, snow-waiting earth,  
What sign was there of the immortal birth?  
What herald of the One?  
Lo! swift as thought the heavenly radiance came,  
A rose-red splendor swept the sky like flame,  
Up rolled the round, bright sun!

And all was changed. From a transfigured world  
The moon's ghost fled, the smoke of home-hearths curled  
Up the still air unblown.  
In Orient warmth and brightness, did that morn  
O'er Nain and Nazareth, when the Christ was born,  
Break fairer than our own?

The morning's promise noon and eve fulfilled  
In warm, soft sky and landscape hazy-hilled  
And sunset fair as they;  
A sweet reminder of His holiest time,  
A summer-miracle in our winter clime,  
God gave a perfect day.

The near was blended with the old and far,  
And Bethlehem's hillside and the Magi's star  
Seemed here, as there and then,--  
Our homestead pine-tree was the Syrian palm,  
Our heart's desire the angels' midnight psalm,  
Peace, and good-will to men!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Cities Of The Plain

'Get ye up from the wrath of God's terrible day!  
Ungirded, unsandalled, arise and away!  
'T is the vintage of blood, 't is the fulness of time,  
And vengeance shall gather the harvest of crime!'

The warning was spoken--the righteous had gone,  
And the proud ones of Sodom were feasting alone;  
All gay was the banquet--the revel was long,  
With the pouring of wine and the breathing of song.

'T was an evening of beauty; the air was perfume,  
The earth was all greenness, the trees were all bloom;  
And softly the delicate viol was heard,  
Like the murmur of love or the notes of a bird.

And beautiful maidens moved down in the dance,  
With the magic of motion and sunshine of glance  
And white arms wreathed lightly, and tresses fell free  
As the plumage of birds in some tropical tree.

Where the shrines of foul idols were lighted on high,  
And wantonness tempted the lust of the eye;  
Midst rites of obsceneness, strange, loathsome, abhorred,  
The blasphemmer scoffed at the name of the Lord.

Hark! the growl of the thunder,--the quaking of earth!  
Woe, woe to the worship, and woe to the mirth!  
The black sky has opened; there's flame in the air;  
The red arm of vengeance is lifted and bare!

Then the shriek of the dying rose wild where the song  
And the low tone of love had been whispered along;  
For the fierce flames went lightly o'er palace and bower,  
Like the red tongues of demons, to blast and devour!

Down, down on the fallen the red ruin rained,  
And the reveller sank with his wine-cup undrained;  
The foot of the dancer, the music's loved thrill,  
And the shout and the laughter grew suddenly still.

The last throb of anguish was fearfully given;  
The last eye glared forth in its madness on Heaven!  
The last groan of horror rose wildly and vain,  
And death brooded over the pride of the Plain!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Clear Vision

I did but dream. I never knew  
What charms our sternest season wore.  
Was never yet the sky so blue,  
Was never earth so white before.  
Till now I never saw the glow  
Of sunset on yon hills of snow,  
And never learned the bough's designs  
Of beauty in its leafless lines.

Did ever such a morning break  
As that my eastern windows see?  
Did ever such a moonlight take  
Weird photographs of shrub and tree?  
Rang ever bells so wild and fleet  
The music of the winter street?  
Was ever yet a sound by half  
So merry as you school-boy's laugh?

O Earth! with gladness overfraught,  
No added charm thy face hath found;  
Within my heart the change is wrought,  
My footsteps make enchanted ground.  
From couch of pain and curtained room  
Forth to thy light and air I come,  
To find in all that meets my eyes  
The freshness of a glad surprise.

Fair seem these winter days, and soon  
Shall blow the warm west-winds of spring,  
To set the unbound rills in tune  
And hither urge the bluebird's wing.  
The vales shall laugh in flowers, the woods  
Grow misty green with leafing buds,  
And violets and wind-flowers sway  
Against the throbbing heart of May.

Break forth, my lips, in praise, and own  
The wiser love severely kind;  
Since, richer for its chastening grown,

I see, whereas I once was blind.  
The world, O Father! hath not wronged  
With loss the life by Thee prolonged;  
But still, with every added year,  
More beautiful Thy works appear!

As Thou hast made thy world without,  
Make Thou more fair my world within;  
Shine through its lingering clouds of doubt;  
Rebuke its haunting shapes of sin;  
Fill, brief or long, my granted span  
Of life with love to thee and man;  
Strike when thou wilt the hour of rest,  
But let my last days be my best!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Common Question

Behind us at our evening meal  
The gray bird ate his fill,  
Swung downward by a single claw,  
And wiped his hooked bill.

He shook his wings and crimson tail,  
And set his head aslant,  
And, in his sharp, impatient way,  
Asked, 'What does Charlie want?'

'Fie, silly bird!' I answered, 'tuck  
Your head beneath your wing,  
And go to sleep;'--but o'er and o'er  
He asked the self-same thing.

Then, smiling, to myself I said  
How like are men and birds!  
We all are saying what he says,  
In action or in words.

The boy with whip and top and drum,  
The girl with hoop and doll,  
And men with lands and houses, ask  
The question of Poor Poll.

However full, with something more  
We fain the bag would cram;  
We sigh above our crowded nets  
For fish that never swam.

No bounty of indulgent Heaven  
The vague desire can stay;  
Self-love is still a Tartar mill  
For grinding prayers away.

The dear God hears and pities all;  
He knoweth all our wants;  
And what we blindly ask of Him  
His love withholds or grants.

And so I sometimes think our prayers  
Might well be merged in one;  
And nest and perch and hearth and church  
Repeat, 'Thy will be done.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Conquest Of Finland

ACROSS the frozen marshes  
The winds of autumn blow,  
And the fen-lands of the Wetter  
Are white with early snow.  
But where the low, gray headlands  
Look o'er the Baltic brine,  
A bark is sailing in the track  
Of England's battle-line.  
No wares hath she to barter  
For Bothnia's fish and grain;  
She saileth not for pleasure,  
She saileth not for gain.  
But still by isle or mainland  
She drops her, anchor down,  
Where'er the British cannon  
Rained fire on tower and town.  
Outspake the ancient Amtman,  
At the gate of Helsingfors:  
'Why comes this ship a-spying  
In the track of England's wars?'  
'God bless her,' said the coast-guard, —  
'God bless the ship, I say.  
The holy angels trim the sails  
That speed her on her way!  
'Where'er she drops her anchor,  
The peasant's heart is glad;  
Where'er she spreads her parting sail,  
The peasant's heart is sad.  
'Each wasted town and hamlet  
She visits to restore;  
To roof the shattered cabin,  
And feed the starving poor.  
' The sunken boats of fishers,  
The foraged beeves and grain,  
The spoil of flake and storehouse,  
The good ship brings again.  
'And so to Finland's sorrow  
The sweet amend is made,  
As if the healing hand of Christ

Upon her wounds were laid!  
Then said the gray old Amtman,  
'The will of God be done!  
The battle lost by England's hate,  
By England's love is won!  
'We braved the iron tempest  
That thundered on our shore;  
But when did kindness fail to find  
The key to Finland's door?  
'No more from Aland's ramparts  
Shall warning signal come,  
Nor startled Sweaborg hear again  
The roll of midnight drum.  
'Beside our fierce Black Eagle  
The Dove of Peace shall rest;  
And in the mouths of cannon  
The sea-bird make her nest.  
'For Finland, looking seaward,  
No coming foe shall scan;  
And the holy bells of Abo  
Shall ring, 'Good-will to man!'  
'Then row thy boat, O fisher!  
In peace on lake and bay;  
And thou, young maiden, dance again  
Around the poles of May!  
'Sit down, old men, together,  
Old wives, in quiet spin;  
Henceforth the Anglo-Saxon  
Is the brother of the Finn!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Corn Song

HEAP HIGH the farmer's wintry hoard!  
Heap high the golden corn!  
No richer gift has Autumn poured  
From out her lavish horn!  
Let other lands, exulting, glean  
The apple from the pine,  
The orange from its glossy green,  
The cluster from the vine;

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

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

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

All through the long, bright days of June  
Its leaves grew green and fair,  
And waved in hot midsummer's noon  
Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with autumn's moonlit eves,  
Its harvest-time has come,  
We pluck away the frosted leaves,  
And bear the treasure home.

There, richer than the fabled gift  
Apollo showered of old,  
Fair hands the broken grain shall sift,  
And knead its meal of gold.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk  
Around their costly board;  
Give us the bowl of samp and milk,  
By homespun beauty poured!

Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth  
Sends up its smoky curls,  
Who will not thank the kindly earth  
And bless our farmer girls?

Then shame on all the proud and vain,  
Whose folly laughs to scorn  
The blessing of our hardy grain,  
Our wealth of golden corn!

Let earth withhold her goodly root,  
Let mildew blight the rye,  
Give to the worm the orchard's fruit,  
The wheat-field to the fly:

But let the good old crop adorn  
The hills our fathers trod;  
Still let us, for His golden corn,  
Send up our thanks to God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Countess

TO E. W.

I KNOW not, Time and Space so intervene,  
Whether, still waiting with a trust serene,  
Thou bearest up thy fourscore years and ten,  
Or, called at last, art now Heaven's citizen;  
But, here or there, a pleasant thought of thee,  
Like an old friend, all day has been with me.  
The shy, still boy, for whom thy kindly hand  
Smoothed his hard pathway to the wonder-land  
Of thought and fancy, in gray manhood yet  
Keeps green the memory of his early debt.  
To-day, when truth and falsehood speak their words  
Through hot-lipped cannon and the teeth of swords,  
Listening with quickened heart and ear intent  
To each sharp clause of that stern argument,  
I still can hear at times a softer note  
Of the old pastoral music round me float,  
While through the hot gleam of our civil strife  
Looms the green mirage of a simpler life.  
As, at his alien post, the sentinel  
Drops the old bucket in the homestead well,  
And hears old voices in the winds that toss  
Above his head the live-oak's beard of moss,  
So, in our trial-time, and under skies  
Shadowed by swords like Islam's paradise,  
I wait and watch, and let my fancy stray  
To milder scenes and youth's Arcadian day;  
And howsoe'er the pencil dipped in dreams  
Shades the brown woods or tints the sunset streams,  
The country doctor in the foreground seems,  
Whose ancient sulky down the village lanes  
Dragged, like a war-car, captive ills and pains.  
I could not paint the scenery of my song,  
Mindless of one who looked thereon so long;  
Who, night and day, on duty's lonely round,  
Made friends o' the woods and rocks, and knew the sound  
Of each small brook, and what the hillside trees  
Said to the winds that touched their leafy keys;

Who saw so keenly and so well could paint  
The village-folk, with all their humors quaint,  
The parson ambling on his wall-eyed roan.  
Grave and erect, with white hair backward blown;  
The tough old boatman, half amphibious grown;  
The muttering witch-wife of the gossip's tale,  
And the loud straggler levying his blackmail,--  
Old customs, habits, superstitions, fears,  
All that lies buried under fifty years.  
To thee, as is most fit, I bring my lay,  
And, grateful, own the debt I cannot pay.

. . . . .

Over the wooded northern ridge,  
Between its houses brown,  
To the dark tunnel of the bridge  
The street comes straggling down.

You catch a glimpse, through birch and pine,  
Of gable, roof, and porch,  
The tavern with its swinging sign,  
The sharp horn of the church.

The river's steel-blue crescent curves  
To meet, in ebb and flow,  
The single broken wharf that serves  
For sloop and gundelow.

With salt sea-scents along its shores  
The heavy hay-boats crawl,  
The long antennae of their oars  
In lazy rise and fall.

Along the gray abutment's wall  
The idle shad-net dries;  
The toll-man in his cobbler's stall  
Sits smoking with closed eyes.

You hear the pier's low undertone  
Of waves that chafe and gnaw;  
You start,--a skipper's horn is blown

To raise the creaking draw.

At times a blacksmith's anvil sounds  
With slow and sluggard beat,  
Or stage-coach on its dusty rounds  
Fakes up the staring street.

A place for idle eyes and ears,  
A cobwebbed nook of dreams;  
Left by the stream whose waves are years  
The stranded village seems.

And there, like other moss and rust,  
The native dweller clings,  
And keeps, in uninquiring trust,  
The old, dull round of things.

The fisher drops his patient lines,  
The farmer sows his grain,  
Content to hear the murmuring pines  
Instead of railroad-train.

Go where, along the tangled steep  
That slopes against the west,  
The hamlet's buried idlers sleep  
In still profounder rest.

Throw back the locust's flowery plume,  
The birch's pale-green scarf,  
And break the web of brier and bloom  
From name and epitaph.

A simple muster-roll of death,  
Of pomp and romance shorn,  
The dry, old names that common breath  
Has cheapened and outworn.

Yet pause by one low mound, and part  
The wild vines o'er it laced,  
And read the words by rustic art  
Upon its headstone traced.

Haply yon white-haired villager  
Of fourscore years can say  
What means the noble name of her  
Who sleeps with common clay.

An exile from the Gascon land  
Found refuge here and rest,  
And loved, of all the village band,  
Its fairest and its best.

He knelt with her on Sabbath morns,  
He worshipped through her eyes,  
And on the pride that doubts and scorns  
Stole in her faith's surprise.

Her simple daily life he saw  
By homeliest duties tried,  
In all things by an untaught law  
Of fitness justified.

For her his rank aside he laid;  
He took the hue and tone  
Of lowly life and toil, and made  
Her simple ways his own.

Yet still, in gay and careless ease,  
To harvest-field or dance  
He brought the gentle courtesies,  
The nameless grace of France.

And she who taught him love not less  
From him she loved in turn  
Caught in her sweet unconsciousness  
What love is quick to learn.

Each grew to each in pleased accord,  
Nor knew the gazing town  
If she looked upward to her lord  
Or he to her looked down.

How sweet, when summer's day was o'er,  
His violin's mirth and wail,

The walk on pleasant Newbury's shore,  
The river's moonlit sail!

Ah! life is brief, though love be long;  
The altar and the bier,  
The burial hymn and bridal song,  
Were both in one short year!

Her rest is quiet on the hill,  
Beneath the locust's bloom  
Far off her lover sleeps as still  
Within his scutcheoned tomb.

The Gascon lord, the village maid,  
In death still clasp their hands;  
The love that levels rank and grade  
Unites their severed lands.

What matter whose the hillside grave,  
Or whose the blazoned stone?  
Forever to her western wave  
Shall whisper blue Garonne!

O Love!--so hallowing every soil  
That gives thy sweet flower room,  
Wherever, nursed by ease or toil,  
The human heart takes bloom!--

Plant of lost Eden, from the sod  
Of sinful earth unriven,  
White blossom of the trees of God  
Dropped down to us from heaven!

This tangled waste of mound and stone  
Is holy for thy sale;  
A sweetness which is all thy own  
Breathes out from fern and brake.

And while ancestral pride shall twine  
The Gascon's tomb with flowers,  
Fall sweetly here, O song of mine,  
With summer's bloom and showers!

And let the lines that severed seem  
Unite again in thee,  
As western wave and Gallic stream  
Are mingled in one sea!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Crisis

ACROSS the Stony Mountains, o'er the desert's drouth and sand,  
The circles of our empire touch the western ocean's strand;  
From slumberous Timpanogos, to Gila, wild and free,  
Flowing down from Nuevo-Leon to California's sea;  
And from the mountains of the east, to Santa Rosa's shore,  
The eagles of Mexitli shall beat the air no more.  
O Vale of Rio Bravo! Let thy simple children weep;  
Close watch about their holy fire let maids of Pecos keep;  
Let Taos send her cry across Sierra Madre's pines,  
And Santa Barbara toll her bells amidst her corn and vines;  
For lo! the pale land-seekers come, with eager eyes of gain,  
Wide scattering, like the bison herds on broad Salada's plain.  
Let Sacramento's herdsmen heed what sound the winds bring down  
Of footsteps on the crisping snow, from cold Nevada's crown!  
Full hot and fast the Saxon rides, with rein of travel slack,  
And, bending o'er his saddle, leaves the sunrise at his back;  
By many a lonely river, and gorge of fir and pine,  
On many a wintry hill-top, his nightly camp-fires shine.  
O countrymen and brothers! that land of lake and plain,  
Of salt wastes alternating with valleys fat with grain;  
Of mountains white with winter, looking downward, cold, serene,  
On their feet with spring-vines tangled and lapped in softest green;  
Swift through whose black volcanic gates, o'er many a sunny vale,  
Wind-like the Arapahoe sweeps the bison's dusty trail!  
Great spaces yet untravelled, great lakes whose mystic shores  
The Saxon rifle never heard, nor dip of Saxon oars;  
Great herds that wander all unwatched, wild steeds that none have tamed,  
Strange fish in unknown streams, and birds the Saxon never named;  
Deep mines, dark mountain crucibles, where Nature's chemic powers  
Work out the Great Designer's will; all these ye say are ours!  
Forever ours! for good or ill, on us the burden lies;  
God's balance, watched by angels, is hung across the skies.  
Shall Justice, Truth, and Freedom turn the poised and trembling scale?  
Or shall the Evil triumph, and robber Wrong prevail?  
Shall the broad land o'er which our flag in starry splendor waves,  
Forego through us its freedom, and bear the tread of slaves?  
The day is breaking in the East of which the prophets told,  
And brightens up the sky of Time the Christian Age of Gold;  
Old Might to Right is yielding, battle blade to clerkly pen,

Earth's monarchs are her peoples, and her serfs stand up as men;  
The isles rejoice together, in a day are nations born,  
And the slave walks free in Tunis, and by Stamboul's Golden Horn!  
Is this, O countrymen of mine! a day for us to sow  
The soil of new-gained empire with slavery's seeds of woe?  
To feed with our fresh life-blood the Old World's cast-off crime,  
Dropped, like some monstrous early birth, from the tired lap of Time?  
To run anew the evil race the old lost nations ran,  
And die like them of unbelief of God, and wrong of man?  
Great Heaven! Is this our mission? End in this the prayers and tears,  
The toil, the strife, the watchings of our younger, better years?  
Still as the Old World rolls in light, shall ours in shadow turn,  
A beamless Chaos, cursed of God, through outer darkness borne?  
Where the far nations looked for light, a blackness in the air?  
Where for words of hope they listened, the long wail of despair?  
The Crisis presses on us; face to face with us it stands,  
With solemn lips of question, like the Sphinx in Egypt's sands!  
This day we fashion Destiny, our web of Fate we spin;  
This day for all hereafter choose we holiness or sin,  
Even now from starry Gerizim, or Ebal's cloudy crown  
We call the dews of blessing or the bolts of cursing down!  
By all for which the martyrs bore their agony and shame;  
By all the warning words of truth with which the prophets came;  
By the Future which awaits us; by all the hopes which cast  
Their faint and trembling beams across the blackness of the Past;  
And by the blessed thought of Him who for Earth's freedom died,  
O my people! O my brothers! let us choose the righteous side.  
So shall the Northern pioneer go joyful on his way;  
To wed Penobscot's waters to San Francisco's bay;  
To make the rugged places smooth, and sow the vales with grain;  
And bear, with Liberty and Law, the Bible in his train:  
The mighty West shall bless the East, and sea shall answer sea,  
And mountain unto mountain call, Praise God for we are free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Cross

'The cross, if rightly borne, shall be  
No burden, but support to thee;  
So, moved of old time for our sake,  
The holy monk of Kempen spake.

Thou brave and true one! upon whom  
Was laid the cross of martyrdom,  
How didst thou, in thy generous youth,  
Bear witness to this blessed truth!

Thy cross of suffering and of shame  
A staff within thy hands became,  
In paths where faith alone could see  
The Master's steps supporting thee.

Thine was the seed-time; God alone  
Beholds the end of what is sown;  
Beyond our vision, weak and dim,  
The harvest-time is hid with Him.

Yet, unforgotten where it lies,  
That seed of generous sacrifice,  
Though seeming on the desert cast,  
Shall rise with bloom and fruit at last.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Crucifixion

Sunlight upon Judha's hills!  
And on the waves of Galilee;  
On Jordan's stream, and on the rills  
That feed the dead and sleeping sea!  
Most freshly from the green wood springs  
The light breeze on its scented wings;  
And gayly quiver in the sun  
The cedar tops of Lebanon!

A few more hours,--a change hath come!  
The sky is dark without a cloud!  
The shouts of wrath and joy are dumb,  
And proud knees unto earth are bowed.  
A change is on the hill of Death,  
The helmed watchers pant for breath,  
And turn with wild and maniac eyes  
From the dark scene of sacrifice!

That Sacrifice!--the death of Him,--  
The Christ of God, the holy One!  
Well may the conscious Heaven grow dim,  
And blacken the beholding, Sun.  
The wonted light hath fled away,  
Night settles on the middle day,  
And earthquake from his caverned bed  
Is waking with a thrill of dread!

The dead are waking underneath!  
Their prison door is rent away!  
And, ghastly with the seal of death,  
They wander in the eye of day!  
The temple of the Cherubim,  
The House of God is cold and dim;  
A curse is on its trembling walls,  
Its mighty veil asunder falls!

Well may the cavern-depths of Earth  
Be shaken, and her mountains nod;  
Well may the sheeted dead come forth

To see the suffering son of God!  
Well may the temple-shrine grow dim,  
And shadows veil the Cherubim,  
When He, the chosen one of Heaven,  
A sacrifice for guilt is given!

And shall the sinful heart, alone,  
Behold unmoved the fearful hour,  
When Nature trembled on her throne,  
And Death resigned his iron power?  
Oh, shall the heart--whose sinfulness  
Gave keenness to His sore distress,  
And added to His tears of blood--  
Refuse its trembling gratitude!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Cry Of A Lost Soul

In that black forest, where, when day is done,  
With a snake's stillness glides the Amazon  
Darkly from sunset to the rising sun,

A cry, as of the pained heart of the wood,  
The long, despairing moan of solitude  
And darkness and the absence of all good,

Startles the traveller, with a sound so drear,  
So full of hopeless agony and fear,  
His heart stands still and listens like his ear.

The guide, as if he heard a dead-bell toll,  
Starts, drops his oar against the gunwale's thole,  
Crosses himself, and whispers, 'A lost soul!'

'No, Senor, not a bird. I know it well,--  
It is the pained soul of some infidel  
Or cursed heretic that cries from hell.

'Poor fool! with hope still mocking his despair,  
He wanders, shrieking on the midnight air  
For human pity and for Christian prayer.

'Saints strike him dumb! Our Holy Mother hath  
No prayer for him who, sinning unto death,  
Burns always in the furnace of God's wrath!'

Thus to the baptized pagan's cruel lie,  
Lending new horror to that mournful cry,  
The voyager listens, making no reply.

Dim burns the boat-lamp: shadows deepen round,  
From giant trees with snake-like creepers wound,  
And the black water glides without a sound.

But in the traveller's heart a secret sense  
Of nature plastic to benign intents,  
And an eternal good in Providence,

Lifts to the starry calm of heaven his eyes;  
And to! rebuking all earth's ominous cries,  
The Cross of pardon lights the tropic skies!

'Father of all!' he urges his strong plea,  
'Thou lovest all: Thy erring child may be  
Lost to himself, but never lost to Thee!

'All souls are Thine; the wings of morning bear  
None from that Presence which is everywhere,  
Nor hell itself can hide, for Thou art there.

'Through sins of sense, perversities of will,  
Through doubt and pain, through guilt and shame and ill,  
Thy pitying eye is on Thy creature still.

'Wilt thou not make, Eternal Source and Goal!  
In Thy long years, life's broken circle whole,  
And change to praise the cry of a lost soul?'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Curse Of The Charter-Breakers

IN Westminster's royal halls,  
Robed in their pontificals,  
England's ancient prelates stood  
For the people's right and good.  
Closed around the waiting crowd,  
Dark and still, like winter's cloud;  
King and council, lord and knight,  
Squire and yeoman, stood in sight;  
Stood to hear the priest rehearse,  
In God's name, the Church's curse,  
By the tapers round them lit,  
Slowly, sternly uttering it.  
'Right of voice in framing laws,  
Right of peers to try each cause;  
Peasant homestead, mean and small,  
Sacred as the monarch's hall, —  
'Whoso lays his hand on these,  
England's ancient liberties;  
Whoso breaks, by word or deed,  
England's vow at Runnymede;  
'Be he Prince or belted knight,  
Whatsoever his rank or might,  
If the highest, then the worst,  
Let him live and die accursed.  
'Thou, who to Thy Church hast given  
Keys alike, of hell and heaven,  
Make our word and witness sure,  
Let the curse we speak endure!'   
Silent, while that curse was said,  
Every bare and listening head  
Bowed in reverent awe, and then  
All the people said, Amen!  
Seven times the bells have tolled,  
For the centuries gray and old,  
Since that stoled and mitred band  
Cursed the tyrants of their land.  
Since the priesthood, like a tower,  
Stood between the poor and power;  
And the wronged and trodden down

Blessed the abbot's shaven crown.  
Gone, thank God, their wizard spell,  
Lost, their keys of heaven and hell;  
Yet I sigh for men as bold  
As those bearded priests of old.  
Now, too oft the priesthood wait  
At the threshold of the state;  
Waiting for the beck and nod  
Of its power as law and God.  
Fraud exults, while solemn words  
Sanctify his stolen hoards;  
Slavery laughs, while ghostly lips  
Bless his manacles and whips.  
Not on them the poor rely,  
Not to them looks liberty,  
Who with fawning falsehood cower  
To the wrong, when clothed with power.  
Oh, to see them meanly cling,  
Round the master, round the king,  
Sported with, and sold and bought, —  
Pitifuller sight is not!  
Tell me not that this must be:  
God's true priest is always free;  
Free, the needed truth to speak,  
Right the wronged, and raise the weak.  
Not to fawn on wealth and state,  
Leaving Lazarus at the gate;  
Not to peddle creeds like wares;  
Got to mutter hireling prayers;  
Nor to paint the new life's bliss  
On the sable ground of this;  
Golden streets for idle knave,  
Sabbath rest for weary slave!  
Not for words and works like these,  
Priest of God, thy mission is;  
But to make earth's desert glad,  
In its Eden greenness clad;  
And to level manhood bring  
Lord and peasant, serf and king;  
And the Christ of God to find  
In the humblest of thy kind!.  
Thine to work as well as pray,

Clearing thorny wrongs away;  
Plucking up the weeds of sin,  
Letting heaven's warm sunshine in;  
Watching on the hills of Faith.;  
Listening what the spirit saith,  
Of the dim-seen light afar,  
Growing like a nearing star.  
God's interpreter art thou,  
To the waiting ones below;  
'Twixt them and its light midway  
Heralding the better day;  
Catching gleams of temple spires,  
Hearing notes of angel choirs,  
Where, as yet unseen of them,  
Comes the New Jerusalem!  
Like the seer of Patmos gazing,  
On the glory downward blazing;  
Till upon Earth's grateful sod  
Rests the City of our God!

--

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Cypress-Tree Of Ceylon

THEY sat in silent watchfulness  
The sacred cypress-tree about,  
And, from beneath old wrinkled brows,  
Their failing eyes looked out.

Gray Age and Sickness waiting there  
Through weary night and lingering day,--  
Grim as the idols at their side,  
And motionless as they.

Unheeded in the boughs above  
The song of Ceylon's birds was sweet;  
Unseen of them the island flowers  
Bloomed brightly at their feet.

O'er them the tropic night-storm swept,  
The thunder crashed on rock and hill;  
The cloud-fire on their eyeballs blazed,  
Yet there they waited still!

What was the world without to them?  
The Moslem's sunset-call, the dance  
Of Ceylon's maids, the passing gleam  
Of battle-flag and lance?

They waited for that falling leaf  
Of which the wandering Jogeas sing:  
Which lends once more to wintry age  
The greenness of its spring.

Oh, if these poor and blinded ones  
In trustful patience wait to feel  
O'er torpid pulse and failing limb  
A youthful freshness steal;

Shall we, who sit beneath that Tree  
Whose healing leaves of life are shed,  
In answer to the breath of prayer,  
Upon the waiting head;

Not to restore our failing forms,  
And build the spirit's broken shrine,  
But on the fainting soul to shed  
A light and life divine--

Shall we grow weary in our watch,  
And murmur at the long delay?  
Impatient of our Father's time  
And His appointed way?

Or shall the stir of outward things  
Allure and claim the Christian's eye,  
When on the heathen watcher's ear  
Their powerless murmurs die?

Alas! a deeper test of faith  
Than prison cell or martyr's stake,  
The self-abasing watchfulness  
Of silent prayer may make.

We gird us bravely to rebuke  
Our erring brother in the wrong,--  
And in the ear of Pride and Power  
Our warning voice is strong.

Easier to smite with Peter's sword  
Than 'watch one hour' in humbling prayer.  
Life's 'great things,' like the Syrian lord,  
Our hearts can do and dare.

But oh! we shrink from Jordan's side,  
From waters which alone can save;

And murmur for Abana's banks  
And Pharpar's brighter wave.

O Thou, who in the garden's shade  
Didst wake Thy weary ones again,  
Who slumbered at that fearful hour  
Forgetful of Thy pain;

Bend o'er us now, as over them,  
And set our sleep-bound spirits free,  
Nor leave us slumbering in the watch  
Our souls should keep with Thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Dead Feast Of The Kol-Folk

We have opened the door,  
Once, twice, thrice!  
We have swept the floor,  
We have boiled the rice.  
Come hither, come hither!  
Come from the far lands,  
Come from the star lands,  
Come as before!  
We lived long together,  
We loved one another;  
Come back to our life.  
Come father, come mother,  
Come sister and brother,  
Child, husband, and wife,  
For you we are sighing.  
Come take your old places,  
Come look in our faces,  
The dead on the dying,  
Come home!

We have opened the door,  
Once, twice, thrice!  
We have kindled the coals,  
And we boil the rice  
For the feast of souls.  
Come hither, come hither!  
Think not we fear you,  
Whose hearts are so near you.  
Come tenderly thought on,  
Come all unforgotten,  
Come from the shadow-lands,  
From the dim meadow-lands  
Where the pale grasses bend  
Low to our sighing.  
Come father, come mother,  
Come sister and brother,  
Come husband and friend,  
The dead to the dying,  
Come home!

We have opened the door  
You entered so oft;  
For the feast of souls  
We have kindled the coals,  
And we boil the rice soft.  
Come you who are dearest  
To us who are nearest,  
Come hither, come hither,  
From out the wild weather;  
The storm clouds are flying,  
The peepul is sighing;  
Come in from the rain.  
Come father, come mother,  
Come sister and brother,  
Come husband and lover,  
Beneath our roof-cover.  
Look on us again,  
The dead on the dying,  
Come home!

We have opened the door!  
For the feast of souls  
We have kindled the coals  
We may kindle no more!  
Snake, fever, and famine,  
The curse of the Brahmin,  
The sun and the dew,  
They burn us, they bite us,  
They waste us and smite us;  
Our days are but few  
In strange lands far yonder  
To wonder and wander  
We hasten to you.  
List then to our sighing,  
While yet we are here  
Nor seeing nor hearing,  
We wait without fearing,  
To feel you draw near.  
O dead, to the dying  
Come home!



# The Dead Ship Of Harpswell

What flecks the outer gray beyond  
The sundown's golden trail?  
The white flash of a sea-bird's wing,  
Or gleam of slanting sail?  
Let young eyes watch from Neck and Point,  
And sea-worn elders pray,--  
The ghost of what was once a ship  
Is sailing up the bay.

From gray sea-fog, from icy drift,  
From peril and from pain,  
The home-bound fisher greets thy lights,  
O hundred-harbored Maine!  
But many a keel shall seaward turn,  
And many a sail outstand,  
When, tall and white, the Dead Ship looms  
Against the dusk of land.

She rounds the headland's bristling pines;  
She threads the isle-set bay;  
No spur of breeze can speed her on,  
Nor ebb of tide delay.  
Old men still walk the Isle of Orr  
Who tell her date and name,  
Old shipwrights sit in Freeport yards  
Who hewed her oaken frame.

What weary doom of baffled quest,  
Thou sad sea-ghost, is thine?  
What makes thee in the haunts of home  
A wonder and a sign?  
No foot is on thy silent deck,  
Upon thy helm no hand;  
No ripple hath the soundless wind  
That smites thee from the land!

For never comes the ship to port,  
Howe'er the breeze may be;  
Just when she nears the waiting shore

She drifts again to sea.  
No tack of sail, nor turn of helm,  
Nor sheer of veering side;  
Stern-fore she drives to sea and night,  
Against the wind and tide.

In vain o'er Harpswell Neck the star  
Of evening guides her in;  
In vain for her the lamps are lit  
Within thy tower, Seguin!  
In vain the harbor-boat shall hail,  
In vain the pilot call;  
No hand shall reef her spectral sail,  
Or let her anchor fall.

Shake, brown old wives, with dreary joy,  
Your gray-head hints of ill;  
And, over sick-beds whispering low,  
Your prophecies fulfil.  
Some home amid yon birchen trees  
Shall drape its door with woe;  
And slowly where the Dead Ship sails,  
The burial boat shall row!

From Wolf Neck and from Flying Point,  
From island and from main,  
From sheltered cove and tided creek,  
Shall glide the funeral train.  
The dead-boat with the bearers four,  
The mourners at her stern,--  
And one shall go the silent way  
Who shall no more return!

And men shall sigh, and women weep,  
Whose dear ones pale and pine,  
And sadly over sunset seas  
Await the ghostly sign.  
They know not that its sails are filled  
By pity's tender breath,  
Nor see the Angel at the helm  
Who steers the Ship of Death!

. . . . .

'Chill as a down-east breeze should be,'  
The Book-man said. 'A ghostly touch  
The legend has. I'm glad to see  
Your flying Yankee beat the Dutch.'  
'Well, here is something of the sort  
Which one midsummer day I caught  
In Narragansett Bay, for lack of fish.'  
'We wait,' the Traveller said;  
'serve hot or cold your dish.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Demon Of The Study

The Brownie sits in the Scotchman's room,  
And eats his meat and drinks his ale,  
And beats the maid with her unused broom,  
And the lazy lout with his idle flail;  
But he sweeps the floor and threshes the corn,  
And hies him away ere the break of dawn.

The shade of Denmark fled from the sun,  
And the Cocklane ghost from the barn-loft cheer,  
The fiend of Faust was a faithful one,  
Agrippa's demon wrought in fear,  
And the devil of Martin Luther sat  
By the stout monk's side in social chat.

The Old Man of the Sea, on the neck of him  
Who seven times crossed the deep,  
Twined closely each lean and withered limb,  
Like the nightmare in one's sleep.  
But he drank of the wine, and Sindbad cast  
The evil weight from his back at last.

But the demon that cometh day by day  
To my quiet room and fireside nook,  
Where the casement light falls dim and gray  
On faded painting and ancient book,  
Is a sorrier one than any whose names  
Are chronicled well by good King James.

No bearer of burdens like Caliban,  
No runner of errands like Ariel,  
He comes in the shape of a fat old man,  
Without rap of knuckle or pull of bell;  
And whence he comes, or whither he goes,  
I know as I do of the wind which blows.

A stout old man with a greasy hat  
Slouched heavily down to his dark, red nose,  
And two gray eyes enveloped in fat,  
Looking through glasses with iron bows.

Read ye, and heed ye, and ye who can,  
Guard well your doors from that old man!

He comes with a careless 'How d' ye do?'  
And seats himself in my elbow-chair;  
And my morning paper and pamphlet new  
Fall forthwith under his special care,  
And he wipes his glasses and clears his throat,  
And, button by button, unfolds his coat.

And then he reads from paper and book,  
In a low and husky asthmatic tone,  
With the stolid sameness of posture and look  
Of one who reads to himself alone;  
And hour after hour on my senses come  
That husky wheeze and that dolorous hum.

The price of stocks, the auction sales,  
The poet's song and the lover's glee,  
The horrible murders, the seaboard gales,  
The marriage list, and the jeu d'esprit,  
All reach my ear in the self-same tone,-  
I shudder at each, but the fiend reads on!

Oh, sweet as the lapse of water at noon  
O'er the mossy roots of some forest tree,  
The sigh of the wind in the woods of June,  
Or sound of flutes o'er a moonlight sea,  
Or the low soft music, perchance, which seems  
To float through the slumbering singer's dreams,

So sweet, so dear is the silvery tone,  
Of her in whose features I sometimes look,  
As I sit at eve by her side alone,  
And we read by turns, from the self-same book,  
Some tale perhaps of the olden time,  
Some lover's romance or quaint old rhyme.

Then when the story is one of woe,-  
Some prisoner's plaint through his dungeon-bar,  
Her blue eye glistens with tears, and low  
Her voice sinks down like a moan afar;

And I seem to hear that prisoner's wail,  
And his face looks on me worn and pale.

And when she reads some merrier song,  
Her voice is glad as an April bird's,  
And when the tale is of war and wrong,  
A trumpet's summons is in her words,  
And the rush of the hosts I seem to hear,  
And see the tossing of plume and spear!

Oh, pity me then, when, day by day,  
The stout fiend darkens my parlor door;  
And reads me perchance the self-same lay  
Which melted in music, the night before,  
From lips as the lips of Hylas sweet,  
And moved like twin roses which zephyrs meet!

I cross my floor with a nervous tread,  
I whistle and laugh and sing and shout,  
I flourish my cane above his head,  
And stir up the fire to roast him out;  
I topple the chairs, and drum on the pane,  
And press my hands on my ears, in vain!

I've studied Glanville and James the wise,  
And wizard black-letter tomes which treat  
Of demons of every name and size  
Which a Christian man is presumed to meet,  
But never a hint and never a line  
Can I find of a reading fiend like mine.

I've crossed the Psalter with Brady and Tate,  
And laid the Primer above them all,  
I've nailed a horseshoe over the grate,  
And hung a wig to my parlor wall  
Once worn by a learned Judge, they say,  
At Salem court in the witchcraft day!

'Conjuro te, sceleratissime,  
Abire ad tuum locum!'-still  
Like a visible nightmare he sits by me,-  
The exorcism has lost its skill;

And I hear again in my haunted room  
The husky wheeze and the dolorous hum!

Ah! commend me to Mary Magdalen  
With her sevenfold plagues, to the wandering Jew,  
To the terrors which haunted Orestes when  
The furies his midnight curtains drew,  
But charm him off, ye who charm him can,  
That reading demon, that fat old man!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Disenthralled

HE had bowed down to drunkenness,  
An abject worshipper:  
The pride of manhood's pulse had grown  
Too faint and cold to stir;  
And he had given his spirit up  
To the unblest thrall,  
And bowing to the poison cup,  
He gloried in his fall!  
There came a change —the cloud rolled off,  
And light fell on his brain —  
And like the passing of a dream  
That cometh not again,  
The shadow of the spirit fled.  
He saw the gulf before,  
He shuddered at the waste behind,  
And was a man once more.  
He shook the serpent folds away,  
That gathered round his heart,  
As shakes the swaying forest-oak  
Its poison vine apart;  
He stood erect; returning pride  
Grew terrible within,  
And conscience sat in judgment, on  
His most familiar sin.  
The light of Intellect again  
Along his pathway shone;  
And Reason like a monarch sat  
Upon his olden throne.  
The honored and the wise once more  
Within his presence came;  
And lingered oft on lovely lips  
His once forbidden name.  
There may be glory in the might,  
That treadeth nations down;  
Wreaths for the crimson conqueror,  
Pride for the kingly crown;  
But nobler is that triumph hour,  
The disenthralled shall find,  
When evil passion boweth down,

Unto the Godlike mind!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Dole Of Jarl Thorkell

THE land was pale with famine  
And racked with fever-pain;  
The frozen fiords were fishless,  
The earth withheld her grain.

Men saw the boding Fylgja  
Before them come and go,  
And, through their dreams, the Urdarmoon  
From west to east sailed slow.

Jarl Thorkell of Thevera  
At Yule-time made his vow;  
On Rykdal's holy Doom-stone  
He slew to Frey his cow.

To bounteous Frey he slew her;  
To Skuld, the younger Norn,  
Who watches over birth and death,  
He gave her calf unborn.

And his little gold-haired daughter  
Took up the sprinkling-rod,  
And smeared with blood the temple  
And the wide lips of the god.

Hoarse below, the winter water  
Ground its ice-blocks o'er and o'er;  
Jets of foam, like ghosts of dead waves,  
Rose and fell along the shore.

The red torch of the Jokul,  
Aloft in icy space,  
Shone down on the bloody Horg-stones  
And the statue's carven face.

And closer round and grimmer  
Beneath its baleful light  
The Jotun shapes of mountains  
Came crowding through the night.

The gray-haired Hersir trembled  
As a flame by wind is blown;  
A weird power moved his white lips,  
And their voice was not his own.

'The AEsir thirst!' he muttered;  
'The gods must have more blood  
Before the tun shall blossom  
Or fish shall fill the flood.

'The AEsir thirst and hunger,  
And hence our blight and ban;  
The mouths of the strong gods water  
For the flesh and blood of man!

'Whom shall we give the strong ones?  
Not warriors, sword on thigh;  
But let the nursling infant  
And bedrid old man die.'

'So be it!' cried the young men,  
'There needs nor doubt nor parole.'  
But, knitting hard his red brows,  
In silence stood the Jarl.

A sound of woman's weeping  
At the temple door was heard,  
But the old men bowed their white heads,  
And answered not a word.

Then the Dream-wife of Thingvalla,  
A Vala young and fair,  
Sang softly, stirring with her breath  
The veil of her loose hair.

She sang: 'The winds from Alfheim  
Bring never sound of strife;  
The gifts for Frey the meetest  
Are not of death, but life.

'He loves the grass-green meadows,

The grazing kine's sweet breath;  
He loathes your bloody Horg-stones,  
Your gifts that smell of death.

'No wrong by wrong is righted,  
No pain is cured by pain;  
The blood that smokes from Doom-rings  
Falls back in redder rain.

'The gods are what you make them,  
As earth shall Asgard prove;  
And hate will come of hating,  
And love will come of love.

'Make dole of skyr and black bread  
That old and young may live;  
And look to Frey for favor  
When first like Frey you give.

'Even now o'er Njord's sea-meadows  
The summer dawn begins  
The tun shall have its harvest,  
The fiord its glancing fins.'

Then up and swore Jarl Thorkell  
'By Gimli and by Hel,  
O Vala of Thingvalla,  
Thou singest wise and well!

'Too dear the AEsir's favors  
Bought with our children's lives;  
Better die than shame in living  
Our mothers and our wives.

'The full shall give his portion  
To him who hath most need;  
Of curdled skyr and black bread,  
Be daily dole decreed.'

He broke from off his neck-chain  
Three links of beaten gold;  
And each man, at his bidding,

Brought gifts for young and old.

Then mothers nursed their children,  
And daughters fed their sires,  
And Health sat down with Plenty  
Before the next Yule fires.

The Horg-stones stand in Rykdal;  
The Doom-ring still remains;  
But the snows of a thousand winters  
Have washed away the stains.

Christ ruleth now; the Asir  
Have found their twilight dim;  
And, wiser than she dreamed, of old  
The Vala sang of Him

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Double-Headed Snake Of Newbury

Far away in the twilight time  
Of every people, in every clime,  
Dragons and griffins and monsters dire,  
Born of water, and air, and fire,  
Or nursed, like the Python, in the mud  
And ooze of the old Deucalion flood,  
Crawl and wriggle and foam with rage,  
Through dusk tradition and ballad age.  
So from the childhood of Newbury town  
And its time of fable the tale comes down  
Of a terror which haunted bush and brake,  
The Amphisbaena, the Double Snake!

Thou who makest the tale thy mirth,  
Consider that strip of Christian earth  
On the desolate shore of a sailless sea,  
Full of terror and mystery,  
Half redeemed from the evil hold  
Of the wood so dreary, and dark, and old,  
Which drank with its lips of leaves the dew  
When Time was young, and the world was new,  
And wove its shadows with sun and moon,  
Ere the stones of Cheops were squared and hewn.  
Think of the sea's dread monotone,  
Of the mournful wail from the pine-wood blown,  
Of the strange, vast splendors that lit the North,  
Of the troubled throes of the quaking earth,  
And the dismal tales the Indian told,  
Till the settler's heart at his hearth grew cold,  
And he shrank from the tawny wizard boasts,  
And the hovering shadows seemed full of ghosts,  
And above, below, and on every side,  
The fear of his creed seemed verified;-  
And think, if his lot were now thine own,  
To grope with terrors nor named nor known,  
How laxer muscle and weaker nerve  
And a feebler faith thy need might serve;  
And own to thyself the wonder more  
That the snake had two heads, and not a score!

Whether he lurked in the Oldtown fen  
Or the gray earth-flax of the Devil's Den,  
Or swam in the wooded Artichoke,  
Or coiled by the Northman's Written Rock,  
Nothing on record is left to show;  
Only the fact that he lived, we know,  
And left the cast of a double head  
In the scaly mask which he yearly shed.  
For he carried a head where his tail should be,  
And the two, of course, could never agree,  
But wriggled about with main and might,  
Now to the left and now to the right;  
Pulling and twisting this way and that,  
Neither knew what the other was at.

A snake with two beads, lurking so near!  
Judge of the wonder, guess at the fear!  
Think what ancient gossips might say,  
Shaking their heads in their dreary way,  
Between the meetings on Sabbath-day!  
How urchins, searching at day's decline  
The Common Pasture for sheep or kine,  
The terrible double-ganger heard  
In leafy rustle or whir of bird!  
Think what a zest it gave to the sport,  
In berry-time, of the younger sort,  
As over pastures blackberry-twined,  
Reuben and Dorothy lagged behind,  
And closer and closer, for fear of harm,  
The maiden clung to her lover's arm;  
And how the spark, who was forced to stay,  
By his sweetheart's fears, till the break of day,  
Thanked the snake for the fond delay.

Far and wide the tale was told,  
Like a snowball growing while it rolled.  
The nurse hushed with it the baby's cry;  
And it served, in the worthy minister's eye,  
To paint the primitive serpent by.  
Cotton Mather came galloping down  
All the way to Newbury town,

With his eyes agog and his ears set wide,  
And his marvellous inkhorn at his side;  
Stirring the while in the shallow pool  
Of his brains for the lore he learned at school,  
To garnish the story, with here a streak  
Of Latin, and there another of Greek  
And the tales he heard and the notes he took,  
Behold! are they not in his Wonder-Book?

Stories, like dragons, are hard to kill.  
If the snake does not, the tale runs still  
In Byfield Meadows, on Pipestave Hill.  
And still, whenever husband and wife  
Publish the shame of their daily strife,  
And, with mad cross-purpose, tug and strain  
At either end of the marriage-chain,  
The gossips say, with a knowing shake  
Of their gray heads, 'Look at the Double Snake  
One in body and two in will,  
The Amphisbaena is living still!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Dream Of Pio Nono

IT chanced that while the pious troops of France  
Fought in the crusade Pio Nono preached,  
What time the holy Bourbons stayed his hands  
(The Hur and Aaron meet for such a Moses),  
Stretched forth from Naples towards rebellious Rome  
To bless the ministry of Oudinot,  
And sanctify his iron homilies  
And sharp persuasions of the bayonet,  
That the great pontiff fell asleep, and dreamed.  
He stood by Lake Tiberias, in the sun  
Of the bright Orient; and beheld the lame,  
The sick, and blind, kneel at the Master's feet,  
And rise up whole. And, sweetly over all,  
Dropping the ladder of their hymn of praise  
From heaven to earth, in silver rounds of song,  
He heard the blessed angels sing of peace,  
Good-will to man, and glory to the Lord.  
Then one, with feet unshod, and leathern face  
Hardened and darkened by fierce summer suns  
And hot winds of the desert, closer drew  
His fisher's haick, and girded up his loins,  
And spake, as one who had authority:  
'Come thou with me.'  
Lakeside and eastern sky  
And the sweet song of angels passed away,  
And, with a dream's alacrity of change,  
The priest, and the swart fisher by his side,  
Beheld the Eternal City lift its domes  
And solemn fanes and monumental pomp  
Above the waste Campagna. On the hills  
The blaze of burning villas rose and fell,  
And momentarily the mortar's iron throat  
Roared from the trenches; and, within the walls,  
Sharp crash of shells, low groans of human pain,  
Shout, drum beat, and the clanging larum-bell,  
And tramp of hosts, sent up a mingled sound,  
Half wail and half defiance. As they passed  
The gate of San Pancrazio, human blood  
Flowed ankle-high about them, and dead men

Choked the long street with gashed and gory piles,—  
A ghastly barricade of mangled flesh,  
From which, at times, quivered a living hand,  
And white lips moved and moaned. A father tore  
His gray hairs, by the body of his son,  
In frenzy; and his fair young daughter wept  
On his old bosom. Suddenly a flash  
Clove the thick sulphurous air, and man and maid  
Sank, crushed and mangled by the shattering shell.  
Then spake the Galilean: 'Thou hast seen  
The blessed Master and His works of love;  
Look now on thine! Hear'st thou the angels sing  
Above this open hell? Thou God's high-priest!  
Thou the Vicegerent of the Prince of Peace!  
Thou the successor of His chosen ones!  
I, Peter, fisherman of Galilee,  
In the dear Master's name, and for the love  
Of His true Church, proclaim thee Antichrist,  
Alien and separate from His holy faith,  
Wide as the difference between death and life,  
The hate of man and the great love of God!  
Hence, and repent!'  
Thereat the pontiff woke,  
Trembling, and muttering o'er his fearful dream.  
'What means he?' cried the Bourbon. 'Nothing more  
Than that your majesty hath all too well  
Catered for your poor guests, and that, in sooth,  
The Holy Father's supper troubleth him,'  
Said Cardinal Antonelli, with a smile.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Drovers

THROUGH heat and cold, and shower and sun,  
Still onward cheerly driving!  
There's life alone in duty done,  
And rest alone in striving.  
But see! the day is closing cool,  
The woods are dim before us;  
The white fog of the wayside pool  
Is creeping slowly o'er us.  
The night is falling, comrades mine,  
Our footsore beasts are weary,  
And through yon elms the tavern sign  
Looks out upon us cheery.  
The landlord beckons from his door,  
His beechen fire is glowing;  
These ample barns, with feed in store,  
Are filled to overflowing.  
From many a valley frowned across  
By brows of rugged mountains;  
From hillsides where, through spongy moss,  
Gush out the river fountains;  
From quiet farm-fields, green and low,  
And bright with blooming clover;  
From vales of corn the wandering crow  
No richer hovers over;  
Day after day our way has been  
O'er many a hill and hollow;  
By lake and stream, by wood and glen,  
Our stately drove we follow.  
Through dust-clouds rising thick and dun,  
As smoke of battle o'er us,  
Their white horns glisten in the sun,  
Like plumes and crests before us.  
We see them slowly climb the hill,  
As slow behind it sinking;  
Or, thronging close, from roadside rill,  
Or sunny lakelet, drinking.  
Now crowding in the narrow road,  
In thick and struggling masses,  
They glare upon the teamster's load,

Or rattling coach that passes.  
Anon, with toss of horn and tail,  
And paw of hoof, and bellow,  
They leap some farmer's broken pale,  
O'er meadow-close or fallow.  
Forth comes the startled goodman; forth  
Wife, children, house-dog, sally,  
Till once more on their dusty path  
The baffled truants rally.  
We drive no starvelings, scraggy grown,  
Loose-legged, and ribbed and bony,  
Like those who grind their noses down  
On pastures bare and stony, —  
Lank oxen, rough as Indian dogs,  
And cows too lean for shadows,  
Disputing feebly with the frogs  
The crop of saw-grass meadows!  
In our good drove, so sleek and fair,  
No bones of leanness rattle;  
No tottering hide-bound ghosts are there,  
Or Pharaoh's evil cattle.  
Each stately beeve bespeaks the hand  
That fed him unrepining;  
The fatness of a goodly land  
In each dun hide is shining.  
We've sought them where, in warmest nooks,  
The freshest feed is growing,  
By sweetest springs and clearest brooks  
Through honeysuckle flowing;  
Wherever hillsides, sloping south,  
Are bright with early grasses,  
Or, tracking green the lowland's drouth,  
The mountain streamlet passes.  
But now the day is closing cool,  
The woods are dim before us,  
The white fog of the wayside pool  
Is creeping slowly o'er us.  
The cricket to the frog's bassoon  
His shrillest time is keeping;  
The sickle of yon setting moon  
The meadow-mist is reaping.  
The night is falling, comrades mine,

Our footsore beasts are weary,  
And through yon elms the tavern sign  
Looks out upon us cheery.  
To-morrow, eastward with our charge  
We'll go to meet the dawning,  
Ere yet the pines of Kearsarge  
Have seen the sun of morning.  
When snow-flakes o'er the frozen earth,  
Instead of birds, are flitting;  
When children throng the glowing hearth,  
And quiet wives are knitting;  
While in the fire-light strong and clear  
Young eyes of pleasure glisten,  
To tales of all we see and hear  
The ears of home shall listen.  
By many a Northern lake and hill,  
From many a mountain pasture,  
Shall Fancy play the Drover still,  
And speed the long night faster.  
Then let us on, through shower and sun,  
And heat and cold, be driving;  
There's life alone in duty done,  
And rest alone in striving.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Emancipation Group

AMIDST thy sacred effigies  
Of old renown give place,  
O city, Freedom-loved! to his  
Whose hand unchained a race.  
Take the worn frame, that rested not  
Save in a martyr's grave;  
The care-lined face, that none forgot,  
Bent to the kneeling slave.  
Let man be free! The mighty word  
He spake was not his own;  
An impulse from the Highest stirred  
These chiselled lips alone.  
The cloudy sign, the fiery guide,  
Along his pathway ran,  
And Nature, through his voice, denied  
The ownership of man.  
We rest in peace where these sad eyes  
Saw peril, strife, and pain;  
His was the nation's sacrifice,  
And ours the priceless gain.  
O symbol of God's will on earth  
As it is done above!  
Bear witness to the cost and worth  
Of justice and of love.  
Stand in thy place and testify  
To coming ages long,  
That truth is stronger than a lie,  
And righteousness than wrong.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Eternal Goodness

O Friends! with whom my feet have trod  
The quiet aisles of prayer,  
Glad witness to your zeal for God  
And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;  
Your logic linked and strong  
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,  
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak  
To hold your iron creeds:  
Against the words ye bid me speak  
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?  
Who talks of scheme and plan?  
The Lord is God! He needeth not  
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground  
Ye tread with boldness shod;  
I dare not fix with mete and bound  
The love and power of God.

Ye praise His justice; even such  
His pitying love I deem:  
Ye seek a king; I fain would touch  
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse which overbroods  
A world of pain and loss;  
I hear our Lord's beatitudes  
And prayer upon the cross.

More than your schoolmen teach, within  
Myself, alas! I know:  
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,  
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,  
I veil mine eyes for shame,  
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,  
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,  
I feel the guilt within;  
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,  
The world confess its sin.  
Yet, in the maddening maze of things,  
And tossed by storm and flood,  
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;  
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim  
And seraphs may not see,  
But nothing can be good in Him  
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below  
I dare not throne above,  
I know not of His hate, - I know  
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known  
Of greater out of sight,  
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own  
His judgments too are right.

I long for household voices gone.  
For vanished smiles I long,  
But God hath led my dear ones on,  
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath  
Of marvel or surprise,  
Assured alone that life and death  
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak  
To bear an untried pain,

The bruised reed He will not break,  
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,  
Nor works my faith to prove;  
I can but give the gifts He gave,  
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea  
I wait the muffled oar;  
No harm from Him can come to me  
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care.

O brothers! if my faith is vain,  
If hopes like these betray,  
Pray for me that my feet may gain  
The sure and safer way.

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen  
Thy creatures as they be,  
Forgive me if too close I lean  
My human heart on Thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Eve Of Election

FROM gold to gray  
Our mild sweet day  
Of Indian Summer fades too soon;  
But tenderly  
Above the sea  
Hangs, white and calm, the hunter's moon.  
In its pale fire,  
The village spire  
Shows like the zodiac's spectral lance;  
The painted walls  
Whereon it falls  
Transfigured stand in marble trance!  
O'er fallen leaves  
The west-wind grieves,  
Yet comes a seed-time round again;  
And morn shall see  
The State sown free  
With baleful tares or healthful grain.  
Along the street  
The shadows meet  
Of Destiny, whose hands conceal  
The moulds of fate  
That shape the State,  
And make or mar the common weal.  
Around I see  
The powers that be;  
I stand by Empire's primal springs;  
And princes meet,  
In every street,  
And hear the tread of uncrowned kings!  
Hark! through the crowd  
The laugh runs loud,  
Beneath the sad, rebuking moon.  
God save the land  
A careless hand  
May shake or swerve ere morrow's noon!  
No jest is this;  
One cast amiss  
May blast the hope of Freedom's year.

Oh, take me where  
Are hearts of prayer,  
And foreheads bowed in reverent fear!  
Not lightly fall  
Beyond recall  
The written scrolls a breath can float;  
The crowning fact  
The kingliest act  
Of Freedom is the freeman's vote!  
For pearls that gem  
A diadem  
The diver in the deep sea dies;  
The regal right  
We boast to-night  
Is ours through costlier sacrifice;  
The blood of Vane,  
His prison pain  
Who traced the path the Pilgrim trod,  
And hers whose faith  
Drew strength from death,  
And prayed her Russell up to God!  
Our hearts grow cold,  
We lightly hold  
A right which brave men died to gain;  
The stake, the cord,  
The axe, the sword,  
Grim nurses at its birth of pain.  
The shadow rend,  
And o'er us bend,  
O martyrs, with your crowns and palms;  
Breathe through these throngs  
Your battle songs,  
Your scaffold prayers, and dungeon psalms!  
Look from the sky,  
Like God's great eye,  
Thou solemn moon, with searching beam,  
Till in the sight  
Of thy pure light  
Our mean self-seekings meaner seem.  
Shame from our hearts  
Unworthy arts,  
The fraud designed, the purpose dark;

And smite away  
The hands we lay  
Profanely on the sacred ark.  
To party claims  
And private aims,  
Reveal that august face of Truth,  
Whereto are given  
The age of heaven,  
The beauty of immortal youth.  
So shall our voice  
Of sovereign choice  
Swell the deep bass of duty done,  
And strike the key  
Of time to be,  
When God and man shall speak as one!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## The Exiles. 1660

The goodman sat beside his door  
One sultry afternoon,  
With his young wife singing at his side  
An old and goodly tune.

A glimmer of heat was in the air,-  
The dark green woods were still;  
And the skirts of a heavy thunder-cloud  
Hung over the western hill.

Black, thick, and vast arose that cloud  
Above the wilderness,

As some dark world from upper air  
Were stooping over this.

At times the solemn thunder pealed,  
And all was still again,  
Save a low murmur in the air  
Of coming wind and rain.

Just as the first big rain-drop fell,  
A weary stranger came,  
And stood before the farmer's door,  
With travel soiled and lame.

Sad seemed he, yet sustaining hope  
Was in his quiet glance,  
And peace, like autumn's moonlight, clothed  
His tranquil countenance,-

A look, like that his Master wore  
In Pilate's council-hall:  
It told of wrongs, but of a love  
Meekly forgiving all.

'Friend! wilt thou give me shelter here?'  
The stranger meekly said;  
And, leaning on his oaken staff,

The goodman's features read.

'My life is hunted,-evil men  
Are following in my track;  
The traces of the torturer's whip  
Are on my aged back;

'And much, I fear, 't will peril thee  
Within thy doors to take  
A hunted seeker of the Truth,  
Oppressed for conscience' sake.'

Oh, kindly spoke the goodman's wife,  
'Come in, old man!' quoth she,  
'We will not leave thee to the storm,  
Whoever thou mayst be.'

Then came the aged wanderer in,  
And silent sat him down;  
While all within grew dark as night  
Beneath the storm-cloud's frown.

But while the sudden lightning's blaze  
Filled every cottage nook,  
And with the jarring thunder-roll  
The loosened casements shook,

A heavy tramp of horses' feet  
Came sounding up the lane,  
And half a score of horse, or more,  
Came plunging through the rain.

'Now, Goodman Macy, ope thy door,-  
We would not be house-breakers;  
A rueful deed thou'st done this day,  
In harboring banished Quakers.'

Out looked the cautious goodman then,  
With much of fear and awe,  
For there, with broad wig drenched with rain  
The parish priest he saw.

Open thy door, thou wicked man,  
And let thy pastor in,  
And give God thanks, if forty stripes  
Repay thy deadly sin.'

'What seek ye?' quoth the goodman;  
'The stranger is my guest;  
He is worn with toil and grievous wrong,-  
Pray let the old man rest.'

'Now, out upon thee, canting knave!'  
And strong hands shook the door.  
'Believe me, Macy,' quoth the priest,  
'Thou 'lt rue thy conduct sore.'

Then kindled Macy's eye of fire  
'No priest who walks the earth,  
Shall pluck away the stranger-guest  
Made welcome to my hearth.'

Down from his cottage wall he caught  
The matchlock, hotly tried  
At Preston-pans and Marston-moor,  
By fiery Ireton's side;

Where Puritan, and Cavalier,  
With shout and psalm contended;  
And Rupert's oath, and Cromwell's prayer,  
With battle-thunder blended.

Up rose the ancient stranger then  
'My spirit is not free  
To bring the wrath and violence  
Of evil men on thee;

'And for thyself, I pray forbear,  
Bethink thee of thy Lord,  
Who healed again the smitten ear,  
And sheathed His follower's sword.

'I go, as to the slaughter led.  
Friends of the poor, farewell!'

Beneath his hand the oaken door  
Back on its hinges fell.

'Come forth, old graybeard, yea and nay,'  
The reckless scoffers cried,  
As to a horseman's saddle-bow  
The old man's arms were tied.

And of his bondage hard and long  
In Boston's crowded jail,  
Where suffering woman's prayer was heard,  
With sickening childhood's wail,

It suits not with our tale to tell;  
Those scenes have passed away;  
Let the dim shadows of the past  
Brood o'er that evil day.

'Ho, sheriff!' quoth the ardent priest,  
'Take Goodman Macy too;  
The sin of this day's heresy  
His back or purse shall rue.'

'Now, goodwife, haste thee!' Macy cried.  
She caught his manly arm;  
Behind, the parson urged pursuit,  
With outcry and alarm.

Ho! speed the Macys, neck or naught,-  
The river-course was near;  
The plashing on its pebbled shore  
Was music to their ear.

A gray rock, tasselled o'er with birch,  
Above the waters hung,  
And at its base, with every wave,  
A small light wherry swung.

A leap-they gain the boat-and there  
The goodman wields his oar;  
'Ill luck betide them all,' he cried,  
'The laggards on the shore.'

Down through the crashing underwood,  
The burly sheriff came:-  
'Stand, Goodman Macy, yield thyself;  
Yield in the King's own name.'

'Now out upon thy hangman's face!'  
Bold Macy answered then,-  
'Whip women, on the village green,  
But meddle not with men.'

The priest came panting to the shore,  
His grave cocked hat was gone;  
Behind him, like some owl's nest, hung  
His wig upon a thorn.

'Come back,-come back!' the parson cried,  
'The church's curse beware.'  
'Curse, an' thou wilt,' said Macy, 'but  
Thy blessing prithee spare.'

'Vile scoffer!' cried the baffled priest,  
'Thou 'lt yet the gallows see.'  
'Who's born to be hanged will not be drowned,'  
Quoth Macy, merrily;

'And so, sir sheriff and priest, good-by!'  
He bent him to his oar,  
And the small boat glided quietly  
From the twain upon the shore.

Now in the west, the heavy clouds  
Scattered and fell asunder,  
While feebler came the rush of rain,  
And fainter growled the thunder.

And through the broken clouds, the sun  
Looked out serene and warm,  
Painting its holy symbol-light  
Upon the passing storm.

Oh, beautiful! that rainbow span,

O'er dim Crane-neck was bended;  
One bright foot touched the eastern hills,  
And one with ocean blended.

By green Pentucket's southern'slope  
The small boat glided fast;  
The watchers of the Block-house saw  
The strangers as they passed.

That night a stalwart garrison  
Sat shaking in their shoes,  
To hear the dip of Indian oars,  
The glide of birch canoes.

The fisher-wives of Salisbury-  
The men were all away-  
Looked out to see the stranger oar  
Upon their waters play.

Deer-Island's rocks and fir-trees threw  
Their sunset-shadows o'er them,  
And Newbury's spire and weathercock  
Peered o'er the pines before them.

Around the Black Rocks, on their left,  
The marsh lay broad and green;  
And on their right, with dwarf shrubs crowned,  
Plum Island's hills were seen.

With skilful hand and wary eye  
The harbor-bar was crossed;  
A plaything of the restless wave,  
The boat on ocean tossed.

The glory of the sunset heaven  
On land and water lay;  
On the steep hills of Agawam,  
On cape, and bluff, and bay.

They passed the gray rocks of Cape Ann,  
And Gloucester's harbor-bar;  
The watch-fire of the garrison

Shone like a setting star.

How brightly broke the morning  
On Massachusetts Bay!  
Blue wave, and bright green island,  
Rejoicing in the day.

On passed the bark in safety  
Round isle and headland steep;  
No tempest broke above them,  
No fog-cloud veiled the deep.

Far round the bleak and stormy Cape  
The venturous Macy passed,  
And on Nantucket's naked isle  
Drew up his boat at last.

And how, in log-built cabin,  
They braved the rough sea-weather;  
And there, in peace and quietness,  
Went down life's vale together;

How others drew around them,  
And how their fishing sped,  
Until to every wind of heaven  
Nantucket's sails were spread;

How pale Want alternated  
With Plenty's golden smile;  
Behold, is it not written  
In the annals of the isle?

And yet that isle remaineth  
A refuge of the free,  
As when true-hearted Macy  
Beheld it from the sea.

Free as the winds that winnow  
Her shrubless hills of sand,  
Free as the waves that batter  
Along her yielding land.

Than hers, at duty's summons,  
No loftier spirit stirs,  
Nor falls o'er human suffering  
A readier tear than hers.

God bless the sea-beat island!  
And grant forevermore,  
That charity and freedom dwell  
As now upon her shore!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Familist's Hymn

Father! to Thy suffering poor  
Strength and grace and faith impart,  
And with Thy own love restore  
Comfort to the broken heart!  
Oh, the failing ones confirm  
With a holier strength of zeal!  
Give Thou not the feeble worm  
Helpless to the spoiler's heel!

Father! for Thy holy sake  
We are spoiled and hunted thus;  
Joyful, for Thy truth we take  
Bonds and burthens unto us  
Poor, and weak, and robbed of all,  
Weary with our daily task,  
That Thy truth may never fall  
Through our weakness, Lord, we ask.

Round our fired and wasted homes  
Flits the forest-bird unscared,  
And at noon the wild beast comes  
Where our frugal meal was shared;  
For the song of praises there  
Shrieks the crow the livelong day;  
For the sound of evening prayer  
Howls the evil beast of prey!

Sweet the songs we loved to sing  
Underneath Thy holy sky;  
Words and tones that used to bring  
Tears of joy in every eye;  
Dear the wrestling hours of prayer,  
When we gathered knee to knee,  
Blameless youth and hoary hair,  
Bowed, O God, alone to Thee.

As Thine early children, Lord,  
Shared their wealth and daily bread,  
Even so, with one accord,

We, in love, each other fed.  
Not with us the miser's hoard,  
Not with us his grasping hand;  
Equal round a common board,  
Drew our meek and brother band!

Safe our quiet Eden lay  
When the war-whoop stirred the land  
And the Indian turned away  
From our home his bloody hand.  
Well that forest-ranger saw,  
That the burthen and the curse  
Of the white man's cruel law  
Rested also upon us.

Torn apart, and driven forth  
To our toiling hard and long,  
Father! from the dust of earth  
Lift we still our grateful song!  
Grateful, that in bonds we share  
In Thy love which maketh free;  
Joyful, that the wrongs we bear,  
Draw us nearer, Lord, to Thee!

Grateful! that where'er we toil,-  
By Wachuset's wooded side,  
On Nantucket's sea-worn isle,  
Or by wild Neponset's tide,-  
Still, in spirit, we are near,  
And our evening hymns, which rise  
Separate and discordant here,  
Meet and mingle in the skies!

Let the scoffer scorn and mock,  
Let the proud and evil priest  
Rob the needy of his flock,  
For his wine-cup and his feast,-  
Redden not Thy bolts in store  
Through the blackness of Thy skies?  
For the sighing of the poor  
Wilt Thou not, at length, arise?

Worn and wasted, oh! how long  
Shall thy trodden poor complain?  
In Thy name they bear the wrong,  
In Thy cause the bonds of pain!  
Melt oppression's heart of steel,  
Let the haughty priesthood see,  
And their blinded followers feel,  
That in us they mock at Thee!

In Thy time, O Lord of hosts,  
Stretch abroad that hand to save  
Which of old, on Egypt's coasts,  
Smote apart the Red Sea's wave  
Lead us from this evil land,  
From the spoiler set us free,  
And once more our gathered band,  
Heart to heart, shall worship Thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Farewell

*Of A Virginia Slave Mother To Her Daughters Sold Into Southern Bondage*

Gone, gone, -- sold and gone  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone.  
Where the slave-whip ceaseless swings  
Where the noisome insect stings  
Where the fever demon strews  
Poison with the falling dews  
Where the sickly sunbeams glare  
Through the hot and misty air;  
Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, -- sold and gone  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone  
There no mother's eye is near them,  
There no mother's ear can hear them;  
Never, when the torturing lash  
Seams their back with many a gash  
Shall a mother's kindness bless them  
Or a mother's arms caress them.  
Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
Oh, when weary, sad, and slow,  
From the fields at night they go  
Faint with toil, and racked with pain  
To their cheerless homes again,  
There no brother's voice shall greet them  
There no father's welcome meet them.  
Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,

From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone  
From the tree whose shadow lay  
On their childhood's place of play;  
From the cool sprmg where they drank;  
Rock, and hill, and rivulet bank;  
From the solemn house of prayer,  
And the holy counsels there;  
Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone;  
Toiling through the weary day,  
And at night the spoiler's prey.  
Oh, that they had earlier died,  
Sleeping calmly, side by side,  
Where the tyrant's power is o'er  
And the fetter galls no more!  
Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone;  
From Virginia's hills and waters  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone;  
By the holy love He beareth;  
By the bruised reed He spareth;  
Oh, may He, to whom alone  
All their cruel wrongs are known,  
Still their hope and refuge prove,  
With a more than mother's love.  
Gone, gone, -- sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!



# The Farewell Of A Virginia Slave Mother

Of A Virginia Slave Mother To Her Daughters Sold Into Southern Bondage

Gone, gone, - sold and gone  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone.  
Where the slave-whip ceaseless swings  
Where the noisome insect stings  
Where the fever demon strews  
Poison with the falling dews  
Where the sickly sunbeams glare  
Through the hot and misty air;  
Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, - sold and gone  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone  
There no mother's eye is near them,  
There no mother's ear can hear them;  
Never, when the torturing lash  
Seams their back with many a gash  
Shall a mother's kindness bless them  
Or a mother's arms caress them.  
Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
Oh, when weary, sad, and slow,  
From the fields at night they go  
Faint with toil, and racked with pain  
To their cheerless homes again,  
There no brother's voice shall greet them  
There no father's welcome meet them.  
Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,

From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone  
From the tree whose shadow lay  
On their childhood's place of play;  
From the cool spring where they drank;  
Rock, and hill, and rivulet bank;  
From the solemn house of prayer,  
And the holy counsels there;  
Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone;  
Toiling through the weary day,  
And at night the spoiler's prey.  
Oh, that they had earlier died,  
Sleeping calmly, side by side,  
Where the tyrant's power is o'er  
And the fetter galls no more!  
Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone;  
From Virginia's hills and waters  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!

Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone;  
By the holy love He beareth;  
By the bruised reed He spareth;  
Oh, may He, to whom alone  
All their cruel wrongs are known,  
Still their hope and refuge prove,  
With a more than mother's love.  
Gone, gone, - sold and gone,  
To the rice-swamp dank and lone,  
From Virginia's hills and waters;  
Woe is me, my stolen daughters!



# The Female Martyr

'BRING out your dead!' The midnight street  
Heard and gave back the hoarse, low call;  
Harsh fell the tread of hasty feet,  
Glanced through the dark the coarse white sheet,  
Her coffin and her pall.  
'What--only one!' the brutal hack-man said,  
As, with an oath, he spurned away the dead.

How sunk the inmost hearts of all,  
As rolled that dead-cart slowly by,  
With creaking wheel and harsh hoof-fall!  
The dying turned him to the wall,  
To hear it and to die!  
Onward it rolled; while oft its driver stayed,  
And hoarsely clamored, 'Ho! bring out your dead.'

It paused beside the burial-place;  
'Toss in your load!' and it was done.  
With quick hand and averted face,  
Hastily to the grave's embrace  
They cast them, one by one,  
Stranger and friend, the evil and the just,  
Together trodden in the churchyard dust.

And thou, young martyr! thou wast there;  
No white-robed sisters round thee trod,  
Nor holy hymn, nor funeral prayer  
Rose through the damp and noisome air,  
Giving thee to thy God;  
Nor flower, nor cross, nor hallowed taper gave  
Grace to the dead, and beauty to the grave!

Yet, gentle sufferer! there shall be,  
In every heart of kindly feeling,  
A rite as holy paid to thee  
As if beneath the convent-tree  
Thy sisterhood were kneeling,  
At vesper hours, like sorrowing angels, keeping  
Their tearful watch around thy place of sleeping.

For thou wast one in whom the light  
Of Heaven's own love was kindled well;  
Enduring with a martyr's might,  
Through weary day and wakeful night,  
Far more than words may tell  
Gentle, and meek, and lowly, and unknown,  
Thy mercies measured by thy God alone!

Where manly hearts were failing, where  
The throngful street grew foul with death,  
O high-souled martyr! thou wast there,  
Inhaling, from the loathsome air,  
Poison with every breath.  
Yet shrinking not from offices of dread  
For the wrung dying, and the unconscious dead.

And, where the sickly taper shed  
Its light through vapors, damp, confined,  
Hushed as a seraph's fell thy tread,  
A new Electra by the bed  
Of suffering human-kind!  
Pointing the spirit, in its dark dismay,  
To that pure hope which fadeth not away.

Innocent teacher of the high  
And holy mysteries of Heaven!  
How turned to thee each glazing eye,  
In mute and awful sympathy,  
As thy low prayers were given;  
And the o'er-hovering Spoiler wore, the while,  
An angel's features, a deliverer's smile!

A blessed task! and worthy one  
Who, turning from the world, as thou,  
Before life's pathway had begun  
To leave its spring-time flower and sun,  
Had sealed her early vow;  
Giving to God her beauty and her youth,  
Her pure affections and her guileless truth.

Earth may not claim thee. Nothing here

Could be for thee a meet reward;  
Thine is a treasure far more dear  
Eye hath not seen it, nor the ear  
Of living mortal heard  
The joys prepared, the promised bliss above,  
The holy presence of Eternal Love!

Sleep on in peace. The earth has not  
A nobler name than thine shall be.  
The deeds by martial manhood wrought,  
The lofty energies of thought,  
The fire of poesy,  
These have but frail and fading honors; thine  
Shall Time unto Eternity consign.

Yea, and when thrones shall crumble down,  
And human pride and grandeur fall,  
The herald's line of long renown,  
The mitre and the kingly crown,--  
Perishing glories all!  
The pure devotion of thy generous heart  
Shall live in Heaven, of which it was a part.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The First Flowers

For ages on our river borders,  
These tassels in their tawny bloom,  
And willowy studs of downy silver,  
Have prophesied of Spring to come.

For ages have the unbound waters  
Smiled on them from their pebbly hem,  
And the clear carol of the robin  
And song of bluebird welcomed them.

But never yet from smiling river,  
Or song of early bird, have they  
Been greeted with a gladder welcome  
Than whispers from my heart to-day.

They break the spell of cold and darkness,  
The weary watch of sleepless pain;  
And from my heart, as from the river,  
The ice of winter melts again.

Thanks, Mary! for this wild-wood token  
Of Freya's footsteps drawing near;  
Almost, as in the rune of Asgard,  
The growing of the grass I hear.

It is as if the pine-trees called me  
From ceiled room and silent books,  
To see the dance of woodland shadows,  
And hear the song of April brooks!

As in the old Teutonic ballad  
Of Odenwald live bird and tree,  
Together live in bloom and music,  
I blend in song thy flowers and thee.

Earth's rocky tablets bear forever  
The dint of rain and small bird's track  
Who knows but that my idle verses  
May leave some trace by Merrimac!

The bird that trod the mellow layers  
Of the young earth is sought in vain;  
The cloud is gone that wove the sandstone,  
From God's design, with threads of rain!

So, when this fluid age we live in  
Shall stiffen round my careless rhyme,  
Who made the vagrant tracks may puzzle  
The savants of the coming time;

And, following out their dim suggestions,  
Some idly-curious hand may draw  
My doubtful portraiture, as Cuvier  
Drew fish and bird from fin and claw.

And maidens in the far-off twilights,  
Singing my words to breeze and stream,  
Shall wonder if the old-time Mary  
Were real, or the rhymer's dream!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Fishermen

HURRAH! the seaward breezes  
Sweep down the bay amain;  
Heave up, my lads, the anchor!  
Run up the sail again!  
Leave to the lubber landsmen  
The rail-car and the steed;  
The stars of heaven shall guide us,  
The breath of heaven shall speed.  
From the hill-top looks the steeple,  
And the lighthouse from the sand;  
And the scattered pines are waving  
Their farewell from the land.  
One glance, my lads, behind us,  
For the homes we leave one sigh,  
Ere we take the change and chances  
Of the ocean and the sky.  
Now, brothers, for the icebergs  
Of frozen Labrador,  
Floating spectral in the moonshine,  
Along the low, black shore!  
Where like snow the gannet's feathers  
On Brador's rocks are shed,  
And the noisy murr are flying,  
Like black scuds, overhead;  
Where in mist the rock is hiding,  
And the sharp reef lurks below,  
And the white squall smites in summer,  
And the autumn tempests blow;  
Where, through gray and rolling vapor,  
From evening unto morn,  
A thousand, boats are hailing,  
Horn answering unto horn.  
Hurrah! for the Red Island,  
With the white cross on its crown!  
Hurrah! for Meccatina,  
And its mountains bare and brown!  
Where the Caribou's tall antlers  
O'er the dwarf-wood freely toss,  
And the footstep of the Mickmack

Has no sound upon the moss.  
There we'll drop our lines, and gather  
Old Ocean's treasures in,  
Where'er the mottled mackerel  
Turns up a steel-dark fin.  
The sea's our field of harvest,  
Its scaly tribes our grain;  
We'll reap the teeming waters  
As at home they reap the plain!  
Our wet hands spread the carpet,  
And light the hearth of home;  
From our fish, as in the old time,  
The silver coin shall come.  
As the demon fled the chamber  
Where the fish of Tobit lay,  
So ours from all our dwellings  
Shall frighten Want away.  
Though the mist upon our jackets  
In the bitter air congeals,  
And our lines wind stiff and slowly  
From off the frozen reels;  
Though the fog be dark around us,  
And the storm blow high and loud,  
We will whistle down the wild wind,  
And laugh beneath the cloud!  
In the darkness as in daylight,  
On the water as on land,  
God's eye is looking on us,  
And beneath us is His hand!  
Death will find us soon or later,  
On the deck or in the cot;  
And we cannot meet him better  
Than in working out our lot.  
Hurrah! hurrah! the west-wind  
Comes freshening down the bay,  
The rising sails are filling;  
Give way, my lads, give way!  
Leave the coward landsman clinging  
To the dull earth, like a weed;  
The stars of heaven shall guide us,  
The breath of heaven shall speed!



# The Fountain

Traveller! on thy journey toiling  
By the swift Powow,  
With the summer sunshine falling  
On thy heated brow,  
Listen, while all else is still,  
To the brooklet from the hill.

Wild and sweet the flowers are blowing  
By that streamlet's side,  
And a greener verdure showing  
Where its waters glide,  
Down the hill-slope murmuring on,  
Over root and mossy stone.

Where yon oak his broad arms flingeth  
O'er the sloping hill,  
Beautiful and freshly springeth  
That soft-flowing rill,  
Through its dark roots wreathed and bare,  
Gushing up to sun and air.

Brighter waters sparkled never  
In that magic well,  
Of whose gift of life forever  
Ancient legends tell,  
In the lonely desert wasted,  
And by mortal lip untasted.

Waters which the proud Castilian  
Sought with longing eyes,  
Underneath the bright pavilion  
Of the Indian skies,  
Where his forest pathway lay  
Through the blooms of Florida.

Years ago a lonely stranger,  
With the dusky brow  
Of the outcast forest-ranger,  
Crossed the swift Powow,

And betook him to the rill  
And the oak upon the hill.

O'er his face of moody sadness  
For an instant shone  
Something like a gleam of gladness,  
As he stooped him down  
To the fountain's grassy side,  
And his eager thirst supplied.

With the oak its shadow throwing  
O'er his mossy seat,  
And the cool, sweet waters flowing  
Softly at his feet,  
Closely by the fountain's rim  
That lone Indian seated him.

Autumn's earliest frost had given  
To the woods below  
Hues of beauty, such as heaven  
Lendeth to its bow;  
And the soft breeze from the west  
Scarcely broke their dreamy rest.

Far behind was Ocean striving  
With his chains of sand;  
Southward, sunny glimpses giving,  
'Twixt the swells of land,  
Of its calm and silvery track,  
Rolled the tranquil Merrimac.

Over village, wood, and meadow  
Gazed that stranger man,  
Sadly, till the twilight shadow  
Over all things ran,  
Save where spire and westward pane  
Flashed the sunset back again.

Gazing thus upon the dwelling  
Of his warrior sires,  
Where no lingering trace was telling  
Of their wigwam fires,

Who the gloomy thoughts might know  
Of that wandering child of woe?

Naked lay, in sunshine glowing,  
Hills that once had stood  
Down their sides the shadows throwing  
Of a mighty wood,  
Where the deer his covert kept,  
And the eagle's pinion swept!

Where the birch canoe had glided  
Down the swift Powow,  
Dark and gloomy bridges strided  
Those clear waters now;  
And where once the beaver swam,  
Jarred the wheel and frowned the dam.

For the wood-bird's merry singing,  
And the hunter's cheer,  
Iron clang and hammer's ringing  
Smote upon his ear;  
And the thick and sullen smoke  
From the blackened forges broke.

Could it be his fathers ever  
Loved to linger here?  
These bare hills, this conquered river,-  
Could they hold them dear,  
With their native loveliness  
Tamed and tortured into this?

Sadly, as the shades of even  
Gathered o'er the hill,  
While the western half of heaven  
Blushed with sunset still,  
From the fountain's mossy seat  
Turned the Indian's weary feet.

Year on year hath flown forever,  
But he came no more  
To the hillside on the river  
Where he came before.

But the villager can tell  
Of that strange man's visit well.

And the merry children, laden  
With their fruits or flowers,  
Roving boy and laughing maiden,  
In their school-day hours,  
Love the simple tale to tell  
Of the Indian and his well.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Freed Islands

A FEW brief years have passed away  
Since Britain drove her million slaves  
Beneath the tropic's fiery ray:  
God willed their freedom; and to-day  
Life blooms above those island graves!  
He spoke! across the Carib Sea,  
We heard the clash of breaking chains,  
And felt the heart-throb of the free,  
The first, strong pulse of liberty  
Which thrilled along the bondman's veins.  
Though long delayed, and far, and slow,  
The Briton's triumph shall be ours:  
Wears slavery here a prouder brow  
Than that which twelve short years ago  
Scowled darkly from her island bowers?  
Mighty alike for good or ill  
With mother-land, we fully share  
The Saxon strength, the nerve of steel,  
The tireless energy of will,  
The power to do, the pride to dare.  
What she has done can we not do?  
Our hour and men are both at hand;  
The blast which Freedom's angel blew  
O'er her green islands, echoes through  
Each valley of our forest land.  
Hear it, old Europe! we have sworn  
The death of slavery. When it falls,  
Look to your vassals in their turn,  
Your poor dumb millions, crushed and worn,  
Your prisons and your palace walls!  
O kingly mockers! scoffing show  
What deeds in Freedom's name we do;  
Yet know that every taunt ye throw  
Across the waters, goads our slow  
Progression towards the right and true.  
Not always shall your outraged poor,  
Appalled by democratic crime,  
Grind as their fathers ground before;  
The hour which sees our prison door

Swing wide shall be their triumph time.  
On then, my brothers! every blow  
Ye deal is felt the wide earth through;  
Whatever here uplifts the low  
Or humbles Freedom's hateful foe,  
Blesses the Old World through the New.  
Take heart! The promised hour draws near;  
I hear the downward beat of wings,  
And Freedom's trumpet sounding clear:  
'Joy to the people! woe and fear  
To new-world tyrants, old-world kings!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Friend's Burial

My thoughts are all in yonder town,  
Where, wept by many tears,  
To-day my mother's friend lays down  
The burden of her years.

True as in life, no poor disguise  
Of death with her is seen,  
And on her simple casket lies  
No wreath of bloom and green.

Oh, not for her the florist's art,  
The mocking weeds of woe;  
Dear memories in each mourner's heart  
Like heaven's white lilies blow.

And all about the softening air  
Of new-born sweetness tells,  
And the ungathered May-flowers wear  
The tints of ocean shells.

The old, assuring miracle  
Is fresh as heretofore;  
And earth takes up its parable  
Of life from death once more.

Here organ-swell and church-bell toll  
Methinks but discord were;  
The prayerful silence of the soul  
Is best befitting her.

No sound should break the quietude  
Alike of earth and sky  
O wandering wind in Seabrook wood,  
Breathe but a half-heard sigh!

Sing softly, spring-bird, for her sake;  
And thou not distant sea,  
Lapse lightly as if Jesus spake,  
And thou wert Galilee!

For all her quiet life flowed on  
As meadow streamlets flow,  
Where fresher green reveals alone  
The noiseless ways they go.

From her loved place of prayer I see  
The plain-robed mourners pass,  
With slow feet treading reverently  
The graveyard's springing grass.

Make room, O mourning ones, for me,  
Where, like the friends of Paul,  
That you no more her face shall see  
You sorrow most of all.

Her path shall brighten more and more  
Unto the perfect day;  
She cannot fail of peace who bore  
Such peace with her away.

O sweet, calm face that seemed to wear  
The look of sins forgiven!  
O voice of prayer that seemed to bear  
Our own needs up to heaven!

How reverent in our midst she stood,  
Or knelt in grateful praise!  
What grace of Christian womanhood  
Was in her household ways!

For still her holy living meant  
No duty left undone;  
The heavenly and the human blent  
Their kindred loves in one.

And if her life small leisure found  
For feasting ear and eye,  
And Pleasure, on her daily round,  
She passed unpausing by,

Yet with her went a secret sense

Of all things sweet and fair,  
And Beauty's gracious providence  
Refreshed her unaware.

She kept her line of rectitude  
With love's unconscious ease;  
Her kindly instincts understood  
All gentle courtesies.

An inborn charm of graciousness  
Made sweet her smile and tone,  
And glorified her farm-wife dress  
With beauty not its own.

The dear Lord's best interpreters  
Are humble human souls;  
The Gospel of a life like hers  
Is more than books or scrolls.

From scheme and creed the light goes out,  
The saintly fact survives;  
The blessed Master none can doubt  
Revealed in holy lives.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Frost Spirit

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

He comes, - he comes, - the Frost Spirit comes!  
From the frozen Labrador,  
From the icy bridge of the northern seas,  
Which the white bear wanders o'er,  
Where the fisherman's sail is stiff with ice,  
And the luckless forms below  
In the sunless cold of the lingering night  
Into marble statues grow!

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

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

He comes, - he comes, - the Frost Spirit comes!  
Let us meet him as we may,  
And turn with the light of the parlor-fire

His evil power away;  
And gather closer the circle 'round,  
When the firelight dances high,  
And laugh at the shriek of the baffled Fiend  
As his sounding wing goes by!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Fruit-Gift

Last night, just as the tints of autumn's sky  
Of sunset faded from our hills and streams,  
I sat, vague listening, lapped in twilight dreams,  
To the leaf's rustle, and the cricket's cry.

Then, like that basket, flush with summer fruit,  
Dropped by the angels at the Prophet's foot,  
Came, unannounced, a gift of clustered sweetness,  
Full-orbed, and glowing with the prisoned beams  
Of summery suns, and rounded to completeness  
By kisses of the south-wind and the dew.  
Thrilled with a glad surprise, methought I knew  
The pleasure of the homeward-turning Jew,  
When Eshcol's clusters on his shoulders lay,  
Dropping their sweetness on his desert way.

I said, 'This fruit beseems no world of sin.  
Its parent vine, rooted in Paradise,  
O'ercrept the wall, and never paid the price  
Of the great mischief,--an ambrosial tree,  
Eden's exotic, somehow smuggled in,  
To keep the thorns and thistles company.'  
Perchance our frail, sad mother plucked in haste  
A single vine-slip as she passed the gate,  
Where the dread sword alternate paled and burned,  
And the stern angel, pitying her fate,  
Forgave the lovely trespasser, and turned  
Aside his face of fire; and thus the waste  
And fallen world hath yet its annual taste  
Of primal good, to prove of sin the cost,  
And show by one gleaned ear the mighty harvest lost.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Funeral Tree Of The Sokokis. 1756

Around Sebago's lonely lake  
There lingers not a breeze to break  
The mirror which its waters make.

The solemn pines along its shore,  
The firs which hang its gray rock o'er,  
Are painted on its glassy floor.

The sun looks o'er, with hazy eye,  
The snowy mountain-tops which lie  
Piled coldly up against the sky.

Dazzling and white! Save where the bleak,  
Wild winds have bared some splintering peak,  
Or snow-slide left its dusky streak.

Yet green are Saco's banks below,  
And belts of spruce and cedar show,  
Dark fringing round those cones of snow.

The earth hath felt the breath of spring,  
Though yet on her deliverer's wing  
The lingering frosts of winter cling.

Fresh grasses fringe the meadow-brooks,  
And mildly from its sunny nooks  
The blue eye of the violet looks.

And odors from the springing grass,  
The sweet birch and the sassafras,  
Upon the scarce-felt breezes pass.

Her tokens of renewing care  
Hath Nature scattered everywhere,  
In bud and flower, and warmer air.

But in their hour of bitterness,  
What reck the broken Sokokis,  
Beside their slaughtered chief, of this?

The turf's red stain is yet undried,  
Scarce have the death-shot echoes died  
Along Sebago's wooded side;

And silent now the hunters stand,  
Grouped darkly, where a swell of land  
Slopes upward from the lake's white sand.

Fire and the axe have swept it bare,  
Save one lone beech, unclosing there  
Its light leaves in the vernal air.

With grave, cold looks, all sternly mute,  
They break the damp turf at its foot,  
And bare its coiled and twisted root.

They heave the stubborn trunk aside,  
The firm roots from the earth divide, -  
The rent beneath yawns dark and wide.

And there the fallen chief is laid  
In tasselled garb of skins arrayed,  
And girded with his wampum-braid.

The silver cross he loved is pressed  
Beneath the heavy arms, which rest  
Upon his scarred and naked breast.

'T is done : the roots are backward sent,  
The beechen-tree stands up unbent,  
The Indian's fitting monument!

When of that sleeper's broken race  
Their green and pleasant dwelling place,  
Which knew them once, retains no trace;

Oh, long may sunset's light be shed  
As now upon that beech's head,  
A green memorial of the dead!

There shall his fitting requiem be,

In northern winds, that, cold and free,  
Howl nightly in that funeral tree.

To their wild wail the waves which break  
Forever round that lonely lake  
A solemn undertone shall make!

And who shall deem the spot unblest,  
Where Nature's younger children rest,  
Lulled on their sorrowing mother's breast?

Deem ye that mother loveth less  
These bronzed forms of the wilderness  
She foldeth in her long caress?

As sweet o'er them her wild-flowers blow,  
As if with fairer hair and brow  
The blue-eyed Saxon slept below.

What though the places of their rest  
No priestly knee hath ever pressed, -  
No funeral rite nor prayer hath blessed?

What though the bigot's ban be there,  
And thoughts of wailing and despair,  
And cursing in the place of prayer!

Yet Heaven hath angels watching round  
The Indian's lowliest forest-mound, -  
And they have made it holy ground.

There ceases man's frail judgment : all  
His powerless bolts of cursing fall  
Unheeded on that grassy pall.

O peeled and hunted and reviled,  
Sleep on, dark tenant of the wild!  
Great Nature owns her simple child!

And Nature's God, to whom alone  
The secret of the heart is known, -  
The hidden language traced thereon;

Who from its many cumberings  
Of form and creed, and outward things,  
To light the naked spirit brings;

Not with our partial eye shall scan,  
Not with our pride and scorn shall ban,  
The spirit of our brother man!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Gallows

I.

THE suns of eighteen centuries have shone  
Since the Redeemer walked with man, and made  
The fisher's boat, the cavern's floor of stone,  
And mountain moss, a pillow for His head;  
And He, who wandered with the peasant Jew,  
And broke with publicans the bread of shame,  
And drank with blessings, in His Father's name,  
The water which Samaria's outcast drew,  
Hath now His temples upon every shore,  
Altar and shrine and priest; and incense dim  
Evermore rising, with low prayer and hymn,  
From lips which press the temple's marble floor,  
Or kiss the gilded sign of the dread cross He bore.

II.

Yet as of old, when, meekly 'doing good,'  
He fed a blind and selfish multitude,  
And even the poor companions of His lot  
With their dim earthly vision knew Him not,  
How ill are His high teachings understood!  
Where He hath spoken Liberty, the priest  
At His own altar binds the chain anew;  
Where He hath bidden to Life's equal feast,  
The starving many wait upon the few;  
Where He hath spoken Peace, His name hath been  
The loudest war-cry of contending men;  
Priests, pale with vigils, in His name have blessed  
The unsheathed sword, and laid the spear in rest,  
Wet the war-banner with their sacred wine,  
And crossed its blazon with the holy sign;  
Yea, in His name who bade the erring live,  
And daily taught His lesson, to forgive!  
Twisted the cord and edged the murderous steel;  
And, with His words of mercy on their lips,  
Hung gloating o'er the pincer's burning grips,  
And the grim horror of the straining wheel;  
Fed the slow flame which gnawed the victim's limb,  
Who saw before his searing eyeballs swim  
The image of their Christ in cruel zeal,

Through the black torment-smoke, held mockingly to him!

III.

The blood which mingled with the desert sand,  
And beaded with its red and ghastly dew  
The vines and olives of the Holy Land;  
The shrieking curses of the hunted Jew;  
The white-sown bones of heretics, where'er  
They sank beneath the Crusade's holy spear;  
Goa's dark dungeons, Malta's sea-washed cell,  
Where with the hymns the ghostly fathers sung  
Mingled the groans by subtle torture wrung,  
Heaven's anthem blending with the shriek of hell!  
The midnight of Bartholomew, the stake  
Of Smithfield, and that thrice-accursed flame  
Which Calvin kindled by Geneva's lake;  
New England's scaffold, and the priestly sneer  
Which mocked its victims in that hour of fear,  
When guilt itself a human tear might claim, —  
Bear witness, O Thou wronged and merciful One!  
That Earth's most hateful crimes have in Thy name been done!

IV.

Thank God! that I have lived to see the time  
When the great truth begins at last to find  
An utterance from the deep heart of mankind,  
Earnest and clear, that all Revenge is Crime,  
That man is holier than a creed, that all  
Restraint upon him must consult his good,  
Hope's sunshine linger on his prison wall,  
And Love look in upon his solitude.  
The beautiful lesson which our Saviour taught  
Through long, dark centuries its way hath wrought  
Into the common mind and popular thought;  
And words, to which by Galilee's lake shore  
The humble fishers listened with hushed oar,  
Have found an echo in the general heart,  
And of the public faith become a living part.

V.

Who shall arrest this tendency? Bring back  
The cells of Venice and the bigot's rack?  
Harden the softening human heart again  
To cold indifference to a brother's pain?  
Ye most unhappy men! who, turned away

From the mild sunshine of the Gospel day,  
Grove in the shadows of Man's twilight time,  
What mean ye, that with ghoul-like zest ye brood,  
O'er those foul altars streaming with warm blood,  
Permitted in another age and clime?  
Why cite that law with which the bigot Jew  
Rebuked the Pagan's mercy, when he knew  
No evil in the Just One? Wherefore turn  
To the dark, cruel past? Can ye not learn  
From the pure Teacher's life how mildly free  
Is the great Gospel of Humanity?  
The Flamen's knife is bloodless, and no more  
Mexitli's altars soak with human gore,  
No more the ghastly sacrifices smoke  
Through the green arches of the Druid's oak;  
And ye of milder faith, with your high claim.  
Of prophet-utterance in the Holiest name,  
Will ye become the Druids of our time!  
Set up your scaffold-altars in our land,  
And, consecrators of Law's darkest crime,  
Urge to its loathsome work the hangman's hand?  
Beware, lest human nature, roused at last,  
From its peeled shoulder your encumbrance cast,  
And, sick to loathing of your cry for blood,  
Rank ye with those who led their victims round  
The Celt's red altar and the Indian's mound,  
Abhorred of Earth and Heaven, a pagan brotherhood!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Garrison Of Cape Ann

From the hills of home forth looking, far beneath the tent-like span  
Of the sky, I see the white gleam of the headland of Cape Ann.  
Well I know its coves and beaches to the ebb-tide glimmering down,  
And the white-walled hamlet children of its ancient fishing town.

Long has passed the summer morning, and its memory waxes old,  
When along yon breezy headlands with a pleasant friend I strolled.  
Ah! the autumn sun is shining, and the ocean wind blows cool,  
And the golden-rod and aster bloom around thy grave, Rantoul!

With the memory of that morning by the summer sea I blend  
A wild and wondrous story, by the younger Mather penned,  
In that quaint Magnalia Christi, with all strange and marvellous things,  
Heaped up huge and undigested, like the chaos Ovid sings.

Dear to me these far, faint glimpses of the dual life of old,  
Inward, grand with awe and reverence; outward, mean and coarse and cold;  
Gleams of mystic beauty playing over dull and vulgar clay,  
Golden-threaded fancies weaving in a web of hodden gray.

The great eventful Present hides the Past; but through the din  
Of its loud life hints and echoes from the life behind steal in;  
And the lore of homeland fireside, and the legendary rhyme,  
Make the task of duty lighter which the true man owes his time.

So, with something of the feeling which the Covenanter knew,  
When with pious chisel wandering Scotland's moorland graveyards through,  
From the graves of old traditions I part the black- berry-vines,  
Wipe the moss from off the headstones, and retouch the faded lines.

Where the sea-waves back and forward, hoarse with rolling pebbles, ran,  
The garrison-house stood watching on the gray rocks of Cape Ann;  
On its windy site uplifting gabled roof and palisade,  
And rough walls of unhewn timber with the moonlight overlaid.

On his slow round walked the sentry, south and eastward looking forth  
O'er a rude and broken coast-line, white with breakers stretching north,-  
Wood and rock and gleaming sand-drift, jagged capes, with bush and tree,  
Leaning inland from the smiting of the wild and gusty sea.

Before the deep-mouthed chimney, dimly lit by dying brands,  
Twenty soldiers sat and waited, with their muskets in their hands;  
On the rough-hewn oaken table the venison haunch was shared,  
And the pewter tankard circled slowly round from beard to beard.

Long they sat and talked together,-talked of wizards Satan-sold;  
Of all ghostly sights and noises,-signs and wonders manifold;  
Of the spectre-ship of Salem, with the dead men in her shrouds,  
Sailing sheer above the water, in the loom of morning clouds;

Of the marvellous valley hidden in the depths of Gloucester woods,  
Full of plants that love the summer,-blossoms of warmer latitudes;  
Where the Arctic birch is braided by the tropic's flowery vines,  
And the white magnolia-blossoms star the twilight of the pines!

But their voices sank yet lower, sank to husky tones of fear,  
As they spake of present tokens of the powers of evil near;  
Of a spectral host, defying stroke of steel and aim of gun;  
Never yet was ball to slay them in the mould of mortals run.

Thrice, with plumes and flowing scalp-locks, from the midnight wood they came,-  
Thrice around the block-house marching, met, unharmed, its volleyed flame;  
Then, with mocking laugh and gesture, sunk in earth or lost in air,  
All the ghostly wonder vanished, and the moonlit sands lay bare.

Midnight came; from out the forest moved a dusky mass that soon  
Grew to warriors, plumed and painted, grimly marching in the moon.  
'Ghosts or witches,' said the captain, 'thus I foil the Evil One!'  
And he rammed a silver button, from his doublet, down his gun.

Once again the spectral horror moved the guarded wall about;  
Once again the levelled muskets through the palisades flashed out,  
With that deadly aim the squirrel on his tree-top might not shun,  
Nor the beach-bird seaward flying with his slant wing to the sun.

Like the idle rain of summer sped the harmless shower of lead.  
With a laugh of fierce derision, once again the phantoms fled;  
Once again, without a shadow on the sands the moonlight lay,  
And the white smoke curling through it drifted slowly down the bay!

'God preserve us!' said the captain; 'never mortal foes were there;

They have vanished with their leader, Prince and Power of the air!  
Lay aside your useless weapons; skill and prowess naught avail;  
They who do the Devil's service wear their master's coat of mail!

So the night grew near to cock-crow, when again a warning call  
Roused the score of weary soldiers watching round the dusky hall  
And they looked to flint and priming, and they longed for break of day;  
But the captain closed his Bible: 'Let us cease from man, and pray!'

To the men who went before us, all the unseen powers seemed near,  
And their steadfast strength of courage struck its roots in holy fear.  
Every hand forsook the musket, every head was bowed and bare,  
Every stout knee pressed the flag-stones, as the captain led in prayer.

Ceased thereat the mystic marching of the spectres round the wall,  
But a sound abhorred, unearthly, smote the ears and hearts of all,-  
Howls of rage and shrieks of anguish! Never after mortal man  
Saw the ghostly leaguers marching round the block-house of Cape Ann.

So to us who walk in summer through the cool and sea-blown town,  
From the childhood of its people comes the solemn legend down.  
Not in vain the ancient fiction, in whose moral lives the youth  
And the fitness and the freshness of an undecaying truth.

Soon or late to all our dwellings come the spectres of the mind,  
Doubts and fears and dread forebodings, in the darkness undefined;  
Round us throng the grim projections of the heart and of the brain,  
And our pride of strength is weakness, and the cunning hand is vain.

In the dark we cry like children; and no answer from on high  
Breaks the crystal spheres of silence, and no white wings downward fly;  
But the heavenly help we pray for comes to faith, and not to sight,  
And our prayers themselves drive backward all the spirits of the night!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Gift Of Titemius

Titemius of Herbipolis, one day,  
While kneeling at the altar's foot to pray,  
Alone with God, as was his pious choice,  
Heard from without a miserable voice,  
A sound which seemed of all sad things to tell,  
As of a lost soul crying out of hell.

Thereat the Abbot paused; the chain whereby  
His thoughts went upward broken by that cry;  
And, looking from the casement, saw below  
A wretched woman, with gray hair a-flow,  
And withered hands held up to him, who cried  
For alms as one who might not be denied.

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

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

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

Then spake Titemius, 'Even as thy word,  
Woman, so be it! (Our most gracious Lord,  
Who loveth mercy more than sacrifice,

Pardon me if a human soul I prize  
Above the gifts upon his altar piled!  
Take what thou askest, and redeem thy child.'

But his hand trembled as the holy alms  
He placed within the beggar's eager palms;  
And as she vanished down the linden shade,  
He bowed his head and for forgiveness prayed.  
So the day passed, and when the twilight came  
He woke to find the chapel all aflame,  
And, dumb with grateful wonder, to behold  
Upon the altar candlesticks of gold!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Golden Wedding Of Longwood

With fifty years between you and your well-kept wedding vow,  
The Golden Age, old friends of mine, is not a fable now.

And, sweet as has life's vintage been through all your pleasant past,  
Still, as at Cana's marriage-feast, the best wine is the last!

Again before me, with your names, fair Chester's landscape comes,  
Its meadows, woods, and ample barns, and quaint, stone-built homes.

The smooth-shorn vales, the wheaten slopes, the boscaige green and soft,  
Of which their poet sings so well from towered Cedarcroft.

And lo! from all the country-side come neighbors, kith and kin;  
From city, hamlet, farm-house old, the wedding guests come in.

And they who, without scrip or purse, mob-hunted, travel-worn,  
In Freedom's age of martyrs came, as victors now return.

Older and slower, yet the same, files in the long array,  
And hearts are light and eyes are glad, though heads are badger-gray.

The fire-tried men of Thirty-eight who saw with me the fall,  
Midst roaring flames and shouting mob, of Pennsylvania Hall;

And they of Lancaster who turned the cheeks of tyrants pale,  
Singing of freedom through the grates of Moyamensing jail!

And haply with them, all unseen, old comrades, gone before,  
Pass, silently as shadows pass, within your open door,--

The eagle face of Lindley Coates, brave Garrett's daring zeal,  
Christian grace of Pennock, the steadfast heart of Neal.

Ah me! beyond all power to name, the worthies tried and true,  
Grave men, fair women, youth and maid, pass by in hushed review.

Of varying faiths, a common cause fused all their hearts in one.  
God give them now, whate'er their names, the peace of duty done!

How gladly would I tread again the old-remembered places,  
Sit down beside your hearth once more and look in the dear old faces!

And thank you for the lessons your fifty years are teaching,  
For honest lives that louder speak than half our noisy preaching;

For your steady faith and courage in that dark and evil time,  
When the Golden Rule was treason, and to feed the hungry, crime;

For the poor slave's house of refuge when the hounds were on his track,  
And saint and sinner, church and state, joined hands to send him back.

Blessings upon you!--What you did for each sad, suffering one,  
So homeless, faint, and naked, unto our Lord was done!

Fair fall on Kennett's pleasant vales and Longwood's bowery ways  
The mellow sunset of your lives, friends of my early days.

May many more of quiet years be added to your sum,  
And, late at last, in tenderest love, the beckoning angel come.

Dear hearts are here, dear hearts are there, alike below, above;  
Our friends are now in either world, and love is sure of love.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Grave By The Lake

Where the Great Lake's sunny smiles  
Dimple round its hundred isles,  
And the mountain's granite ledge  
Cleaves the water like a wedge,  
Ringed about with smooth, gray stones,  
Rest the giant's mighty bones.

Close beside, in shade and gleam,  
Laughs and ripples Melvin stream;  
Melvin water, mountain-born,  
All fair flowers its banks adorn;  
All the woodland's voices meet,  
Mingling with its murmurs sweet.

Over lowlands forest-grown,  
Over waters island-strown,  
Over silver-sanded beach,  
Leaf-locked bay and misty reach,  
Melvin stream and burial-heap,  
Watch and ward the mountains keep.

Who that Titan cromlech fills?  
Forest-kaiser, lord o' the hills?  
Knight who on the birchen tree  
Carved his savage heraldry?  
Priest o' the pine-wood temples dim,  
Prophet, sage, or wizard grim?

Rugged type of primal man,  
Grim utilitarian,  
Loving woods for hunt and prowl,  
Lake and hill for fish and fowl,  
As the brown bear blind and dull  
To the grand and beautiful:

Not for him the lesson drawn  
From the mountains smit with dawn,  
Star-rise, moon-rise, flowers of May,  
Sunset's purple bloom of day,--

Took his life no hue from thence,  
Poor amid such affluence?

Haply unto hill and tree  
All too near akin was he  
Unto him who stands afar  
Nature's marvels greatest are;  
Who the mountain purple seeks  
Must not climb the higher peaks.

Yet who knows in winter tramp,  
Or the midnight of the camp,  
What revealings faint and far,  
Stealing down from moon and star,  
Kindled in that human clod  
Thought of destiny and God?

Stateliest forest patriarch,  
Grand in robes of skin and bark,  
What sepulchral mysteries,  
What weird funeral-rites, were his?  
What sharp wail, what drear lament,  
Back scared wolf and eagle sent?

Now, whate'er he may have been,  
Low he lies as other men;  
On his mound the partridge drums,  
There the noisy blue-jay comes;  
Rank nor name nor pomp has he  
In the grave's democracy.

Part thy blue lips, Northern lake!  
Moss-grown rocks, your silence break!  
Tell the tale, thou ancient tree!  
Thou, too, slide-worn Ossipee!  
Speak, and tell us how and when  
Lived and died this king of men!

Wordless moans the ancient pine;  
Lake and mountain give no sign;  
Vain to trace this ring of stones;  
Vain the search of crumbling bones

Deepest of all mysteries,  
And the saddest, silence is.

Nameless, noteless, clay with clay  
Mingles slowly day by day;  
But somewhere, for good or ill,  
That dark soul is living still;  
Somewhere yet that atom's force  
Moves the light-poised universe.

Strange that on his burial-sod  
Harebells bloom, and golden-rod,  
While the soul's dark horoscope  
Holds no starry sign of hope!  
Is the Unseen with sight at odds?  
Nature's pity more than God's?

Thus I mused by Melvin's side,  
While the summer eventide  
Made the woods and inland sea  
And the mountains mystery;  
And the hush of earth and air  
Seemed the pause before a prayer,--

Prayer for him, for all who rest,  
Mother Earth, upon thy breast,--  
Lapped on Christian turf, or hid  
In rock-cave or pyramid  
All who sleep, as all who live,  
Well may need the prayer, 'Forgive!'

Desert-smothered caravan,  
Knee-deep dust that once was man,  
Battle-trenches ghastly piled,  
Ocean-floors with white bones tiled,  
Crowded tomb and mounded sod,  
Dumbly crave that prayer to God.

Oh, the generations old  
Over whom no church-bells tolled,  
Christless, lifting up blind eyes  
To the silence of the skies!

For the innumerable dead  
Is my soul disquieted.

Where be now these silent hosts?  
Where the camping-ground of ghosts?  
Where the spectral conscripts led  
To the white tents of the dead?  
What strange shore or chartless sea  
Holds the awful mystery?

Then the warm sky stooped to make  
Double sunset in the lake;  
While above I saw with it,  
Range on range, the mountains lit;  
And the calm and splendor stole  
Like an answer to my soul.

Hear'st thou, O of little faith,  
What to thee the mountain saith,  
What is whispered by the trees?  
Cast on God thy care for these;  
Trust Him, if thy sight be dim  
Doubt for them is doubt of Him.

'Blind must be their close-shut eyes  
Where like night the sunshine lies,  
Fiery-linked the self-forged chain  
Binding ever sin to pain,  
Strong their prison-house of will,  
But without He waiteth still.

'Not with hatred's undertow  
Doth the Love Eternal flow;  
Every chain that spirits wear  
Crumbles in the breath of prayer;  
And the penitent's desire  
Opens every gate of fire.

'Still Thy love, O Christ arisen,  
Yearns to reach these souls in prison!  
Through all depths of sin and loss  
Drops the plummet of Thy cross!

Never yet abyss was found  
Deeper than that cross could sound!

Therefore well may Nature keep  
Equal faith with all who sleep,  
Set her watch of hills around  
Christian grave and heathen mound,  
And to cairn and kirkyard send  
Summer's flowery dividend.

Keep, O pleasant Melvin stream,  
Thy sweet laugh in shade and gleam  
On the Indian's grassy tomb  
Swing, O flowers, your bells of bloom!  
Deep below, as high above,  
Sweeps the circle of God's love.

. . . . .

He paused and questioned with his eye  
The hearers' verdict on his song.  
A low voice asked: Is 't well to pry  
Into the secrets which belong  
Only to God?--The life to be  
Is still the unguessed mystery  
Unsealed, unpierced the cloudy walls remain,  
We beat with dream and wish the soundless doors in vain.

'But faith beyond our sight may go.'  
He said: 'The gracious Fatherhood  
Can only know above, below,  
Eternal purposes of good.  
From our free heritage of will,  
The bitter springs of pain and ill  
Flow only in all worlds. The perfect day  
Of God is shadowless, and love is love always.'

'I know,' she said, 'the letter kills;  
That on our arid fields of strife  
And heat of clashing texts distils  
The clew of spirit and of life.'

But, searching still the written Word,  
I fain would find, Thus saith the Lord,  
A voucher for the hope I also feel  
That sin can give no wound beyond love's power to heal.'

'Pray,' said the Man of Books, 'give o'er  
A theme too vast for time and place.  
Go on, Sir Poet, ride once more  
Your hobby at his old free pace.  
But let him keep, with step discreet,  
The solid earth beneath his feet.  
In the great mystery which around us lies,  
The wisest is a fool, the fool Heaven-helped is wise.'

The Traveller said: 'If songs have creeds,  
Their choice of them let singers make;  
But Art no other sanction needs  
Than beauty for its own fair sake.  
It grinds not in the mill of use,  
Nor asks for leave, nor begs excuse;  
It makes the flexile laws it deigns to own,  
And gives its atmosphere its color and its tone.'

'Confess, old friend, your austere school  
Has left your fancy little chance;  
You square to reason's rigid rule  
The flowing outlines of romance.  
With conscience keen from exercise,  
And chronic fear of compromise,  
You check the free play of your rhymes, to clap  
A moral underneath, and spring it like a trap.'

The sweet voice answered: 'Better so  
Than bolder flights that know no check;  
Better to use the bit, than throw  
The reins all loose on fancy's neck.  
The liberal range of Art should be  
The breadth of Christian liberty,  
Restrained alone by challenge and alarm  
Where its charmed footsteps tread the border land of harm.'

'Beyond the poet's sweet dream lives

The eternal epic of the man.  
He wisest is who only gives,  
True to himself, the best he can;  
Who, drifting in the winds of praise,  
The inward monitor obeys;  
And, with the boldness that confesses fear,  
Takes in the crowded sail, and lets his conscience steer.

'Thanks for the fitting word he speaks,  
Nor less for doubtful word unspoken;  
For the false model that he breaks,  
As for the moulded grace unbroken;  
For what is missed and what remains,  
For losses which are truest gains,  
For reverence conscious of the Eternal eye,  
And truth too fair to need the garnish of a lie.'

Laughing, the Critic bowed. 'I yield  
The point without another word;  
Who ever yet a case appealed  
Where beauty's judgment had been heard?  
And you, my good friend, owe to me  
Your warmest thanks for such a plea,  
As true withal as sweet. For my offence  
Of cavil, let her words be ample recompense.'

Across the sea one lighthouse star,  
With crimson ray that came and went,  
Revolving on its tower afar,  
Looked through the doorway of the tent.  
While outward, over sand-slopes wet,  
The lamp flashed down its yellow jet  
On the long wash of waves, with red and green  
Tangles of weltering weed through the white foam-wreaths seen.

'Sing while we may,--another day  
May bring enough of sorrow;!--thus  
Our Traveller in his own sweet lay,  
His Crimean camp-song, hints to us,'  
The lady said. 'So let it be;  
Sing us a song,' exclaimed all three.  
She smiled: 'I can but marvel at your choice

To hear our poet's words through my poor borrowed voice.'

. . . . .

Her window opens to the bay,  
On glistening light or misty gray,  
And there at dawn and set of day  
In prayer she kneels.

'Dear Lord!' she saith, 'to many a borne  
From wind and wave the wanderers come;  
I only see the tossing foam  
Of stranger keels.

'Blown out and in by summer gales,  
The stately ships, with crowded sails,  
And sailors leaning o'er their rails,  
Before me glide;  
They come, they go, but nevermore,  
Spice-laden from the Indian shore,  
I see his swift-winged Isidore  
The waves divide.

'O Thou! with whom the night is day  
And one the near and far away,  
Look out on yon gray waste, and say  
Where lingers he.  
Alive, perchance, on some lone beach  
Or thirsty isle beyond the reach  
Of man, he hears the mocking speech  
Of wind and sea.

'O dread and cruel deep, reveal  
The secret which thy waves conceal,  
And, ye wild sea-birds, hither wheel  
And tell your tale.  
Let winds that tossed his raven hair  
A message from my lost one bear,--  
Some thought of me, a last fond prayer  
Or dying wail!

'Come, with your dreariest truth shut out

The fears that haunt me round about;  
O God! I cannot bear this doubt  
That stifles breath.  
The worst is better than the dread;  
Give me but leave to mourn my dead  
Asleep in trust and hope, instead  
Of life in death!'

It might have been the evening breeze  
That whispered in the garden trees,  
It might have been the sound of seas  
That rose and fell;  
But, with her heart, if not her ear,  
The old loved voice she seemed to hear  
'I wait to meet thee: be of cheer,  
For all is well!'

. . . . .

The sweet voice into silence went,  
A silence which was almost pain  
As through it rolled the long lament,  
The cadence of the mournful main.  
Glancing his written pages o'er,  
The Reader tried his part once more;  
Leaving the land of hackmatack and pine  
For Tuscan valleys glad with olive and with vine.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Haschish

Of all that Orient lands can vaunt  
Of marvels with our own competing,  
The strangest is the Haschish plant,  
And what will follow on its eating.  
What pictures to the taster rise,  
Of Dervish or of Almeh dances!  
Of Eblis, or of Paradise,  
Set all aglow with Houri glances!  
The poppy visions of Cathay,  
The heavy beer-trance of the Suabian;  
The wizard lights and demon play  
Of nights Walpurgis and Arabian!  
The Mollah and the Christian dog  
Change place in mad metempsychosis;  
The Muezzin climbs the synagogue,  
The Rabbi shakes his beard at Moses!  
The Arab by his desert well  
Sits choosing from some Caliph's daughters,  
And hears his single camel's bell  
Sound welcome to his regal quarters.  
The Koran's reader makes complaint  
Of Shitan dancing on and off it;  
The robber offers alms, the saint  
Drinks Tokay and blasphemes the Prophet.  
Such scenes that Eastern plant awakes;  
But we have one ordained to beat it,  
The Haschish of the West, which makes  
Or fools or knaves of all who eat it.  
The preacher eats, and straight appears  
His Bible in a new translation;  
Its angels negro overseers,  
And Heaven itself a snug plantation!  
The man of peace, about whose dreams  
The sweet millennial angels cluster,  
Tastes the mad weed, and plots and schemes,  
A raving Cuban filibuster!  
The noisiest Democrat, with ease,  
It turns to Slavery's parish beadle;  
The shrewdest statesman eats and sees

Due southward point the polar needle.  
The Judge partakes, and sits erelong  
Upon his bench a railing blackguard;  
Decides off-hand that right is wrong,  
And reads the ten commandments backward.  
O potent plant! so rare a taste  
Has never Turk or Gentoos gotten;  
The hempen Haschish of the East  
Is powerless to our Western Cotton!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Healer

TO A YOUNG PHYSICIAN, WITH DORE'S PICTURE OF CHRIST  
HEALING THE SICK.

So stood of old the holy Christ  
Amidst the suffering throng;  
With whom His lightest touch sufficed  
To make the weakest strong.

That healing gift He lends to them  
Who use it in His name;  
The power that filled His garment's hem  
Is evermore the same.

For lo! in human hearts unseen  
The Healer dwelleth still,  
And they who make His temples clean  
The best subserve His will.

The holiest task by Heaven decreed,  
An errand all divine,  
The burden of our common need  
To render less is thine.

The paths of pain are thine. Go forth  
With patience, trust, and hope;  
The sufferings of a sin-sick earth  
Shall give thee ample scope.

Beside the unveiled mysteries  
Of life and death go stand,  
With guarded lips and reverent eyes  
And pure of heart and hand.

So shalt thou be with power endued  
From Him who went about  
The Syrian hillsides doing good,  
And casting demons out.

That Good Physician liveth yet

Thy friend and guide to be;  
The Healer by Gennesaret  
Shall walk the rounds with thee.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Henchman

My lady walks her morning round,  
My lady's page her fleet greyhound,  
My lady's hair the fond winds stir,  
And all the birds make songs for her.

Her thrushes sing in Rathburn bowers,  
And Rathburn side is gay with flowers;  
But ne'er like hers, in flower or bird,  
Was beauty seen or music heard.

The distance of the stars is hers;  
The least of all her worshippers,  
The dust beneath her dainty heel,  
She knows not that I see or feel.

Oh, proud and calm!-she cannot know  
Where'er she goes with her I go;  
Oh, cold and fair!-she cannot guess  
I kneel to share her hound's caress!

Gay knights beside her hunt and hawk,  
I rob their ears of her sweet talk;  
Her suitors come from east and west,  
I steal her smiles from every guest.

Unheard of her, in loving words,  
I greet her with the song of birds;  
I reach her with her green-armed bowers,  
I kiss her with the lips of flowers.

The hound and I are on her trail,  
The wind and I uplift her veil;  
As if the calm, cold moon she were,  
And I the tide, I follow her.

As unrebuked as they, I share  
The license of the sun and air,  
And in a common homage hide  
My worship from her scorn and pride.

World-wide apart, and yet so near,  
I breathe her charmed atmosphere,  
Wherein to her my service brings  
The reverence due to holy things.

Her maiden pride, her haughty name,  
My dumb devotion shall not shame;  
The love that no return doth crave  
To knightly levels lifts the slave,

No lance have I, in joust or fight,  
To splinter in my lady's sight  
But, at her feet, how blest were I  
For any need of hers to die!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Hermit Of Thebaid

O strong, upwelling prayers of faith,  
From inmost founts of life ye start,-  
The spirit's pulse, the vital breath  
Of soul and heart!

From pastoral toil, from traffic's din,  
Alone, in crowds, at home, abroad,  
Unheard of man, ye enter in  
The ear of God.

Ye brook no forced and measured tasks,  
Nor weary rote, nor formal chains;  
The simple heart, that freely asks  
In love, obtains.

For man the living temple is  
The mercy-seat and cherubim,  
And all the holy mysteries,  
He bears with him.

And most avails the prayer of love,  
Which, wordless, shapes itself in needs,  
And wearies Heaven for naught above  
Our common needs.

Which brings to God's all-perfect will  
That trust of His undoubting child  
Whereby all seeming good and ill  
Are reconciled.

And, seeking not for special signs  
Of favor, is content to fall  
Within the providence which shines  
And rains on all.

Alone, the Thebaid hermit leaned  
At noontime o'er the sacred word.  
Was it an angel or a fiend  
Whose voice be heard?

It broke the desert's hush of awe,  
A human utterance, sweet and mild;  
And, looking up, the hermit saw  
A little child.

A child, with wonder-widened eyes,  
O'erawed and troubled by the sight  
Of hot, red sands, and brazen skies,  
And anchorite.

"What dost thou here, poor man? No shade  
Of cool, green palms, nor grass, nor well,  
Nor corn, nor vines.' The hermit said  
'With God I dwell.

'Alone with Him in this great calm,  
I live not by the outward sense;  
My Nile his love, my sheltering palm  
His providence.'

The child gazed round him. 'Does God live  
Here only?-where the desert's rim  
Is green with corn, at morn and eve,  
We pray to Him.

'My brother tills beside the Nile  
His little field; beneath the leaves  
My sisters sit and spin, the while  
My mother weaves.

'And when the millet's ripe heads fall,  
And all the bean-field hangs in pod,  
My mother smiles, and, says that all  
Are gifts from God.'

Adown the hermit's wasted cheeks  
Glistened the flow of human tears;  
'Dear Lord!' he said, 'Thy angel speaks,  
Thy servant hears.'

Within his arms the child he took,

And thought of home and life with men;  
And all his pilgrim feet forsook  
Returned again.

The palmy shadows cool and long,  
The eyes that smiled through lavish locks,  
Home's cradle-hymn and harvest-song,  
And bleat of flocks.

'O child!' he said, 'thou teachest me  
There is no place where God is not;  
That love will make, where'er it be,  
A holy spot.'

He rose from off the desert sand,  
And, leaning on his staff of thorn,  
Went with the young child hand in hand,  
Like night with morn.

They crossed the desert's burning line,  
And heard the palm-tree's rustling fan,  
The Nile-bird's cry, the low of kine,  
And voice of man.

Unquestioning, his childish guide  
He followed, as the small hand led  
To where a woman, gentle-eyed,  
Her distaff fed.

She rose, she clasped her truant boy,  
She thanked the stranger with her eyes;  
The hermit gazed in doubt and joy  
And dumb surprise.

And to!-with sudden warmth and light  
A tender memory thrilled his frame;  
New-born, the world-lost anchorite  
A man became.

'O sister of El Zara's race,  
Behold me!-had we not one mother?'  
She gazed into the stranger's face

'Thou art my brother!'

'And when to share our evening meal,  
She calls the stranger at the door,  
She says God fills the hands that deal  
Food to the poor.'

'O kin of blood! Thy life of use  
And patient trust is more than mine;  
And wiser than the gray recluse  
This child of thine.

'For, taught of him whom God hath sent,  
That toil is praise, and love is prayer,  
I come, life's cares and pains content  
With thee to share.'

Even as his foot the threshold crossed,  
The hermit's better life began;  
Its holiest saint the Thebaid lost,  
And found a man!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Hero

'O for a knight like Bayard,  
Without reproach or fear;  
My light glove on his casque of steel,  
My love-knot on his spear!

'O for the white plume floating  
Sad Zutphen's field above,  
The lion heart in battle,  
The woman's heart in love!

'O that man once more were manly,  
Woman's pride, and not her scorn  
That once more the pale young mother  
Dared to boast `a man is born'!

'But, now life's slumberous current  
No sun-bowed cascade wakes;  
No tall, heroic manhood  
The level dulness breaks.

'O for a knight like Bayard,  
Without reproach or fear!  
My light glove on his casque of steel  
My love-knot on his spear!'

Then I said, my own heart throbbing  
To the time her proud pulse beat,  
'Life hath its regal natures yet,-  
True, tender, brave, and sweet!

'Smile not, fair unbeliever!  
One man, at least, I know,  
Who might wear the crest of Bayard  
Or Sydney's plume of snow.

'Once, when over purple mountains  
Died away the Grecian sun,  
And the far Cyllenian ranges  
Paled and darkened, one by one,-

'Fell the Turk, a bolt of thunder,  
Cleaving all the quiet sky,  
And against his sharp steel lightnings  
Stood the Suliote but to die.

'Woe for the weak and halting!  
The crescent blazed behind  
A curving line of sabres  
Like fire before the wind!

'Last to fly, and first to rally,  
Rode he of whom I speak,  
When, groaning in his bridle path,  
Sank down like a wounded Greek.

'With the rich Albanian costume  
Wet with many a ghastly stain,  
Gazing on earth and sky as one  
Who might not gaze again!

'He looked forward to the mountains,  
Back on foes that never spare,  
Then flung him from his saddle,  
And place the stranger there.

"Allah! hu!" Through flashing sabres,  
Through a stormy hail of lead,  
The good Thessalian charger  
Up the slopes of olives sped.

'Hot spurred the turbaned riders;  
He almost felt their breath,  
Where a mountain stream rolled darkly down  
Between the hills and death.

'One brave and manful struggle,-  
He gained the solid land,  
And the cover of the mountains,  
And the carbines of his band!'

'It was very great and noble,'

Said the moist-eyed listener then,  
'But one brave deed makes no hero;  
Tell me what he since hath been!'

'Still a brave and generous manhood,  
Still and honor without stain,  
In the prison of the Kaiser,  
By the barricades of Seine.

'But dream not helm and harness  
The sign of valor true;  
Peace bath higher tests of manhood  
Than battle ever knew.

'Wouldst know him now? Behold him,  
The Cadmus of the blind,  
Giving the dumb lip language,  
The idiot clay a mind.

'Walking his round of duty  
Serenely day by day,  
With the strong man's hand of labor  
And childhood's heart of play.

'True as the knights of story,  
Sir Lancelot and his peers,  
Brave in his calm endurance  
As they in tilt of spears.

'As waves in stillest waters,  
As stars in noonday skies,  
All that wakes to noble action  
In his noon of calmness lies.

'Wherever outraged Nature  
Asks word or action brave,  
Wherever struggles labor,  
Wherever groans a slave,-

'Wherever rise the peoples,  
Wherever sinks a throne,  
The throbbing heart of Freedom finds

An answer in his own.

'Knight of a better era,  
Without reproach or fear!  
Said I not well that Bayards  
And Sidneys still are here?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Hill-Top

The burly driver at my side,  
We slowly climbed the hill,  
Whose summit, in the hot noontide,  
Seemed rising, rising still.  
At last, our short noon-shadows bid  
The top-stone, bare and brown,  
From whence, like Gizeh's pyramid,  
The rough mass slanted down.

I felt the cool breath of the North;  
Between me and the sun,  
O'er deep, still lake, and ridgy earth,  
I saw the cloud-shades run.  
Before me, stretched for glistening miles,  
Lay mountain-girdled Squam;  
Like green-winged birds, the leafy isles  
Upon its bosom swam.

And, glimmering through the sun-haze warm,  
Far as the eye could roam,  
Dark billows of an earthquake storm  
Beflecked with clouds like foam,  
Their vales in misty shadow deep,  
Their rugged peaks in shine,  
I saw the mountain ranges sweep  
The horizon's northern line.

There towered Chocorua's peak; and west,  
Moosehillock's woods were seem,  
With many a nameless slide-scarred crest  
And pine-dark gorge between.  
Beyond them, like a sun-rimmed cloud,  
The great Notch mountains shone,  
Watched over by the solemn-browed  
And awful face of stone!

'A good look-off!' the driver spake;  
'About this time, last year,  
I drove a party to the Lake,

And stopped, at evening, here.  
'T was duskish down below; but all  
These hills stood in the sun,  
Till, dipped behind yon purple wall,  
He left them, one by one.

'A lady, who, from Thornton hill,  
Had held her place outside,  
And, as a pleasant woman will,  
Had cheered the long, dull ride,  
Besought me, with so sweet a smile,  
That--though I hate delays--  
I could not choose but rest awhile,--  
(These women have such ways!)

'On yonder mossy ledge she sat,  
Her sketch upon her knees,  
A stray brown lock beneath her hat  
Unrolling in the breeze;  
Her sweet face, in the sunset light  
Upraised and glorified,--  
I never saw a prettier sight  
In all my mountain ride.

'As good as fair; it seemed her joy  
To comfort and to give;  
My poor, sick wife, and cripple boy,  
Will bless her while they live!  
The tremor in the driver's tone  
His manhood did not shame  
'I dare say, sir, you may have known'--  
He named a well-known name.

Then sank the pyramidal mounds,  
The blue lake fled away;  
For mountain-scope a parlor's bounds,  
A lighted hearth for day!  
From lonely years and weary miles  
The shadows fell apart;  
Kind voices cheered, sweet human smiles  
Shone warm into my heart.

We journeyed on; but earth and sky  
Had power to charm no more;  
Still dreamed my inward-turning eye  
The dream of memory o'er.  
Ah! human kindness, human love,--  
To few who seek denied;  
Too late we learn to prize above  
The whole round world beside!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Hive At Gettysburg

IN the old Hebrew myth the lion's frame,  
So terrible alive,  
Bleached by the desert's sun and wind, became  
The wandering wild bees' hive;  
And he who, lone and naked-handed, tore  
Those jaws of death apart,  
In after time drew forth their honeyed store  
To strengthen his strong heart.  
Dead seemed the legend: but it only slept  
To wake beneath our sky;  
Just on the spot whence ravening Treason crept  
Back to its lair to die,  
Bleeding and torn from Freedom's mountain bounds,  
A stained and shattered drum  
Is now the hive where, on their flowery rounds,  
The wild bees go and come.  
Unchallenged by a ghostly sentinel,  
They wander wide and far,  
Along green hillsides, sown with shot and shell,  
Through vales once choked with war.  
The low reveille of their battle-drum  
Disturbs no morning prayer;  
With deeper peace in summer noons their hum  
Fills all the drowsy air.  
And Samson's riddle is our own to-day,  
Of sweetness from the strong,  
Of union, peace, and freedom plucked away  
From the rent jaws of wrong.  
From Treason's death we draw a purer life,  
As, from the beast he slew,  
A sweetness sweeter for his bitter strife  
The old-time athlete drew!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## The Holy Land. From Lamartine

I have not felt, o'er seas of sand,  
The rocking of the desert bark;  
Nor laved at Hebron's fount my hand,  
By Hebron's palm-trees cool and dark;  
Nor pitched my tent at even-fall,  
On dust where Job of old has lain,  
Nor dreamed beneath its canvas wall,  
The dream of Jacob o'er again.

One vast world-page remains unread;  
How shine the stars in Chaldea's sky,  
How sounds the reverent pilgrim's tread,  
How beats the heart with God so nigh  
How round gray arch and column lone  
The spirit of the old time broods,  
And sighs in all the winds that moan  
Along the sandy solitudes!

In thy tall cedars, Lebanon,  
I have not heard the nations' cries,  
Nor seen thy eagles stooping down  
Where buried Tyre in ruin lies.  
The Christian's prayer I have not said  
In Tadmor's temples of decay,  
Nor startled, with my dreary tread,  
The waste where Memnon's empire lay.

Nor have I, from thy hallowed tide,  
O Jordan! heard the low lament,  
Like that sad wail along thy side  
Which Israel's mournful prophet sent!  
Nor thrilled within that grotto lone  
Where, deep in night, the Bard of Kings  
Felt hands of fire direct his own,  
And sweep for God the conscious strings.

I have not climbed to Olivet,  
Nor laid me where my Saviour lay,  
And left His trace of tears as yet

By angel eyes unwept away;  
Nor watched, at midnight's solemn time,  
The garden where His prayer and groan,  
Wrung by His sorrow and our crime,  
Rose to One listening ear alone.

I have not kissed the rock-hewn grot  
Where in His mother's arms He lay,  
Nor knelt upon the sacred spot  
Where last His footsteps pressed the clay;  
Nor looked on that sad mountain head,  
Nor smote my sinful breast, where wide  
His arms to fold the world He spread,  
And bowed His head to bless-and died!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Homestead

AGAINST the wooded hills it stands,  
Ghost of a dead home, staring through  
Its broken lights on wasted lands  
Where old-time harvests grew.

Unploughed, unsown, by scythe unshorn,  
The poor, forsaken farm-fields lie,  
Once rich and rife with golden corn  
And pale green breadths of rye.

Of healthful herb and flower bereft,  
The garden plot no housewife keeps;  
Through weeds and tangle only left,  
The snake, its tenant, creeps.

A lilac spray, still blossom-clad,  
Sways slow before the empty rooms;  
Beside the roofless porch a sad  
Pathetic red rose blooms.

His track, in mould and dust of drouth,  
On floor and hearth the squirrel leaves,  
And in the fireless chimney's mouth  
His web the spider weaves.

The leaning barn, about to fall,  
Resounds no more on husking eves;  
No cattle low in yard or stall,  
No thresher beats his sheaves.

So sad, so drear! It seems almost  
Some haunting Presence makes its sign;  
That down yon shadowy lane some ghost  
Might drive his spectral kine!

O home so desolate and lorn!  
Did all thy memories die with thee?  
Were any wed, were any born,  
Beneath this low roof-tree?

Whose axe the wall of forest broke,  
And let the waiting sunshine through?  
What goodwife sent the earliest smoke  
Up the great chimney flue?

Did rustic lovers hither come?  
Did maidens, swaying back and forth  
In rhythmic grace, at wheel and loom,  
Make light their toil with mirth?

Did child feet patter on the stair?  
Did boyhood frolic in the snow?  
Did gray age, in her elbow chair,  
Knit, rocking to and fro?

The murmuring brook, the sighing breeze,  
The pine's slow whisper, cannot tell;  
Low mounds beneath the hemlock-trees  
Keep the home secrets well.

Cease, mother-land, to fondly boast  
Of sons far off who strive and thrive,  
Forgetful that each swarming host  
Must leave an emptier hive.

O wanderers from ancestral soil,  
Leave noisome mill and chaffering store:  
Gird up your loins for sturdier toil,  
And build the home once more!

Come back to bayberry-scented slopes,  
And fragrant fern, and ground-nut vine;  
Breathe airs blown over holt and copse  
Sweet with black birch and pine.

What matter if the gains are small  
That life's essential wants supply?  
Your homestead's title gives you all  
That idle wealth can buy.

All that the many-dollared crave,

The brick-walled slaves of 'Change and mart,  
Lawns, trees, fresh air, and flowers, you have,  
More dear for lack of art.

Your own sole masters, freedom-willed,  
With none to bid you go or stay,  
Till the old fields your fathers tilled,  
As manly men as they!

With skill that spares your toiling hands,  
And chemic aid that science brings,  
Reclaim the waste and outworn lands,  
And reign thereon as kings

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Human Sacrifice

I.

FAR from his close and noisome cell,  
By grassy lane and sunny stream,  
Blown clover field and strawberry dell,  
And green and meadow freshness, fell  
The footsteps of his dream.  
Again from careless feet the dew  
Of summer's misty morn he shook;  
Again with merry heart he threw  
His light line in the rippling brook.  
Back crowded all his school-day joys;  
He urged the ball and quoit again,  
And heard the shout of laughing boys  
Come ringing down the walnut glen.  
Again he felt the western breeze,  
With scent of flowers and crisping hay;  
And down again through wind-stirred trees  
He saw the quivering sunlight play.  
An angel in home's vine-hung door,  
He saw his sister smile once more;  
Once more the truant's brown-locked head  
Upon his mother's knees was laid,  
And sweetly lulled to slumber there,  
With evening's holy hymn and prayer!

II.

He woke. At once on heart and brain  
The present Terror rushed again;  
Clanked on his limbs the felon's chain!  
He woke, to hear the church-tower tell  
Time's footfall on the conscious bell,  
And, shuddering, feel that clanging din  
His life's last hour had ushered in;  
To see within his prison-yard,  
Through the small window, iron barred,  
The gallows shadow rising dim  
Between the sunrise heaven and him;  
A horror in God's blessed air;  
A blackness in his morning light;  
Like some foul devil-altar there

Built up by demon hands at night,  
And, maddened by that evil sight,  
Dark, horrible, confused, and strange,  
A chaos of wild, weltering change,  
All power of check and guidance gone,  
Dizzy and blind, his mind swept on.  
In vain he strove to breathe a prayer,  
In vain he turned the Holy Book,  
He only heard the gallows-stair  
Creak as the wind its timbers shook.  
No dream for him of sin forgiven,  
While still that baleful spectre stood,  
With its hoarse murmur, 'Blood for Blood!'  
Between him and the pitying Heaven!

III.

Low on his dungeon floor he knelt,  
And smote his breast, and on his chain,  
Whose iron clasp he always felt,  
His hot tears fell like rain;  
And near him, with the cold, calm look  
And tone of one whose formal part,  
Unwarmed, unsoftened of the heart,  
Is measured out by rule and book,  
With placid lip and tranquil blood,  
The hangman's ghostly ally stood,  
Blessing with solemn text and word  
The gallows-drop and strangling cord;  
Lending the sacred Gospel's awe  
And sanction to the crime of Law.

IV.

He saw the victim's tortured brow,  
The sweat of anguish starting there,  
The record of a nameless woe  
In the dim eye's imploring stare,  
Seen hideous through the long, damp hair, —  
Fingers of ghastly skin and bone  
Working and writhing on the stone!  
And heard, by mortal terror wrung  
From heaving breast and stiffened tongue,  
The choking sob and low hoarse prayer;  
As o'er his half-crazed fancy came  
A vision of the eternal flame,

Its smoking cloud of agonies,  
Its demon-worm that never dies,  
The everlasting rise and fall  
Of fire-waves round the infernal wall;  
While high above that dark red flood,  
Black, giant-like, the gallows stood;  
Two busy fiends attending there:  
One with cold mocking rite and prayer,  
The other with impatient grasp,  
Tightening the death-rope's strangling clasp.  
V.

The unfelt rite at length was done,  
The prayer unheard at length was said,  
An hour had passed: the noonday sun  
Smote on the features of the dead!  
And he who stood the doomed beside,  
Calm gauger of the swelling tide  
Of mortal agony and fear,  
Heeding with curious eye and ear  
Whate'er revealed the keen excess  
Of man's extremest wretchedness:  
And who in that dark anguish saw  
An earnest of the victim's fate,  
The vengeful terrors of God's law,  
The kindlings of Eternal hate,  
The first drops of that fiery rain  
Which beats the dark red realm of pain,  
Did he uplift his earnest cries  
Against the crime of Law, which gave  
His brother to that fearful grave,  
Whereon Hope's moonlight never lies,  
And Faith's white blossoms never wave  
To the soft breath of Memory's sighs;  
Which sent a spirit marred and stained,  
By fiends of sin possessed, profaned,  
In madness and in blindness stark,  
Into the silent, unknown dark?  
No, from the wild and shrinking dread,  
With which he saw the victim led  
Beneath the dark veil which divides  
Ever the living from the dead,  
And Nature's solemn secret hides,

The man of prayer can only draw  
New reasons for his bloody law;  
New faith in staying Murder's hand  
By murder at that Law's command;  
New reverence for the gallows-rope,  
As human nature's latest hope;  
Last relic of the good old time,  
When Power found license for its crime,  
And held a writhing world in check  
By that fell cord about its neck;  
Stifled Sedition's rising shout,  
Choked the young breath of Freedom out,  
And timely checked the words which sprung  
From Heresy's forbidden tongue;  
While in its noose of terror bound,  
The Church its cherished union found,  
Conforming, on the Moslem plan,  
The motley-colored mind of man,  
Not by the Koran and the Sword,  
But by the Bible and the Cord!  
VI.

O Thou! at whose rebuke the grave  
Back to warm life its sleeper gave,  
Beneath whose sad and tearful glance  
The cold and changèd countenance  
Broke the still horror of its trance,  
And, waking, saw with joy above,  
A brother's face of tenderest love;  
Thou, unto whom the blind and lame,  
The sorrowing and the sin-sick came,  
And from Thy very garment's hem  
Drew life and healing unto them,  
The burden of Thy holy faith  
Was love and life, not hate and death;  
Man's demon ministers of pain,  
The fiends of his revenge, were sent  
From thy pure Gospel's element  
To their dark home again.  
Thy name is Love! What, then, is he,  
Who in that name the gallows rears,  
An awful altar built to Thee,  
With sacrifice of blood and tears?

Oh, once again Thy healing lay  
On the blind eyes which knew Thee not,  
And let the light of Thy pure day  
Melt in upon his darkened thought.  
Soften his hard, cold heart, and show  
The power which in forbearance lies,  
And let him feel that mercy now  
Is better than old sacrifice!

VII.

As on the White Sea's charmèd shore,  
The Parsee sees his holy hill<sup>10</sup>  
With dunnest smoke-clouds curtained o'er,  
Yet knows beneath them, evermore,  
The low, pale fire is quivering still;  
So, underneath its clouds of sin,  
The heart of man retaineth yet  
Gleams of its holy origin;  
And half-quenched stars that never set,  
Dim colors of its faded bow,  
And early beauty, linger there,  
And o'er its wasted desert blow  
Faint breathings of its morning air.  
Oh, never yet upon the scroll  
Of the sin-stained, but priceless soul,  
Hath Heaven inscribed 'Despair!'  
Cast not the clouded gem away,  
Quench not the dim but living ray, —  
My brother man, Beware!  
With that deep voice which from the skies  
Forbade the Patriarch's sacrifice,  
God's angel cries, Forbear!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Hunters Of Men

HAVE ye heard of our hunting, o'er mountain and glen,  
Through cane-brake and forest, — the hunting of men?  
The lords of our land to this hunting have gone,  
As the fox-hunter follows the sound of the horn;  
Hark! the cheer and the hallo! the crack of the whip,  
And the yell of the hound as he fastens his grip!  
All blithe are our hunters, and noble their match,  
Though hundreds are caught, there are millions to catch.  
So speed to their hunting, o'er mountain and glen,  
Through cane-brake and forest, — the hunting of men!  
Gay luck to our hunters! how nobly they ride  
In the glow of their zeal, and the strength of their pride!  
The priest with his cassock flung back on the wind,  
Just screening the politic statesman behind;  
The saint and the sinner, with cursing and prayer,  
The drunk and the sober, ride merrily there.  
And woman, kind woman, wife, widow, and maid,  
For the good of the hunted, is lending her aid:  
Her foot's in the stirrup, her hand on the rein,  
How blithely she rides to the hunting of men!  
Oh, goodly and grand is our hunting to see,  
In this 'land of the brave and this home of the free.'  
Priest, warrior, and statesman, from Georgia to Maine,  
All mounting the saddle, all grasping the rein;  
Right merrily hunting the black man, whose sin  
Is the curl of his hair and the hue of his skin!  
Woe, now, to the hunted who turns him at bay!  
Will our hunters be turned from their purpose and prey?  
Will their hearts fail within them? their nerves tremble, when  
All roughly they ride to the hunting of men?  
Ho! alms for our hunters! all weary and faint,  
Wax the curse of the sinner and prayer of the saint.  
The horn is wound faintly, the echoes are still,  
Over cane-brake and river, and forest and hill.  
Haste, alms for our hunters! the hunted once more  
Have turned from their flight with their backs to the shore:  
What right have they here in the home of the white,  
Shadowed o'er by our banner of Freedom and Right?  
Ho! alms for the hunters! or never again

Will they ride in their pomp to the hunting of men!  
Alms, alms for our hunters! why will ye delay,  
When their pride and their glory are melting away?  
The parson has turned; for, on charge of his own,  
Who goeth a warfare, or hunting, alone?  
The politic statesman looks back with a sigh,  
There is doubt in his heart, there is fear in his eye.  
Oh, haste, lest that doubting and fear shall prevail,  
And the head of his steed take the place of the tail.  
Oh, haste, ere he leave us! for who will ride then,  
For pleasure or gain, to the hunting of men?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Huskers

IT was late in mild October, and the long autumnal rain  
Had left the summer harvest-fields all green with grass again;  
The first sharp frosts had fallen, leaving all the woodlands gay  
With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the meadow flowers of May.  
Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the sun rose broad and red,  
At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened as he sped;  
Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened and subdued,  
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly pictured wood.  
And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to the night,  
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with yellow light;  
Slanting through the painted beeches, he glorified the hill;  
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay brighter, greener still.  
And shouting boys in woodland haunts caught glimpses of that sky,  
Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and laughed, they knew not why;  
And school-girls, gay with aster-flowers, beside the meadow brooks,  
Mingled the glow of autumn with the sunshine of sweet looks.  
From spire and barn looked westerly the patient weathercocks;  
But even the birches on the hill stood motionless as rocks.  
No sound was in the woodlands, save the squirrel's dropping shell,  
And the yellow leaves among the boughs, low rustling as they fell.  
The summer grains were harvested; the stubblefields lay dry,  
Where June winds rolled, in light and shade, the pale green waves of rye;  
But still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys fringed with wood,  
Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn crop stood.  
Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks that, dry and sere,  
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone out the yellow ear;  
Beneath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a verdant fold,  
And glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin's sphere of gold.  
There wrought the busy harvesters; and many a creaking wain  
Bore slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk and grain;  
Till broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down, at last,  
And like a merry guest's farewell, the day in brightness passed.  
And lo! as through the western pines, on meadow, stream, and pond,  
Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire beyond,  
Slowly o'er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder glory shone,  
And the sunset and the moonrise were mingled into one!  
As thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed away,  
And deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil shadows lay;  
From many a brown old farm-house, and hamlet without name,

Their milking and their home-tasks done, the merry huskers came.  
Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks in the mow,  
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant scene below;  
The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ears before,  
And laughing eyes and busy hands and brown cheeks glimmering o'er.  
Half hidden, in a quiet nook, serene of look and heart,  
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart;  
While up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling in its shade,  
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happy children played.  
Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden young and fair,  
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of soft brown hair,  
The master of the village school, sleek of hair and smooth of tongue,  
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a husking-ballad sung.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Inward Judge

From Institutes of Manu.

The soul itself its awful witness is.  
Say not in evil doing, 'No one sees,'  
And so offend the conscious One within,  
Whose ear can hear the silences of sin.

Ere they find voice, whose eyes unsleeping see  
The secret motions of iniquity.  
Nor in thy folly say, 'I am alone.'  
For, seated in thy heart, as on a throne,  
The ancient Judge and Witness liveth still,  
To note thy act and thought; and as thy ill  
Or good goes from thee, far beyond thy reach,  
The solemn Doomsman's seal is set on each.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Jubilee Singers

VOICE of a people suffering long,  
The pathos of their mournful song,  
The sorrow of their night of wrong!  
Their cry like that which Israel gave,  
A prayer for one to guide and save,  
Like Moses by the Red Sea's wave!  
The Stern accord her timbrel lent  
To Miriam's note of triumph sent  
O'er Egypt's sunken armament!  
The tramp that startled camp and town,  
And shook the walls of slavery down,  
The spectral march of old John Brown!  
The storm that swept through battle-days,  
The triumph after long delays,  
The bondmen giving God the praise!  
Voice of a ransomed race, sing on  
Till Freedom's every right is won,  
And slavery's every wrong undone!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Kansas Emigrants

THE KANSAS EMIGRANTS.

WE cross the prairie as of old  
The pilgrims crossed the sea,  
To make the West, as they the East,  
The homestead of the free!  
We go to rear a wall of men  
On Freedom's southern line,  
And plant beside the cotton-tree  
The rugged Northern pine!  
We're flowing from our native hills  
As our free rivers flow;  
The blessing of our Mother-land  
Is on us as we go.  
We go to plant her common schools,  
On distant prairie swells,  
And give the Sabbaths of the wild  
The music of her bells.  
Upbearing, like the Ark of old,  
The Bible in our van,  
We go to test the truth of God  
Against the fraud of man.  
No pause, nor rest, save where the streams  
That feed the Kansas run,  
Save where our Pilgrim gonfalon  
Shall flout the setting sun!  
We'll tread the prairie as of old  
Our fathers sailed the sea,  
And make the West, as they the East,  
The homestead of the free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Khan's Devil

The Khan came from Bokhara town  
To Hamza, santon of renown.

'My head is sick, my hands are weak;  
Thy help, O holy man, I seek.'

In silence marking for a space  
The Khan's red eyes and purple face,

Thick voice, and loose, uncertain tread,  
'Thou hast a devil!' Hamza said.

'Allah forbid!' exclaimed the Khan.  
Rid me of him at once, O man!

'Nay,' Hamza said, 'no spell of mine  
Can slay that cursed thing of thine.

'Leave feast and wine, go forth and drink  
Water of healing on the brink

'Where clear and cold from mountain snows,  
The Nahr el Zeben downward flows.

'Six moons remain, then come to me;  
May Allah's pity go with thee!'

Awestruck, from feast and wine the Khan  
Went forth where Nahr el Zeben ran.

Roots were his food, the desert dust  
His bed, the water quenched his thirst;

And when the sixth moon's scimeter  
Curved sharp above the evening star,

He sought again the santon's door,  
Not weak and trembling as before,

But strong of limb and clear of brain;  
'Behold,' he said, 'the fiend is slain.'

'Nay,' Hamza answered, 'starved and drowned,  
The curst one lies in death-like swoond.

'But evil breaks the strongest gyves,  
And jins like him have charmed lives.

'One beaker of the juice of grape  
May call him up in living shape.

'When the red wine of Badakshan  
Sparkles for thee, beware, O Khan,

'With water quench the fire within,  
And drown each day thy devilkin!'

Thenceforth the great Khan shunned the cup  
As Shitan's own, though offered up,

With laughing eyes and jewelled hands,  
By Yarkand's maids and Samarcand's.

And, in the lofty vestibule  
Of the medress of Kaush Kodul,

The students of the holy law  
A golden-lettered tablet saw,

With these words, by a cunning hand,  
Graved on it at the Khan's command:

'In Allah's name, to him who hath  
A devil, Khan el Hamed saith,

'Wisely our Prophet cursed the vine  
The fiend that loves the breath of wine,

'No prayer can slay, no marabout  
Nor Meccan dervis can drive out.

'I, Khan el Hamed, know the charm  
That robs him of his power to harm.

'Drown him, O Islam's child! the spell  
To save thee lies in tank and well!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The King's Missive

UNDER the great hill sloping bare  
To cove and meadow and Common lot,  
In his council chamber and oaken chair,  
Sat the worshipful Governor Endicott.  
A grave, strong man, who knew no peer  
In the pilgrim land, where he ruled in fear  
Of God, not man, and for good or ill  
Held his trust with an iron will.

He had shorn with his sword the cross from out  
The flag, and cloven the May-pole down,  
Harried the heathen round about,  
And whipped the Quakers from town to town.  
Earnest and honest, a man at need  
To burn like a torch for his own harsh creed,  
He kept with the flaming brand of his zeal  
The gate of the holy common weal.

His brow was clouded, his eye was stern,  
With a look of mingled sorrow and wrath;  
'Woe's me!' he murmured: 'at every turn  
The pestilent Quakers are in my path!  
Some we have scourged, and banished some,  
Some hanged, more doomed, and still they come,  
Fast as the tide of yon bay sets in,  
Sowing their heresy's seed of sin.

'Did we count on this? Did we leave behind  
The graves of our kin, the comfort and ease  
Of our English hearths and homes, to find  
Troublers of Israel such as these?  
Shall I spare? Shall I pity them? God forbid!  
I will do as the prophet to Agag did  
They come to poison the wells of the Word,  
I will hew them in pieces before the Lord!'

The door swung open, and Rawson the clerk  
Entered, and whispered under breath,  
'There waits below for the hangman's work

A fellow banished on pain of death--  
Shattuck, of Salem, unhealed of the whip,  
Brought over in Master Goldsmith's ship  
At anchor here in a Christian port,  
With freight of the devil and all his sort!

Twice and thrice on the chamber floor  
Striding fiercely from wall to wall,  
'The Lord do so to me and more,'  
The Governor cried, 'if I hang not all!  
Bring hither the Quaker.' Calm, sedate,  
With the look of a man at ease with fate,  
Into that presence grim and dread  
Came Samuel Shattuck, with hat on head.

'Off with the knave's hat!' An angry hand  
Smote down the offence; but the wearer said,  
With a quiet smile, 'By the king's command  
I bear his message and stand in his stead.'  
In the Governor's hand a missive he laid  
With the royal arms on its seal displayed,  
And the proud man spake as he gazed thereat,  
Uncovering, 'Give Mr. Shattuck his hat.'

He turned to the Quaker, bowing low,--  
'The king commandeth your friends' release;  
Doubt not he shall be obeyed, although  
To his subjects' sorrow and sin's increase.  
What he here enjoineth, John Endicott,  
His loyal servant, questioneth not.  
You are free! God grant the spirit you own  
May take you from us to parts unknown.'

So the door of the jail was open cast,  
And, like Daniel, out of the lion's den  
Tender youth and girlhood passed,  
With age-bowed women and gray-locked men.  
And the voice of one appointed to die  
Was lifted in praise and thanks on high,  
And the little maid from New Netherlands  
Kissed, in her joy, the doomed man's hands.

And one, whose call was to minister  
To the souls in prison, beside him went,  
An ancient woman, bearing with her  
The linen shroud for his burial meant.  
For she, not counting her own life dear,  
In the strength of a love that cast out fear,  
Had watched and served where her brethren died,  
Like those who waited the cross beside.

One moment they paused on their way to look  
On the martyr graves by the Common side,  
And much scourged Wharton of Salem took  
His burden of prophecy up and cried  
'Rest, souls of the valiant! Not in vain  
Have ye borne the Master's cross of pain;  
Ye have fought the fight, ye are victors crowned,  
With a fourfold chain ye have Satan bound!'

The autumn haze lay soft and still  
On wood and meadow and upland farms;  
On the brow of Snow Hill the great windmill  
Slowly and lazily swung its arms;  
Broad in the sunshine stretched away,  
With its capes and islands, the turquoise bay;  
And over water and dusk of pines  
Blue hills lifted their faint outlines.

The topaz leaves of the walnut glowed,  
The sumach added its crimson fleck,  
And double in air and water showed  
The tinted maples along the Neck;  
Through frost flower clusters of pale star-mist,  
And gentian fringes of amethyst,  
And royal plumes of golden-rod,  
The grazing cattle on Centry trod.

But as they who see not, the Quakers saw  
The world about them; they only thought  
With deep thanksgiving and pious awe  
On the great deliverance God had wrought.  
Through lane and alley the gazing town  
Noisily followed them up and down;

Some with scoffing and brutal jeer,  
Some with pity and words of cheer.

One brave voice rose above the din.  
Upsall, gray with his length of days,  
Cried from the door of his Red Lion Inn  
'Men of Boston, give God the praise  
No more shall innocent blood call down  
The bolts of wrath on your guilty town.  
The freedom of worship, dear to you,  
Is dear to all, and to all is due.

'I see the vision of days to come,  
When your beautiful City of the Bay  
Shall be Christian liberty's chosen home,  
And none shall his neighbor's rights gainsay.  
The varying notes of worship shall blend  
And as one great prayer to God ascend,  
And hands of mutual charity raise  
Walls of salvation and gates of praise.'

So passed the Quakers through Boston town,  
Whose painful ministers sighed to see  
The walls of their sheep-fold falling down,  
And wolves of heresy prowling free.  
But the years went on, and brought no wrong;  
With milder counsels the State grew strong,  
As outward Letter and inward Light  
Kept the balance of truth aright.

The Puritan spirit perishing not,  
To Concord's yeomen the signal sent,  
And spake in the voice of the cannon-shot  
That severed the chains of a continent.  
With its gentler mission of peace and good-will  
The thought of the Quaker is living still,  
And the freedom of soul he prophesied  
Is gospel and law where the martyrs died.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Knight Of St. John

Ere down yon blue Carpathian hills  
The sun shall sink again,  
Farewell to life and all its ills,  
Farewell to cell and chain!

These prison shades are dark and cold,  
But, darker far than they,  
The shadow of a sorrow old  
Is on my heart alway.

For since the day when Warkworth wood  
Closed o'er my steed, and I,  
An alien from my name and blood,  
A weed cast out to die,-

When, looking back in sunset light,  
I saw her turret gleam,  
And from its casement, far and white,  
Her sign of farewell stream,

Like one who, from some desert shore,  
Doth home's green isles descry,  
And, vainly longing, gazes o'er  
The waste of wave and sky;

So from the desert of my fate  
I gaze across the past;  
Forever on life's dial-plate  
The shade is backward cast!

I've wandered wide from shore to shore,  
I've knelt at many a shrine;  
And bowed me to the rocky floor  
Where Bethlehem's tapers shine;

And by the Holy Sepulchre  
I've pledged my knightly sword  
To Christ, His blessed Church, and her,  
The Mother of our Lord.

Oh, vain the vow, and vain the strife!  
How vain do all things seem!  
My soul is in the past, and life  
To-day is but a dream.

In vain the penance strange and long,  
And hard for flesh to bear;  
The prayer, the fasting, and the thong,  
And sackcloth shirt of hair.

The eyes of memory will not sleep,  
Its ears are open still;  
And vigils with the past they keep  
Against my feeble will.

And still the loves and joys of old  
Do evermore uprise;  
I see the flow of locks of gold,  
The shine of loving eyes!

Ah me! upon another's breast  
Those golden locks recline;  
I see upon another rest  
The glance that once was mine.

'O faithless priest! O perjured knight!'  
I hear the Master cry;  
'Shut out the vision from thy sight,  
Let Earth and Nature die.

'The Church of God is now thy spouse,  
And thou the bridegroom art;  
Then let the burden of thy vows  
Crush down thy human heart!'

In vain! This heart its grief must know,  
Till life itself hath ceased,  
And falls beneath the self-same blow  
The lover and the priest!

O pitying Mother! souls of light,

And saints and martyrs old!  
Pray for a weak and sinful knight,  
A suffering man uphold.

Then let the Paynim work his will,  
And death unbind my chain,  
Ere down yon blue Carpathian hill  
The sun shall fall again.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Lakeside

The shadows round the inland sea  
Are deepening into night;  
Slow up the slopes of Ossipee  
They chase the lessening light.  
Tired of the long day's blinding heat,  
I rest my languid eye,  
Lake of the Hills! where, cool and sweet,  
Thy sunset waters lie!

Along the sky, in wavy lines,  
O'er isle and reach and bay,  
Green-belted with eternal pines,  
The mountains stretch away.  
Below, the maple masses sleep  
Where shore with water blends,  
While midway on the tranquil deep  
The evening light descends.

So seemed it when yon hill's red crown,  
Of old, the Indian trod,  
And, through the sunset air, looked down  
Upon the Smile of God.  
To him of light and shade the laws  
No forest skeptic taught;  
Their living and eternal Cause  
His truer instinct sought.

He saw these mountains in the light  
Which now across them shines;  
This lake, in summer sunset bright,  
Walled round with sombering pines.  
God near him seemed; from earth and skies  
His loving voice he beard,  
As, face to face, in Paradise,  
Man stood before the Lord.

Thanks, O our Father! that, like him,  
Thy tender love I see,  
In radiant hill and woodland dim,

And tinted sunset sea.  
For not in mockery dost Thou fill  
Our earth with light and grace;  
Thou hid'st no dark and cruel will  
Behind Thy smiling face!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Landmarks

I.

THROUGH the streets of Marblehead  
Fast the red-winged terror sped;

Blasting, withering, on it came,  
With its hundred tongues of flame,

Where St. Michael's on its way  
Stood like chained Andromeda,

Waiting on the rock, like her,  
Swift doom or deliverer!

Church that, after sea-moss grew  
Over walls no longer new,

Counted generations five,  
Four entombed and one alive;

Heard the martial thousand tread  
Battleward from Marblehead;

Saw within the rock-walled bay  
Treville's liked pennons play,

And the fisher's dory met  
By the barge of Lafayette,

Telling good news in advance  
Of the coming fleet of France!

Church to reverend memories, dear,  
Quaint in desk and chandelier;

Bell, whose century-rusted tongue  
Burials tolled and bridals rung;

Loft, whose tiny organ kept  
Keys that Snetzler's hand had swept;

Altar, o'er whose tablet old  
Sinai's law its thunders rolled!

Suddenly the sharp cry came  
'Look! St. Michael's is aflame!'

Round the low tower wall the fire  
Snake-like wound its coil of ire.

Sacred in its gray respect  
From the jealousies of sect,

'Save it,' seemed the thought of all,  
'Save it, though our roof-trees fall!'

Up the tower the young men sprung;  
One, the bravest, outward swung

By the rope, whose kindling strands  
Smoked beneath the holder's hands,

Smiting down with strokes of power  
Burning fragments from the tower.

Then the gazing crowd beneath  
Broke the painful pause of breath;

Brave men cheered from street to street,  
With home's ashes at their feet;

Houseless women kerchiefs waved:  
'Thank the Lord! St. Michael's saved!'

II.

In the heart of Boston town  
Stands the church of old renown,

From whose walls the impulse went  
Which set free a continent;

From whose pulpit's oracle

Prophecies of freedom fell;

And whose steeple-rocking din  
Rang the nation's birth-day in!

Standing at this very hour  
Perilled like St. Michael's tower,

Held not in the clasp of flame,  
But by mammon's grasping claim.

Shall it be of Boston said  
She is shamed by Marblehead?

City of our pride! as there,  
Hast thou none to do and dare?

Life was risked for Michael's shrine;  
Shall not wealth be staked for thine?

Woe to thee, when men shall search  
Vainly for the Old South Church;

When from Neck to Boston Stone,  
All thy pride of place is gone;

When from Bay and railroad car,  
Stretched before them wide and far,

Men shall only see a great  
Wilderness of brick and slate,

Every holy spot o'erlaid  
By the commonplace of trade!

City of our love': to thee  
Duty is but destiny.

True to all thy record saith,  
Keep with thy traditions faith;

Ere occasion's overpast,

Hold its flowing forelock fast;

Honor still the precedents  
Of a grand munificence;

In thy old historic way  
Give, as thou didst yesterday

At the South-land's call, or on  
Need's demand from fired St. John.

Set thy Church's muffled bell  
Free the generous deed to tell.

Let thy loyal hearts rejoice  
In the glad, sonorous voice,

Ring from the brazen mouth  
Of the bell of the Old South,--

Ring clearly, with a will,  
'What she was is Boston still!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Last Eve Of Summer

Summer's last sun nigh unto setting shines  
Through yon columnar pines,  
And on the deepening shadows of the lawn  
Its golden lines are drawn.

Dreaming of long gone summer days like this,  
Feeling the wind's soft kiss,  
Grateful and glad that failing ear and sight  
Have still their old delight,

I sit alone, and watch the warm, sweet day  
Lapse tenderly away;  
And, wistful, with a feeling of forecast,  
I ask, 'Is this the last?

'Will nevermore for me the seasons run  
Their round, and will the sun  
Of ardent summers yet to come forget  
For me to rise and set?'

Thou shouldst be here, or I should be with thee  
Wherever thou mayst be,  
Lips mute, hands clasped, in silences of speech  
Each answering unto each.

For this still hour, this sense of mystery far  
Beyond the evening star,  
No words outworn suffice on lip or scroll:  
The soul would fain with soul

Wait, while these few swift-passing days fulfil  
The wise-disposing Will,  
And, in the evening as at morning, trust  
The All-Merciful and Just.

The solemn joy that soul-communion feels  
Immortal life reveals;  
And human love, its prophecy and sign,  
Interprets love divine.

Come then, in thought, if that alone may be,  
O friend! and bring with thee  
Thy calm assurance of transcendent Spheres  
And the Eternal Years!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Last Walk In Autumn

I.

O'er the bare woods, whose outstretched hands  
Plead with the leaden heavens in vain,  
I see, beyond the valley lands,  
The sea's long level dim with rain.  
Around me all things, stark and dumb,  
Seem praying for the snows to come,  
And, for the summer bloom and greenness gone,  
With winter's sunset lights and dazzling morn atone.

II.

Along the river's summer walk,  
The withered tufts of asters nod;  
And trembles on its arid stalk  
The boar plume of the golden-rod.  
And on a ground of sombre fir,  
And azure-studded juniper,  
The silver birch its buds of purple shows,  
And scarlet berries tell where bloomed the sweet wild-rose!

III.

With mingled sound of horns and bells,  
A far-heard clang, the wild geese fly,  
Storm-sent, from Arctic moors and fells,  
Like a great arrow through the sky,  
Two dusky lines converged in one,  
Chasing the southward-flying sun;  
While the brave snow-bird and the hardy jay  
Call to them from the pines, as if to bid them stay.

IV.

I passed this way a year ago  
The wind blew south; the noon of day  
Was warm as June's; and save that snow  
Flecked the low mountains far away,  
And that the vernal-seeming breeze  
Mocked faded grass and leafless trees,  
I might have dreamed of summer as I lay,  
Watching the fallen leaves with the soft wind at play.

V.

Since then, the winter blasts have piled  
The white pagodas of the snow  
On these rough slopes, and, strong and wild,  
Yon river, in its overflow  
Of spring-time rain and sun, set free,  
Crashed with its ices to the sea;  
And over these gray fields, then green and gold,  
The summer corn has waved, the thunder's organ rolled.

VI.

Rich gift of God! A year of time  
What pomp of rise and shut of day,  
What hues wherewith our Northern clime  
Makes autumn's dropping woodlands gay,  
What airs outblown from ferny dells,  
And clover-bloom and sweetbrier smells,  
What songs of brooks and birds, what fruits and flowers,  
Green woods and moonlit snows, have in its round been ours!

VII.

I know not how, in other lands,  
The changing seasons come and go;  
What splendors fall on Syrian sands,  
What purple lights on Alpine snow!  
Nor how the pomp of sunrise waits  
On Venice at her watery gates;  
A dream alone to me is Arno's vale,  
And the Alhambra's halls are but a traveller's tale.

VIII.

Yet, on life's current, he who drifts  
Is one with him who rows or sails  
And he who wanders widest lifts  
No more of beauty's jealous veils  
Than he who from his doorway sees  
The miracle of flowers and trees,  
Feels the warm Orient in the noonday air,  
And from cloud minarets hears the sunset call to prayer!

IX.

The eye may well be glad that looks  
Where Pharpar's fountains rise and fall;  
But he who sees his native brooks  
Laugh in the sun, has seen them all.  
The marble palaces of Ind  
Rise round him in the snow and wind;  
From his lone sweetbrier Persian Hafiz smiles,  
And Rome's cathedral awe is in his woodland aisles.

X.

And thus it is my fancy blends  
The near at hand and far and rare;  
And while the same horizon bends  
Above the silver-sprinkled hair  
Which flashed the light of morning skies  
On childhood's wonder-lifted eyes,  
Within its round of sea and sky and field,  
Earth wheels with all her zones, the Kosmos stands revealed.

XI.

And thus the sick man on his bed,  
The toiler to his task-work bound,  
Behold their prison-walls outspread,  
Their clipped horizon widen round!  
While freedom-giving fancy waits,  
Like Peter's angel at the gates,  
The power is theirs to baffle care and pain,  
To bring the lost world back, and make it theirs again!

XII.

What lack of goodly company,  
When masters of the ancient lyre  
Obey my call, and trace for me  
Their words of mingled tears and fire!  
I talk with Bacon, grave and wise,  
I read the world with Pascal's eyes;  
And priest and sage, with solemn brows austere,  
And poets, garland-bound, the Lords of Thought, draw near.

XIII.

Methinks, O friend, I hear thee say,  
'In vain the human heart we mock;

Bring living guests who love the day,  
Not ghosts who fly at crow of cock!  
The herbs we share with flesh and blood  
Are better than ambrosial food  
With laurelled shades.' I grant it, nothing loath,  
But doubly blest is he who can partake of both.

XIV.

He who might Plato's banquet grace,  
Have I not seen before me sit,  
And watched his puritanic face,  
With more than Eastern wisdom lit?  
Shrewd mystic! who, upon the back  
Of his Poor Richard's Almanac,  
Writing the Sufi's song, the Gentoo's dream,  
Links Manu's age of thought to Fulton's age of steam!

XV.

Here too, of answering love secure,  
Have I not welcomed to my hearth  
The gentle pilgrim troubadour,  
Whose songs have girdled half the earth;  
Whose pages, like the magic mat  
Whereon the Eastern lover sat,  
Have borne me over Rhine-land's purple vines,  
And Nubia's tawny sands, and Phrygia's mountain pines!

XVI.

And he, who to the lettered wealth  
Of ages adds the lore unpriced,  
The wisdom and the moral health,  
The ethics of the school of Christ;  
The statesman to his holy trust,  
As the Athenian archon, just,  
Struck down, exiled like him for truth alone,  
Has he not graced my home with beauty all his own?

XVII.

What greetings smile, what farewells wave,  
What loved ones enter and depart!  
The good, the beautiful, the brave,  
The Heaven-lent treasures of the heart!

How conscious seems the frozen sod  
And beechen slope whereon they trod  
The oak-leaves rustle, and the dry grass bends  
Beneath the shadowy feet of lost or absent friends.

XVIII.

Then ask not why to these bleak hills  
I cling, as clings the tufted moss,  
To bear the winter's lingering chills,  
The mocking spring's perpetual loss.  
I dream of lands where summer smiles,  
And soft winds blow from spicy isles,  
But scarce would Ceylon's breath of flowers be sweet,  
Could I not feel thy soil, New England, at my feet!

XIX.

At times I long for gentler skies,  
And bathe in dreams of softer air,  
But homesick tears would fill the eyes  
That saw the Cross without the Bear.  
The pine must whisper to the palm,  
The north-wind break the tropic calm;  
And with the dreamy languor of the Line,  
The North's keen virtue blend, and strength to beauty join.

XX.

Better to stem with heart and hand  
The roaring tide of life, than lie,  
Unmindful, on its flowery strand,  
Of God's occasions drifting by  
Better with naked nerve to bear  
The needles of this goading air,  
Than, in the lap of sensual ease, forego  
The godlike power to do, the godlike aim to know.

XXI.

Home of my heart! to me more fair  
Than gay Versailles or Windsor's halls,  
The painted, shingly town-house where  
The freeman's vote for Freedom falls!  
The simple roof where prayer is made,  
Than Gothic groin and colonnade;

The living temple of the heart of man,  
Than Rome's sky-mocking vault, or many-spired Milan!

XXII.

More dear thy equal village schools,  
Where rich and poor the Bible read,  
Than classic halls where Priestcraft rules,  
And Learning wears the chains of Creed;  
Thy glad Thanksgiving, gathering in  
The scattered sheaves of home and kin,  
Than the mad license ushering Lenten pains,  
Or holidays of slaves who laugh and dance in chains.

XXIII.

And sweet homes nestle in these dales,  
And perch along these wooded swells;  
And, blest beyond Arcadian vales,  
They hear the sound of Sabbath bells!  
Here dwells no perfect man sublime,  
Nor woman winged before her time,  
But with the faults and follies of the race,  
Old home-bred virtues hold their not unhonored place.

XXIV.

Here manhood struggles for the sake  
Of mother, sister, daughter, wife,  
The graces and the loves which make  
The music of the march of life;  
And woman, in her daily round  
Of duty, walks on holy ground.  
No unpaid menial tills the soil, nor here  
Is the bad lesson learned at human rights to sneer.

XXV.

Then let the icy north-wind blow  
The trumpets of the coming storm,  
To arrowy sleet and blinding snow  
Yon slanting lines of rain transform.  
Young hearts shall hail the drifted cold,  
As gayly as I did of old;  
And I, who watch them through the frosty pane,  
Unenvious, live in them my boyhood o'er again.

XXVI.

And I will trust that He who heeds  
The life that hides in mead and wold,  
Who hangs yon alder's crimson beads,  
And stains these mosses green and gold,  
Will still, as He hath done, incline  
His gracious care to me and mine;  
Grant what we ask aright, from wrong debar,  
And, as the earth grows dark, make brighter every star!

XXVII.

I have not seen, I may not see,  
My hopes for man take form in fact,  
But God will give the victory  
In due time; in that faith I act.  
And he who sees the future sure,  
The baffling present may endure,  
And bless, meanwhile, the unseen Hand that leads  
The heart's desires beyond the halting step of deeds.

XXVIII.

And thou, my song, I send thee forth,  
Where harsher songs of mine have flown;  
Go, find a place at home and hearth  
Where'er thy singer's name is known;  
Revive for him the kindly thought  
Of friends; and they who love him not,  
Touched by some strain of thine, perchance may take  
The hand he proffers all, and thank him for thy sake.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Laurels

FROM these wild rocks I look to-day  
O'er leagues of dancing waves, and see  
The far, low coast-line stretch away  
To where our river meets the sea.

The light wind blowing off the land  
Is burdened with old voices; through  
Shut eyes I see how lip and hand  
The greeting of old days renew.

O friends whose hearts still keep their prime,  
Whose bright example warms and cheers,  
Ye teach us how to smile at Time,  
And set to music all his years!

I thank you for sweet summer days,  
For pleasant memories lingering long,  
For joyful meetings, fond delays,  
And ties of friendship woven strong.

As for the last time, side by side,  
You tread the paths familiar grown,  
I reach across the severing tide,  
And blend my farewells with your own.

Make room, O river of our home!  
For other feet in place of ours,  
And in the summers yet to come,  
Make glad another Feast of Flowers!

Hold in thy mirror, calm and deep,  
The pleasant pictures thou hast seen;  
Forget thy lovers not, but keep  
Our memory like thy laurels green.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Legend Of St. Mark

The day is closing dark and cold,  
With roaring blast and sleety showers;  
And through the dusk the lilacs wear  
The bloom of snow, instead of flowers.

I turn me from the gloom without,  
To ponder o'er a tale of old;  
A legend of the age of Faith,  
By dreaming monk or abbess told.

On Tintoretto's canvas lives  
That fancy of a loving heart,  
In graceful lines and shapes of power,  
And hues immortal as his art.

In Provence (so the story runs)  
There lived a lord, to whom, as slave,  
A peasant-boy of tender years  
The chance of trade or conquest gave.

Forth-looking from the castle tower,  
Beyond the hills with almonds dark,  
The straining eye could scarce discern  
The chapel of the good St. Mark.

And there, when bitter word or fare  
The service of the youth repaid,  
By stealth, before that holy shrine,  
For grace to bear his wrong, he prayed.

The steed stamped at the castle gate,  
The boar-hunt sounded on the hill;  
Why stayed the Baron from the chase,  
With looks so stern, and words so ill?

'Go, bind yon slave! and let him learn,  
By scath of fire and strain of cord,  
How ill they speed who give dead saints  
The homage due their living lord!'

They bound him on the fearful rack,  
When, through the dungeon's vaulted dark,  
He saw the light of shining robes,  
And knew the face of good St. Mark.

Then sank the iron rack apart,  
The cords released their cruel clasp,  
The pincers, with their teeth of fire,  
Fell broken from the torturer's grasp.

And lo! before the Youth and Saint,  
Barred door and wall of stone gave way;  
And up from bondage and the night  
They passed to freedom and the day!

O dreaming monk! thy tale is true;  
O painter! true thy pencil's art;  
in tones of hope and prophecy,  
Ye whisper to my listening heart!

Unheard no burdened heart's appeal  
Moans up to God's inclining ear;  
Unheeded by his tender eye,  
Falls to the earth no sufferer's tear.

For still the Lord alone is God  
The pomp and power of tyrant man  
Are scattered at his lightest breath,  
Like chaff before the winnowing fan.

Not always shall the slave uplift  
His heavy hands to Heaven in vain.  
God's angel, like the good St. Mark,  
Comes shining down to break his chain!

O weary ones! ye may not see  
Your helpers in their downward flight;  
Nor hear the sound of silver wings  
Slow beating through the hush of night!

But not the less gray Dothan shone,

With sunbright watchers bending low,  
That Fear's dim eye beheld alone  
The spear-heads of the Syrian foe.

There are, who, like the Seer of old,  
Can see the helpers God has sent,  
And how life's rugged mountain-side  
Is white with many an angel tent!

They hear the heralds whom our Lord  
Sends down his pathway to prepare;  
And light, from others hidden, shines  
On their high place of faith and prayer.

Let such, for earth's despairing ones,  
Hopeless, yet longing to be free,  
Breathe once again the Prophet's prayer  
'Lord, ope their eyes, that they may see!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Library

'Let there be light!' God spake of old,  
And over chaos dark and cold,  
And through the dead and formless frame  
Of nature, life and order came.

Faint was the light at first that shone  
On giant fern and mastodon,  
On half-formed plant and beast of prey,  
And man as rude and wild as they.

Age after age, like waves, o'erran  
The earth, uplifting brute and man;  
And mind, at length, in symbols dark  
Its meanings traced on stone and bark.

On leaf of palm, on sedge-wrought roll,  
On plastic clay and leathern scroll,  
Man wrote his thoughts; the ages passed,  
And to! the Press was found at last!

Then dead souls woke; the thoughts of men  
Whose bones were dust revived again;  
The cloister's silence found a tongue,  
Old prophets spake, old poets sung.

And here, to-day, the dead look down,  
The kings of mind again we crown;  
We hear the voices lost so long,  
The sage's word, the sibyl's song.

Here Greek and Roman find themselves  
Alive along these crowded shelves;  
And Shakespeare treads again his stage,  
And Chaucer paints anew his age.

As if some Pantheon's marbles broke  
Their stony trance, and lived and spoke,  
Life thrills along the alcoved hall,  
The lords of thought await our call!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Light That Is Felt

A tender child of summers three,  
Seeking her little bed at night,  
Paused on the dark stair timidly.  
'Oh, mother! Take my hand,' said she,  
'And then the dark will all be light.'

We older children grope our way  
From dark behind to dark before;  
And only when our hands we lay,  
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day,  
And there is darkness nevermore.

Reach downward to the sunless days  
Wherein our guides are blind as we,  
And faith is small and hope delays;  
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,  
And let us feel the light of Thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Lost Occasion

Some die too late and some too soon,  
At early morning, heat of noon,  
Or the chill evening twilight. Thou,  
Whom the rich heavens did so endow  
With eyes of power and Jove's own brow,  
With all the massive strength that fills  
Thy home-horizon's granite hills,  
With rarest gifts of heart and head  
From manliest stock inherited,  
New England's stateliest type of man,  
In port and speech Olympian;

Whom no one met, at first, but took  
A second awed and wondering look  
(As turned, perchance, the eyes of Greece  
On Phidias' unveiled masterpiece);  
Whose words in simplest homespun clad,  
The Saxon strength of Caedmon's had,  
With power reserved at need to reach  
The Roman forum's loftiest speech,  
Sweet with persuasion, eloquent  
In passion, cool in argument,  
Or, ponderous, falling on thy foes  
As fell the Norse god's hammer blows,  
Crushing as if with Talus' flail  
Through Error's logic-woven mail,  
And failing only when they tried  
The adamant of the righteous side,--  
Thou, foiled in aim and hope, bereaved  
Of old friends, by the new deceived,  
Too soon for us, too soon for thee,  
Beside thy lonely Northern sea,  
Where long and low the marsh-lands spread,  
Laid wearily down thy August head.

Thou shouldst have lived to feel below  
Thy feet Disunion's fierce upthrow;  
The late-sprung mine that underlaid  
Thy sad concessions vainly made.

Thou shouldst have seen from Sumter's wall  
The star-flag of the Union fall,  
And armed rebellion pressing on  
The broken lines of Washington!  
No stronger voice than thine had then  
Called out the utmost might of men,  
To make the Union's charter free  
And strengthen law by liberty.  
How had that stern arbitrament  
To thy gray age youth's vigor lent,  
Shaming ambition's paltry prize  
Before thy disillusioned eyes;  
Breaking the spell about thee wound  
Like the green withes that Samson bound;  
Redeeming in one effort grand,  
Thyself and thy imperilled land!  
Ah, cruel fate, that closed to thee,  
O sleeper by the Northern sea,  
The gates of opportunity!  
God fills the gaps of human need,  
Each crisis brings its word and deed.  
Wise men and strong we did not lack;  
But still, with memory turning back,  
In the dark hours we thought of thee,  
And thy lone grave beside the sea.

Above that grave the east winds blow,  
And from the marsh-lands drifting slow  
The sea-fog comes, with evermore  
The wave-wash of a lonely shore,  
And sea-bird's melancholy cry,  
As Nature fain would typify  
The sadness of a closing scene,  
The loss of that which should have been.  
But, where thy native mountains bare  
Their foreheads to diviner air,  
Fit emblem of enduring fame,  
One lofty summit keeps thy name.  
For thee the cosmic forces did  
The rearing of that pyramid,  
The prescient ages shaping with  
Fire, flood, and frost thy monolith.

Sunrise and sunset lay thereon  
With hands of light their benison,  
The stars of midnight pause to set  
Their jewels in its coronet.  
And evermore that mountain mass  
Seems climbing from the shadowy pass  
To light, as if to manifest  
Thy nobler self, thy life at best!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Lost Statesman

AS they who, tossing midst the storm at night,  
While turning shoreward, where a beacon shone,  
Meet the walled blackness of the heaven alone,  
So, on the turbulent waves of party tossed,  
In gloom and tempest, men have seen thy light  
Quenched in the darkness. At thy hour of noon,  
While life was pleasant to thy undimmed sight,  
And, day by day, within thy spirit grew  
A holier hope than young Ambition knew,  
As through thy rural quiet, not in vain,  
Pierced the sharp thrill of Freedom's cry of pain,  
Man of the millions, thou art lost too soon!  
Portents at which the bravest stand aghast, —  
The birth-throes of a Future, strange and vast,  
Alarm the land; yet thou, so wise and strong,  
Suddenly summoned to the burial bed,  
Lapped in its slumbers deep and ever long,  
Hear'st not the tumult surging overhead.  
Who now shall rally Freedom's scattering host?  
Who wear the mantle of the leader lost?  
Who stay the march of slavery? He whose voice  
Hath called thee from thy task-field shall not lack  
Yet bolder champions, to beat bravely back  
The wrong which, through his poor ones, reaches Him:  
Yet firmer hands shall Freedom's torchlights trim,  
And wave them high across the abysmal black,  
Till bound, dumb millions there shall see them and rejoice.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Lumbermen

WILDLY round our woodland quarters  
Sad-voiced Autumn grieves;  
Thickly down these swelling waters  
Float his fallen leaves.  
Through the tall and naked timber,  
Column-like and old,  
Gleam the sunsets of November,  
From their skies of gold.  
O'er us, to the southland heading,  
Screams the gray wild-goose;  
On the night-frost sounds the treading  
Of the brindled moose.  
Noiseless creeping, while we're sleeping,  
Frost his task-work plies;  
Soon, his icy bridges heaping,  
Shall our log-piles rise.  
When, with sounds of smothered thunder,  
On some night of rain,  
Lake and river break asunder  
Winter's weakened chain,  
Down the wild March flood shall bear them  
To the saw-mill's wheel,  
Or where Steam, the slave, shall tear them  
With his teeth of steel.  
Be it starlight, be it moonlight,  
In these vales below,  
When the earliest beams of sunlight  
Streak the mountain's snow,  
Crisps the hoar-frost, keen and early,  
To our hurrying feet,  
And the forest echoes clearly  
All our blows repeat.  
Where the crystal Ambijejis  
Stretches broad and clear,  
And Millnocket's pine-black ridges  
Hide the browsing deer:  
Where, through lakes and wide morasses,  
Or through rocky walls,  
Swift and strong, Penobscot passes

White with foamy falls;  
Where, through clouds, are glimpses given  
Of Katahdin's sides, —  
Rock and forest piled to heaven,  
Torn and ploughed by slides!  
Far below, the Indian trapping,  
In the sunshine warm;  
Far above, the snow-cloud wrapping  
Half the peak in storm!  
Where are mossy carpets better  
Than the Persian weaves,  
And than Eastern perfumes sweeter  
Seem the fading leaves;  
And a music wild and solemn,  
From the pine-tree's height,  
Rolls its vast and sea-like volume  
On the wind of night;  
Make we here our camp of winter;  
And, through sleet and snow,  
Pitchy knot and beechen splinter  
On our hearth shall glow.  
Here, with mirth to lighten duty,  
We shall lack alone  
Woman's smile and girlhood's beauty,  
Childhood's lisping tone.  
But their hearth is brighter burning  
For our toil to-day;  
And the welcome of returning  
Shall our loss repay,  
When, like seamen from the waters,  
From the woods we come,  
Greeting sisters, wives, and daughters,  
Angels of our home!  
Not for us the measured ringing  
From the village spire,  
Not for us the Sabbath singing  
Of the sweet-voiced choir.  
Ours the old, majestic temple,  
Where God's brightness shines  
Down the dome so grand and ample,  
Propped by lofty pines!  
Through each branch-enwoven skylight,

Speaks He in the breeze,  
As of old beneath the twilight  
Of lost Eden's trees!  
For His ear, the inward feeling  
Needs no outward tongue;  
He can see the spirit kneeling  
While the axe is swung.  
Heeding truth alone, and turning  
From the false and dim,  
Lamp of toil or altar burning  
Are alike to Him.  
Strike, then, comrades! Trade is waiting  
On our rugged toil;  
Far ships waiting for the freighting  
Of our woodland spoil!  
Ships, whose traffic links these highlands,  
Bleak and cold, of ours,  
With the citron-planted islands  
Of a clime of flowers;  
To our frosts the tribute bringing  
Of eternal heats;  
In our lap of winter flinging  
Tropic fruits and sweets.  
Cheerly, on the axe of labor,  
Let the sunbeams dance,  
Better than the flash of sabre  
Or the gleam of lance!  
Strike! With every blow is given  
Freer sun and sky,  
And the long-hid earth to heaven  
Looks, with wondering eye!  
Loud behind us grow the murmurs  
Of the age to come;  
Clang of smiths, and tread of farmers,  
Bearing harvest home!  
Here her virgin lap with treasures  
Shall the green earth fill;  
Waving wheat and golden maize-ears  
Crown each beechen hill.  
Keep who will the city's alleys,  
Take the smooth-shorn plain;  
Give to us the cedarn valleys,

Rocks and hills of Maine!  
In our North-land, wild and woody,  
Let us still have part:  
Rugged nurse and mother sturdy,  
Hold us to thy heart!  
Oh, our free hearts beat the warmer  
For thy breath of snow;  
And our tread is all the firmer  
For thy rocks below.  
Freedom, hand in hand with labor,  
Walketh strong and brave;  
On the forehead of his neighbor  
No man writeth Slave!  
Lo, the day breaks! old Katahdin's  
Pine-trees show its fires,  
While from these dim forest gardens  
Rise their blackened spires.  
Up, my comrades! up and doing!  
Manhood's rugged play  
Still renewing, bravely hewing  
Through the world our way!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Maids Of Attitash

In sky and wave the white clouds swam,  
And the blue hills of Nottingham  
Through gaps of leafy green  
Across the lake were seen,

When, in the shadow of the ash  
That dreams its dream in Attitash,  
In the warm summer weather,  
Two maidens sat together.

They sat and watched in idle mood  
The gleam and shade of lake and wood;  
The beach the keen light smote,  
The white sail of a boat;

Swan flocks of lilies shoreward lying,  
In sweetness, not in music, dying;  
Hardback, and virgin's-bower,  
And white-spiked clethra-flower.

With careless ears they heard the plash  
And breezy wash of Attitash,  
The wood-bird's plaintive cry,  
The locust's sharp reply.

And teased the while, with playful band,  
The shaggy dog of Newfoundland,  
Whose uncouth frolic spilled  
Their baskets berry-filled.

Then one, the beauty of whose eyes  
Was evermore a great surprise,  
Tossed back her queenly head,  
And, lightly laughing, said:

'No bridegroom's hand be mine to hold  
That is not lined with yellow gold;  
I tread no cottage-floor;  
I own no lover poor.

'My love must come on silken wings,  
With bridal lights of diamond rings,  
Not foul with kitchen smirch,  
With tallow-dip for torch.'

The other, on whose modest head  
Was lesser dower of beauty shed,  
With look for home-hearths meet,  
And voice exceeding sweet,

Answered, 'We will not rivals be;  
Take thou the gold, leave love to me;  
Mine be the cottage small,  
And thine the rich man's hall.

'I know, indeed, that wealth is good;  
But lowly roof and simple food,  
With love that hath no doubt,  
Are more than gold without.'

Hard by a farmer hale and young  
His cradle in the rye-field swung,  
Tracking the yellow plain  
With windrows of ripe grain.

And still, whene'er he paused to whet  
His scythe, the sidelong glance he met  
Of large dark eyes, where strove  
False pride and secret love.

Be strong, young mower of the-grain;  
That love shall overmatch disdain,  
Its instincts soon or late  
The heart shall vindicate.

In blouse of gray, with fishing-rod,  
Half screened by leaves, a stranger trod  
The margin of the pond,  
Watching the group beyond.

The supreme hours unnoted come;

Unfelt the turning tides of doom;  
And so the maids laughed on,  
Nor dreamed what Fate had done,--

Nor knew the step was Destiny's  
That rustled in the birchen trees,  
As, with their lives forecast,  
Fisher and mower passed.

Erelong by lake and rivulet side  
The summer roses paled and died,  
And Autumn's fingers shed  
The maple's leaves of red.

Through the long gold-hazed afternoon,  
Alone, but for the diving loon,  
The partridge in the brake,  
The black duck on the lake,

Beneath the shadow of the ash  
Sat man and maid by Attitash;  
And earth and air made room  
For human hearts to bloom.

Soft spread the carpets of the sod,  
And scarlet-oak and golden-rod  
With blushes and with smiles  
Lit up the forest aisles.

The mellow light the lake aslant,  
The pebbled margin's ripple-chant  
Attempered and low-toned,  
The tender mystery owned.

And through the dream the lovers dreamed  
Sweet sounds stole in and soft lights streamed;  
The sunshine seemed to bless,  
The air was a caress.

Not she who lightly laughed is there,  
With scornful toss of midnight hair,  
Her dark, disdainful eyes,

And proud lip worldly-wise.

Her haughty vow is still unsaid,  
But all she dreamed and coveted  
Wears, half to her surprise,  
The youthful farmer's guise!

With more than all her old-time pride  
She walks the rye-field at his side,  
Careless of cot or hall,  
Since love transfigures all.

Rich beyond dreams, the vantage-ground  
Of life is gained; her hands have found  
The talisman of old  
That changes all to gold.

While she who could for love dispense  
With all its glittering accidents,  
And trust her heart alone,  
Finds love and gold her own.

What wealth can buy or art can build  
Awaits her; but her cup is filled  
Even now unto the brim;  
Her world is love and him!

. . . . .

The while he heard, the Book-man drew  
A length of make-believing face,  
With smothered mischief laughing through  
'Why, you shall sit in Ramsay's place,  
And, with his Gentle Shepherd, keep  
On Yankee hills immortal sheep,  
While love-lorn swains and maids the seas beyond  
Hold dreamy tryst around your huckleberry-pond.'

The Traveller laughed: 'Sir Galahad  
Singing of love the Trouvere's lay!  
How should he know the blindfold lad

From one of Vulcan's forge-boys?'--'Nay,  
He better sees who stands outside  
Than they who in procession ride,'  
The Reader answered: 'selectmen and squire  
Miss, while they make, the show that wayside folks admire.

'Here is a wild tale of the North,  
Our travelled friend will own as one  
Fit for a Norland Christmas hearth  
And lips of Christian Andersen.  
They tell it in the valleys green  
Of the fair island he has seen,  
Low lying off the pleasant Swedish shore,  
Washed by the Baltic Sea, and watched by Elsinore.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Mantle Of St. John De Matha. A Legend Of

A STRONG and mighty Angel,  
Calm, terrible, and bright,  
The cross in blended red and blue  
Upon his mantle white!  
Two captives by him kneeling,  
Each on his broken chain,  
Sang praise to God who raiseth  
The dead to life again!  
Dropping his cross-wrought mantle,  
'Wear this,' the Angel said;  
'Take thou, O Freedom's priest, its sign, —  
The white, the blue, and red.'  
Then rose up John de Matha  
In the strength the Lord Christ gave,  
And begged through all the land of France  
The ransom of the slave.  
The gates of tower and castle  
Before him open flew,  
The drawbridge at his coming fell,  
The door-bolt backward drew.  
For all men owned his errand,  
And paid his righteous tax;  
And the hearts of lord and peasant  
Were in his hands as wax.  
At last, outbound from Tunis,  
His bark her anchor weighed,  
Freighted with seven-score Christian souls  
Whose ransom he had paid.  
But, torn by Paynim hatred,  
Her sails in tatters hung;  
And on the wild waves, rudderless,  
A shattered hulk she swung.  
'God save us!' cried the captain,  
'For naught can man avail;  
Oh, woe betide the ship that lacks  
Her rudder and her sail!  
'Behind us are the Moormen;  
At sea we sink or strand:  
There's death upon the water,

There's death upon the land!  
Then up spake John de Matha:  
'God's errands never fail!  
Take thou the mantle which I wear,  
And make of it a sail.'  
They raised the cross-wrought mantle,  
The blue, the white, the red;  
And straight before the wind off-shore  
The ship of Freedom sped.  
'God help us!' cried the seamen,  
'For vain is mortal skill:  
The good ship on a stormy sea  
Is drifting at its will.'  
Then up spake John de Matha:  
'My mariners, never fear!  
The Lord whose breath has filled her sail  
May well our vessel steer!'  
So on through storm and darkness  
They drove for weary hours;  
And lo! the third gray morning shone  
On Ostia's friendly towers.  
And on the walls the watchers  
The ship of mercy knew, —  
They knew far off its holy cross,  
The red, the white, and blue.  
And the bells in all the steeples  
Rang out in glad accord,  
To welcome home to Christian soil  
The ransomed of the Lord.  
So runs the ancient legend  
By bard and painter told;  
And lo! the cycle rounds again,  
The new is as the old!  
With rudder foully broken,  
And sails by traitors torn,  
Our country on a midnight sea  
Is waiting for the morn.  
Before her, nameless terror;  
Behind, the pirate foe;  
The clouds are black above her,  
The sea is white below.  
The hope of all who suffer,

The dread of all who wrong,  
She drifts in darkness and in storm,  
How long, O Lord! how long?  
But courage, O my mariners!  
Ye shall not suffer wreck,  
While up to God the freedman's prayers  
Are rising from your deck.  
Is not your sail the banner  
Which God hath blest anew,  
The mantle that De Matha wore,  
The red, the white, the blue?  
Its hues are all of heaven, —  
The red of sunset's dye,  
The whiteness of the moon-lit cloud,  
The blue of morning's sky.  
Wait cheerily, then, O mariners,  
For daylight and for land;  
The breath of God is in your sail,  
Your rudder is His hand.  
Sail on, sail on, deep-freighted  
With blessings and with hopes;  
The saints of old with shadowy hands  
Are pulling at your ropes.  
Behind ye holy martyrs  
Uplift the palm and crown;  
Before ye unborn ages send  
Their benedictions down.  
Take heart from John de Matha! —  
God's errands never fail!  
Sweep on through storm and darkness,  
The thunder and the hail!  
Sail on! The morning cometh,  
The port ye yet shall win;  
And all the bells of God shall ring  
The good ship bravely in!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Mayflowers

Sad Mayflower! watched by winter stars,  
And nursed by winter gales,  
With petals of the sleeted spars,  
And leaves of frozen sails!

What had she in those dreary hours,  
Within her ice-rimmed bay,  
In common with the wild-wood flowers,  
The first sweet smiles of May?

Yet, 'God be praised!' the Pilgrim said,  
Who saw the blossoms peer  
Above the brown leaves, dry and dead,  
'Behold our Mayflower here!'

'God wills it: here our rest shall be,  
Our years of wandering o'er;  
For us the Mayflower of the sea  
Shall spread her sails no more.'

O sacred flowers of faith and hope,  
As sweetly now as then  
Ye bloom on many a birchen slope,  
In many a pine-dark glen.

Behind the sea-wall's rugged length,  
Unchanged, your leaves unfold,  
Like love behind the manly strength  
Of the brave hearts of old.

So live the fathers in their sons,  
Their sturdy faith be ours,  
And ours the love that overruns  
Its rocky strength with flowers!

The Pilgrim's wild and wintry day  
Its shadow round us draws;  
The Mayflower of his stormy bay,  
Our Freedom's struggling cause.

But warmer suns ere long shall bring  
To life the frozen sod;  
And through dead leaves of hope shall spring  
A fresh the flowers of God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Meeting

The elder folks shook hands at last,  
Down seat by seat the signal passed.  
To simple ways like ours unused,  
Half solemnized and half amused,  
With long-drawn breath and shrug, my guest  
His sense of glad relief expressed.  
Outside, the hills lay warm in sun;  
The cattle in the meadow-run  
Stood half-leg deep; a single bird  
The green repose above us stirred.  
'What part or lot have you,' he said,  
'In these dull rites of drowsy-head?  
Is silence worship? Seek it where  
It soothes with dreams the summer air,  
Not in this close and rude-benched hall,  
But where soft lights and shadows fall,  
And all the slow, sleep-walking hours  
Glide soundless over grass and flowers!  
From time and place and form apart,  
Its holy ground the human heart,  
Nor ritual-bound nor templeward  
Walks the free spirit of the Lord!  
Our common Master did not pen  
His followers up from other men;  
His service liberty indeed,  
He built no church, He framed no creed;  
But while the saintly Pharisee  
Made broader his phylactery,  
As from the synagogue was seen  
The dusty-sandalled Nazarene  
Through ripening cornfields lead the way  
Upon the awful Sabbath day,  
His sermons were the healthful talk  
That shorter made the mountain-walk,  
His wayside texts were flowers and birds,  
Where mingled with His gracious words  
The rustle of the tamarisk-tree  
And ripple-wash of Galilee.'

'Thy words are well, O friend,' I said;  
'Unmeasured and unlimited,  
With noiseless slide of stone to stone,  
The mystic Church of God has grown.  
Invisible and silent stands  
The temple never made with hands,  
Unheard the voices still and small  
Of its unseen confessional.  
He needs no special place of prayer  
Whose hearing ear is everywhere;  
He brings not back the childish days  
That ringed the earth with stones of praise,  
Roofed Karnak's hall of gods, and laid  
The plinths of Phil e's colonnade.  
Still less He owns the selfish good  
And sickly growth of solitude,--  
The worthless grace that, out of sight,  
Flowers in the desert anchorite;  
Dissevered from the suffering whole,  
Love hath no power to save a soul.  
Not out of Self, the origin  
And native air and soil of sin,  
The living waters spring and flow,  
The trees with leaves of healing grow.

'Dream not, O friend, because I seek  
This quiet shelter twice a week,  
I better deem its pine-laid floor  
Than breezy hill or sea-sung shore;  
But nature is not solitude  
She crowds us with her thronging wood;  
Her many hands reach out to us,  
Her many tongues are garrulous;  
Perpetual riddles of surprise  
She offers to our ears and eyes;  
She will not leave our senses still,  
But drags them captive at her will  
And, making earth too great for heaven,  
She hides the Giver in the given.

'And so, I find it well to come  
For deeper rest to this still room,

For here the habit of the soul  
Feels less the outer world's control;  
The strength of mutual purpose pleads  
More earnestly our common needs;  
And from the silence multiplied  
By these still forms on either side,  
The world that time and sense have known  
Falls off and leaves us God alone.

'Yet rarely through the charmed repose  
Unmixed the stream of motive flows,  
A flavor of its many springs,  
The tints of earth and sky it brings;  
In the still waters needs must be  
Some shade of human sympathy;  
And here, in its accustomed place,  
I look on memory's dearest face;  
The blind by-sitter guesseth not  
What shadow haunts that vacant spot;  
No eyes save mine alone can see  
The love wherewith it welcomes me!  
And still, with those alone my kin,  
In doubt and weakness, want and sin,  
I bow my head, my heart I bare  
As when that face was living there,  
And strive (too oft, alas! in vain)  
The peace of simple trust to gain,  
Fold fancy's restless wings, and lay  
The idols of my heart away.

'Welcome the silence all unbroken,  
Nor less the words of fitness spoken,--  
Such golden words as hers for whom  
Our autumn flowers have just made room;  
Whose hopeful utterance through and through  
The freshness of the morning blew;  
Who loved not less the earth that light  
Fell on it from the heavens in sight,  
But saw in all fair forms more fair  
The Eternal beauty mirrored there.  
Whose eighty years but added grace  
And saintlier meaning to her face,--

The look of one who bore away  
Glad tidings from the hills of day,  
While all our hearts went forth to meet  
The coming of her beautiful feet!  
Or haply hers, whose pilgrim tread  
Is in the paths where Jesus led;  
Who dreams her childhood's Sabbath dream  
By Jordan's willow-shaded stream,  
And, of the hymns of hope and faith,  
Sung by the monks of Nazareth,  
Hears pious echoes, in the call  
To prayer, from Moslem minarets fall,  
Repeating where His works were wrought  
The lesson that her Master taught,  
Of whom an elder Sibyl gave,  
The prophecies of Cuma 's cave.

'I ask no organ's soulless breath  
To drone the themes of life and death,  
No altar candle-lit by day,  
No ornate wordsman's rhetoric-play,  
No cool philosophy to teach  
Its bland audacities of speech  
To double-tasked idolaters  
Themselves their gods and worshippers,  
No pulpit hammered by the fist  
Of loud-asserting dogmatist,  
Who borrows for the Hand of love  
The smoking thunderbolts of Jove.  
I know how well the fathers taught,  
What work the later schoolmen wrought;  
I reverence old-time faith and men,  
But God is near us now as then;  
His force of love is still unspent,  
His hate of sin as imminent;  
And still the measure of our needs  
Outgrows the cramping bounds of creeds;  
The manna gathered yesterday  
Already savors of decay;  
Doubts to the world's child-heart unknown  
Question us now from star and stone;  
Too little or too much we know,

And sight is swift and faith is slow;  
The power is lost to self-deceive  
With shallow forms of make-believe.  
We walk at high noon, and the bells  
Call to a thousand oracles,  
But the sound deafens, and the light  
Is stronger than our dazzled sight;  
The letters of the sacred Book  
Glimmer and swim beneath our look;  
Still struggles in the Age's breast  
With deepening agony of quest  
The old entreaty: 'Art thou He,  
Or look we for the Christ to be?'

'God should be most where man is least  
So, where is neither church nor priest,  
And never rag of form or creed  
To clothe the nakedness of need,--  
Where farmer-folk in silence meet,--  
I turn my bell-unsummoned feet;'  
I lay the critic's glass aside,  
I tread upon my lettered pride,  
And, lowest-seated, testify  
To the oneness of humanity;  
Confess the universal want,  
And share whatever Heaven may grant.  
He findeth not who seeks his own,  
The soul is lost that's saved alone.  
Not on one favored forehead fell  
Of old the fire-tongued miracle,  
But flamed o'er all the thronging host  
The baptism of the Holy Ghost;  
Heart answers heart: in one desire  
The blending lines of prayer aspire;  
'Where, in my name, meet two or three,'  
Our Lord hath said, 'I there will be!'

'So sometimes comes to soul and sense  
The feeling which is evidence  
That very near about us lies  
The realm of spiritual mysteries.  
The sphere of the supernal powers

Impinges on this world of ours.  
The low and dark horizon lifts,  
To light the scenic terror shifts;  
The breath of a diviner air  
Blows down the answer of a prayer  
That all our sorrow, pain, and doubt  
A great compassion clasps about,  
And law and goodness, love and force,  
Are wedded fast beyond divorce.  
Then duty leaves to love its task,  
The beggar Self forgets to ask;  
With smile of trust and folded hands,  
The passive soul in waiting stands  
To feel, as flowers the sun and dew,  
The One true Life its own renew.

'So, to the calmly gathered thought  
The innermost of truth is taught,  
The mystery dimly understood,  
That love of God is love of good,  
And, chiefly, its divinest trace  
In Him of Nazareth's holy face;  
That to be saved is only this,--  
Salvation from our selfishness,  
From more than elemental fire,  
The soul's unsanctified desire,  
From sin itself, and not the pain  
That warns us of its chafing chain;  
That worship's deeper meaning lies  
In mercy, and not sacrifice,  
Not proud humilities of sense  
And posturing of penitence,  
But love's unforced obedience;  
That Book and Church and Day are given  
For man, not God,--for earth, not heaven,--  
The blessed means to holiest ends,  
Not masters, but benignant friends;  
That the dear Christ dwells not afar,  
The king of some remoter star,  
Listening, at times, with flattered ear  
To homage wrung from selfish fear,  
But here, amidst the poor and blind,

The bound and suffering of our kind,  
In works we do, in prayers we pray,  
Life of our life, He lives to-day.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Memory Of Burns

How sweetly come the holy psalms  
From saints and martyrs down,  
The waving of triumphal palms  
Above the thorny crown  
The choral praise, the chanted prayers  
From harps by angels strung,  
The hunted Cameron's mountain airs,  
The hymns that Luther sung!

Yet, jarring not the heavenly notes,  
The sounds of earth are heard,  
As through the open minster floats  
The song of breeze and bird  
Not less the wonder of the sky  
That daisies bloom below;  
The brook sings on, though loud and high  
The cloudy organs blow!

And, if the tender ear be jarred  
That, haply, hears by turns  
The saintly harp of Olney's bard,  
The pastoral pipe of Burns,  
No discord mars His perfect plan  
Who gave them both a tongue;  
For he who sings the love of man  
The love of God hath sung!

To-day be every fault forgiven  
Of him in whom we joy  
We take, with thanks, the gold of Heaven  
And leave the earth's alloy.  
Be ours his music as of spring,  
His sweetness as of flowers,  
The songs the bard himself might sing  
In holier ears than ours.

Sweet airs of love and home, the hum  
Of household melodies,  
Come singing, as the robins come

To sing in door-yard trees.  
And, heart to heart, two nations lean,  
No rival wreaths to twine,  
But blending in eternal green  
The holly and the pine!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Men Of Old

WELL speed thy mission, bold Iconoclast!  
Yet all unworthy of its trust thou art,  
If, with dry eye, and cold, unloving heart,  
Thou tread'st the solemn Pantheon of the Past,  
By the great Future's dazzling hope made blind  
To all the beauty, power, and truth behind.  
Not without reverent awe shouldst thou put by  
The cypress branches and the amaranth blooms,  
Where, with clasped hands of prayer, upon their tombs  
The effigies of old confessors lie,  
God's witnesses; the voices of His will,  
Heard in the slow march of the centuries still!  
Such were the men at whose rebuking frown,  
Dark with God's wrath, the tyrant's knee went down;  
Such from the terrors of the guilty drew  
The vassal's freedom and the poor man's due.  
St. Anselm (may he rest forevermore  
In Heaven's sweet peace!) forbade, of old, the sale  
Of men as slaves, and from the sacred pale  
Hurl'd the Northumbrian buyers of the poor.  
To ransom souls from bonds and evil fate  
St. Ambrose melted down the sacred plate, —  
Image of saint, the chalice, and the pix,  
Crosses of gold, and silver candlesticks.  
'Man is worth more than temples!' he replied  
To such as came his holy work to chide.  
And brave Cesarius, stripping altars bare,  
And coining from the Abbey's golden hoard  
The captive's freedom, answered to the prayer  
Or threat of those whose fierce zeal for the Lord  
Stifled their love of man, — 'An earthen dish  
The last sad supper of the Master bore:  
Most miserable sinners! do ye wish  
More than your Lord, and grudge His dying poor  
What your own pride and not His need requires?  
Souls, than these shining gauds, He values more;  
Mercy, not sacrifice, His heart desires!'  
O faithful worthies! resting far behind  
In your dark ages, since ye fell asleep,

Much has been done for truth and human-kind;  
Shadows are scattered wherein ye groped blind;  
Man claims his birthright, freer pulses leap  
Through peoples driven in your day like sheep;  
Yet, like your own, our age's sphere of light,  
Though widening still, is walled around by night;  
With slow, reluctant eye, the Church has read,  
Skeptic at heart, the lessons of its Head;  
Counting, too oft, its living members less  
Than the wall's garnish and the pulpit's dress;  
World-moving zeal with power to bless and feed  
Life's fainting pilgrims, to their utter need,  
Instead of bread, holds out the stone of creed;  
Sect builds and worships where its wealth and pride  
And vanity stand shrined and deified,  
Careless that in the shadow of its walls  
God's living temple into ruin falls.  
We need, methinks, the prophet-hero still,  
Saints true of life, and martyrs strong of will,  
To tread the land, even now, as Xavier trod  
The streets of God, barefoot, with his bell,  
Proclaiming freedom in the name of God,  
And startling tyrants with the fear of hell!  
Soft words, smooth prophecies, are doubtless well;  
But to rebuke the age's popular crime,  
We need the souls of fire, the hearts of that old time!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Merrimac

Stream of my fathers! sweetly still  
The sunset rays thy valley fill;  
Poured slantwise down the long defile,  
Wave, wood, and spire beneath them smile.  
I see the winding Powow fold  
The green hill in its belt of gold,  
And following down its wavy line,  
Its sparkling waters blend with thine.  
There 's not a tree upon thy side,  
Nor rock, which thy returning tide  
As yet hath left abrupt and stark  
Above thy evening water-mark;  
No calm cove with its rocky hem,  
No isle whose emerald swells begin  
Thy broad, smooth current; not a sail  
Bowed to the freshening ocean gale;  
No small boat with its busy oars,  
Nor gray wall sloping to thy shores;  
Nor farm-house with its maple shade,  
Or rigid poplar colonnade,  
But lies distinct and full in sight,  
Beneath this gush of sunset light.  
Centuries ago, that harbor-bar,  
Stretching its length of foam afar,  
And Salisbury's beach of shining sand,  
And yonder island's wave-smoothed strand,  
Saw the adventurer's tiny sail,  
Flit, stooping from the eastern gale;  
And o'er these woods and waters broke  
The cheer from Britain's hearts of oak,  
As brightly on the voyager's eye,  
Weary of forest, sea, and sky,  
Breaking the dull continuous wood,  
The Merrimac rolled down his flood;  
Mingling that clear pellucid brook,  
Which channels vast Agioochook  
When spring-time's sun and shower unlock  
The frozen fountains of the rock,  
And more abundant waters given

From that pure lake, 'The Smile of Heaven,'  
Tributes from vale and mountain-side,-  
With ocean's dark, eternal tide!

On yonder rocky cape, which braves  
The stormy challenge of the waves,  
Midst tangled vine and dwarfish wood,  
The hardy Anglo-Saxon stood,  
Planting upon the topmost crag  
The staff of England's battle-flag;  
And, while from out its heavy fold  
Saint George's crimson cross unrolled,  
Midst roll of drum and trumpet blare,  
And weapons brandishing in air,  
He gave to that lone promontory  
The sweetest name in all his story;  
Of her, the flower of Islam's daughters,  
Whose harems look on Stamboul's waters,-  
Who, when the chance of war had bound  
The Moslem chain his limbs around,  
Wreathed o'er with silk that iron chain,  
Soothed with her smiles his hours of pain,  
And fondly to her youthful slave  
A dearer gift than freedom gave.

But look! the yellow light no more  
Streams down on wave and verdant shore;  
And clearly on the calm air swells  
The twilight voice of distant bells.  
From Ocean's bosom, white and thin,  
The mists come slowly rolling in;  
Hills, woods, the river's rocky rim,  
Amidst the sea-like vapor swim,  
While yonder lonely coast-light, set  
Within its wave-washed minaret,  
Half quenched, a beamless star and pale,  
Shines dimly through its cloudy veil!

Home of my fathers!-I have stood  
Where Hudson rolled his lordly flood  
Seen sunrise rest and sunset fade  
Along his frowning Palisade;

Looked down the Appalachian peak  
On Juniata's silver streak;  
Have seen along his valley gleam  
The Mohawk's softly winding stream;  
The level light of sunset shine  
Through broad Potomac's hem of pine;  
And autumn's rainbow-tinted banner  
Hang lightly o'er the Susquehanna;  
Yet wheresoe'er his step might be,  
Thy wandering child looked back to thee!  
Heard in his dreams thy river's sound  
Of murmuring on its pebbly bound,  
The unforgotten swell and roar  
Of waves on thy familiar shore;  
And saw, amidst the curtained gloom  
And quiet of his lonely room,  
Thy sunset scenes before him pass;  
As, in Agrippa's magic glass,  
The loved and lost arose to view,  
Remembered groves in greenness grew,  
Bathed still in childhood's morning dew,  
Along whose bowers of beauty swept  
Whatever Memory's mourners wept,  
Sweet faces, which the charnel kept,  
Young, gentle eyes, which long had slept;  
And while the gazer leaned to trace,  
More near, some dear familiar face,  
He wept to find the vision flown,-  
A phantom and a dream alone!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Minister's Daughter

In the minister's morning sermon  
He had told of the primal fall,  
And how thenceforth the wrath of God  
Rested on each and all.

And how of His will and pleasure,  
All souls, save a chosen few,  
Were doomed to the quenchless burning,  
And held in the way thereto.

Yet never by faith's unreason  
A saintlier soul was tried,  
And never the harsh old lesson  
A tenderer heart belied.

And, after the painful service  
On that pleasant Sabbath day,  
He walked with his little daughter  
Through the apple-bloom of May.

Sweet in the fresh green meadows  
Sparrow and blackbird sung;  
Above him their tinted petals  
The blossoming orchards hung.

Around on the wonderful glory  
The minister looked and smiled;  
'How good is the Lord who gives us  
These gifts from His hand, my child.

'Behold in the bloom of apples  
And the violets in the sward  
A hint of the old, lost beauty  
Of the Garden of the Lord!'

Then up spake the little maiden,  
Treading on snow and pink  
'O father! these pretty blossoms  
Are very wicked, I think.

'Had there been no Garden of Eden  
There never had been a fall;  
And if never a tree had blossomed  
God would have loved us all.'

'Hush, child!' the father answered,  
'By His decree man fell;  
His ways are in clouds and darkness,  
But He doeth all things well.

'And whether by His ordaining  
To us cometh good or ill,  
Joy or pain, or light or shadow,  
We must fear and love Him still.'

'Oh, I fear Him!' said the daughter,  
'And I try to love Him, too;  
But I wish He was good and gentle,  
Kind and loving as you.'

The minister groaned in spirit  
As the tremulous lips of pain  
And wide, wet eyes uplifted  
Questioned his own in vain.

Bowing his head he pondered  
The words of the little one;  
Had he erred in his life-long teaching?  
Had he wrong to his Master done?

To what grim and dreadful idol  
Had he lent the holiest name?  
Did his own heart, loving and human,  
The God of his worship shame?

And lo! from the bloom and greenness,  
From the tender skies above,  
And the face of his little daughter,  
He read a lesson of love.

No more as the cloudy terror

Of Sinai's mount of law,  
But as Christ in the Syrian lilies  
The vision of God he saw.

And, as when, in the clefts of Horeb,  
Of old was His presence known,  
The dread Ineffable Glory  
Was Infinite Goodness alone.

Thereafter his hearers noted  
In his prayers a tenderer strain,  
And never the gospel of hatred  
Burned on his lips again.

And the scoffing tongue was prayerful,  
And the blinded eyes found sight,  
And hearts, as flint aforetime,  
Grew soft in his warmth and light.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Moral Warfare

WHEN Freedom, on her natal day,  
Within her war-rocked cradle lay,  
An iron race around her stood,  
Baptized her infant brow in blood;  
And, through the storm which round her swept,  
Their constant ward and watching kept.  
Then, where our quiet herds repose,  
The roar of baleful battle rose,  
And brethren of a common tongue  
To mortal strife as tigers sprung,  
And every gift on Freedom's shrine  
Was man for beast, and blood for wine!  
Our fathers to their graves have gone;  
Their strife is past, their triumph won;  
But sterner trials wait the race  
Which rises in their honored place;  
A moral warfare with the crime  
And folly of an evil time.  
So let it be. In God's own might  
We gird us for the coming fight,  
And, strong in Him whose cause is ours  
In conflict with unholy powers,  
We grasp the weapons He has given, —  
The Light, and Truth, and Love of Heaven.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Mystic's Christmas

'All hail!' the bells of Christmas rang,  
'All hail!' the monks at Christmas sang,  
The merry monks who kept with cheer  
The gladdest day of all their year.

But still apart, unmoved thereat,  
A pious elder brother sat  
Silent, in his accustomed place,  
With God's sweet peace upon his face.

'Why sitt'st thou thus?' his brethren cried.  
'It is the blessed Christmas-tide;  
The Christmas lights are all aglow,  
The sacred lilies bud and blow.

'Above our heads the joy-bells ring,  
Without the happy children sing,  
And all God's creatures hail the morn  
On which the holy Christ was born!

'Rejoice with us; no more rebuke  
Our gladness with thy quiet look.'  
The gray monk answered: 'Keep, I pray,  
Even as ye list, the Lord's birthday.

'Let heathen Yule fires flicker red  
Where thronged refectory feasts are spread;  
With mystery-play and masque and mime  
And wait-songs speed the holy time!

'The blindest faith may haply save;  
The Lord accepts the things we have;  
And reverence, howsoe'er it strays,  
May find at last the shining ways.

'They needs must grope who cannot see,  
The blade before the ear must be;  
As ye are feeling I have felt,  
And where ye dwell I too have dwelt.

'But now, beyond the things of sense,  
Beyond occasions and events,  
I know, through God's exceeding grace,  
Release from form and time and place.

'I listen, from no mortal tongue,  
To hear the song the angels sung;  
And wait within myself to know  
The Christmas lilies bud and blow.

'The outward symbols disappear  
From him whose inward sight is clear;  
And small must be the choice of clays  
To him who fills them all with praise!

'Keep while you need it, brothers mine,  
With honest zeal your Christmas sign,  
But judge not him who every morn  
Feels in his heart the Lord Christ born!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The New Exodus

BY fire and cloud, across the desert sand,  
And through the parted waves,  
From their long bondage, with an outstretched hand,  
God led the Hebrew slaves!  
Dead as the letter of the Pentateuch,  
As Egypt's statues cold,  
In the adytum of the sacred book  
Now stands that marvel old.  
'Lo, God is great!' the simple Moslem says.  
We seek the ancient date,  
Turn the dry scroll, and make that living phrase  
A dead one: 'God was great!'  
And, like the Coptic monks by Mousa's wells,  
We dream of wonders past,  
Vague as the tales the wandering Arab tells,  
Each drowsier than the last.  
O fools and blind! Above the Pyramids  
Stretches once more that hand,  
And tranced Egypt, from her stony lids,  
Flings back her veil of sand.  
And morning-smitten Memnon, singing, wakes:  
And, listening by his Nile,  
O'er Ammon's grave and awful visage breaks  
A sweet and human smile.  
Not, as before, with hail and fire, and call  
Of death for midnight graves,  
But in the stillness of the noonday, fall  
The fetters of the slaves.  
No longer through the Red Sea, as of old,  
The bondmen walk dry shod;  
Through human hearts, by love of Him controlled,  
Runs now that path of God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The New Wife And The Old

Dark the halls, and cold the feast,  
Gone the bridemaids, gone the priest.  
All is over, all is done,  
Twain of yesterday are one!  
Blooming girl and manhood gray,  
Autumn in the arms of May!

Hushed within and hushed without,  
Dancing feet and wrestlers' shout;  
Dies the bonfire on the hill;  
All is dark and all is still,  
Save the starlight, save the breeze  
Moaning through the graveyard trees,  
And the great sea-waves below,  
Pulse of the midnight beating slow.

From the brief dream of a bride  
She hath wakened, at his side.  
With half-uttered shriek and start,-  
Feels she not his beating heart?  
And the pressure of his arm,  
And his breathing near and warm?

Lightly from the bridal bed  
Springs that fair dishevelled head,  
And a feeling, new, intense,  
Half of shame, half innocence,  
Maiden fear and wonder speaks  
Through her lips and changing cheeks.

From the oaken mantel glowing,  
Faintest light the lamp is throwing  
On the mirror's antique mould,  
High-backed chair, and wainscot old,  
And, through faded curtains stealing,  
His dark sleeping face revealing.

Listless lies the strong man there,  
Silver-streaked his careless hair;

Lips of love have left no trace  
On that hard and haughty face;  
And that forehead's knitted thought  
Love's soft hand hath not unwrought.

'Yet,' she sighs, 'he loves me well,  
More than these calm lips will tell.  
Stooping to my lowly state,  
He hath made me rich and great,  
And I bless him, though he be  
Hard and stern to all save me!'

While she speaketh, falls the light  
O'er her fingers small and white;  
Gold and gem, and costly ring  
Back the timid lustre fling,-  
Love's selectest gifts, and rare,  
His proud hand had fastened there.

Gratefully she marks the glow  
From those tapering lines of snow;  
Fondly o'er the sleeper bending  
His black hair with golden blending,  
In her soft and light caress,  
Cheek and lip together press.

Ha!-that start of horror! why  
That wild stare and wilder cry,  
Full of terror, full of pain?  
Is there madness in her brain?  
Hark! that gasping, hoarse and low,  
'Spare me,-spare me,-let me go!'

God have mercy!-icy cold  
Spectral hands her own enfold,  
Drawing silently from them  
Love's fair gifts of gold and gem.  
'Waken! save me!' still as death  
At her side he slumbereth.

Ring and bracelet all are gone,  
And that ice-cold hand withdrawn;

But she hears a murmur low,  
Full of sweetness, full of woe,  
Half a sigh and half a moan  
'Fear not! give the dead her own!'

Ah!-the dead wife's voice she knows!  
That cold hand whose pressure froze,  
Once in warmest life had borne  
Gem and band her own hath worn.  
'Wake thee! wake thee!' Lo, his eyes  
Open with a dull surprise.

In his arms the strong man folds her,  
Closer to his breast he holds her;  
Trembling limbs his own are meeting,  
And he feels her heart's quick beating  
'Nay, my dearest, why this fear?'  
'Hush!' she saith, 'the dead is here!'

'Nay, a dream,-an idle dream.'  
But before the lamp's pale gleam  
Tremblingly her hand she raises.  
There no more the diamond blazes,  
Clasp of pearl, or ring of gold,-  
'Ah!' she sighs, 'her hand was cold!'

Broken words of cheer he saith,  
But his dark lip quivereth,  
And as o'er the past he thinketh,  
From his young wife's arms he shrinketh;  
Can those soft arms round him lie,  
Underneath his dead wife's eye?

She her fair young head can rest  
Soothed and childlike on his breast,  
And in trustful innocence  
Draw new strength and courage thence;  
He, the proud man, feels within  
But the cowardice of sin!

She can murmur in her thought  
Simple prayers her mother taught,

And His blessed angels call,  
Whose great love is over all;  
He, alone, in prayerless pride,  
Meets the dark Past at her side!

One, who living shrank with dread  
From his look, or word, or tread,  
Unto whom her early grave  
Was as freedom to the slave,  
Moves him at this midnight hour,  
With the dead's unconscious power!

Ah, the dead, the unforgot!  
From their solemn homes of thought,  
Where the cypress shadows blend  
Darkly over foe and friend,  
Or in love or sad rebuke,  
Back upon the living look.

And the tenderest ones and weakest,  
Who their wrongs have borne the meekest,  
Lifting from those dark, still places,  
Sweet and sad-remembered faces,  
O'er the guilty hearts behind  
An unwitting triumph find.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The New Year

THE wave is breaking on the shore,  
The echo fading from the chime;  
Again the shadow moveth o'er  
The dial-plate of time!  
O seer-seen Angel! waiting now  
With weary feet on sea and shore,  
Impatient for the last dread vow  
That time shall be no more!  
Once more across thy sleepless eye  
The semblance of a smile has passed:  
The year departing leaves more nigh  
Time's fearfullest and last.  
Oh, in that dying year hath been  
The sum of all since time began;  
The birth and death, the joy and pain,  
Of Nature and of Man.  
Spring, with her change of sun and shower,  
And streams released from Winter's chain,  
And bursting bud, and opening flower,  
And greenly growing grain;  
And Summer's shade, and sunshine warm,  
And rainbows o'er her hill-tops bowed,  
And voices in her rising storm;  
God speaking from His cloud!  
And Autumn's fruits and clustering sheaves,  
And soft, warm days of golden light,  
The glory of her forest leaves,  
And harvest-moon at night;  
And Winter with her leafless grove,  
And prisoned stream, and drifting snow,  
The brilliance of her heaven above  
And of her earth below:  
And man, in whom an angel's mind  
With earth's low instincts finds abode,  
The highest of the links which bind  
Brute nature to her God;  
His infant eye hath seen the light,  
His childhood's merriest laughter rung,  
And active sports to manlier might

The nerves of boyhood strung!  
And quiet love, and passion's fires,  
Have soothed or burned in manhood's breast,  
And lofty aims and low desires  
By turns disturbed his rest.  
The wailing of the newly-born  
Has mingled with the funeral knell;  
And o'er the dying's ear has gone  
The merry marriage-bell.  
And Wealth has filled his halls with mirth,  
While Want, in many a humble shed,  
Toiled, shivering by her cheerless hearth,  
The live-long night for bread.  
And worse than all, the human slave,  
The sport of lust, and pride, and scorn!  
Plucked off the crown his Maker gave,  
His regal manhood gone!  
Oh, still, my country! o'er thy plains,  
Blackened with slavery's blight and ban,  
That human chattel drags his chains,  
An uncreated man!  
And still, where'er to sun and breeze,  
My country, is thy flag unrolled,  
With scorn, the gazing stranger sees  
A stain on every fold.  
Oh, tear the gorgeous emblem down!  
It gathers scorn from every eye,  
And despots smile and good men frown  
Whene'er it passes by.  
Shame! shame! its starry splendors glow  
Above the slaver's loathsome jail;  
Its folds are ruffling even now  
His crimson flag of sale.  
Still round our country's proudest hall  
The trade in human flesh is driven,  
And at each careless hammer-fall  
A human heart is riven.  
And this, too, sanctioned by the men  
Vested with power to shield the right,  
And throw each vile and robber den  
Wide open to the light.  
Yet, shame upon them! there they sit,

Men of the North, subdued and still;  
Meek, pliant poltroons, only fit  
To work a master's will.  
Sold, bargained off for Southern votes,  
A passive herd of Northern mules,  
Just braying through their purchased throats  
Whate'er their owner rules.  
And he, the basest of the base  
The vilest of the vile, whose name,  
Embalmed in infinite disgrace,  
Is deathless in its shame!  
A tool, to bolt the people's door  
Against the people clamoring there,  
An ass, to trample on their floor  
A people's right of prayer!  
Nailed to his self-made gibbet fast,  
Self-pilloried to the public view,  
A mark for every passing blast  
Of scorn to whistle through;  
There let him hang, and hear the boast  
Of Southrons o'er their pliant tool, —  
A new Stylites on his post,  
'Sacred to ridicule!'  
Look we at home! our noble hall,  
To Freedom's holy purpose given,  
Now rears its black and ruined wall,  
Beneath the wintry heaven,  
Telling the story of its doom,  
The fiendish mob, the prostrate law,  
The fiery jet through midnight's gloom,  
Our gazing thousands saw.  
Look to our State! the poor man's right  
Torn from him: and the sons of those  
Whose blood in Freedom's sternest fight  
Sprinkled the Jersey snows,  
Outlawed within the land of Penn,  
That Slavery's guilty fears might cease,  
And those whom God created men  
Toil on as brutes in peace.  
Yet o'er the blackness of the storm  
A bow of promise bends on high,  
And gleams of sunshine, soft and warm,

Break through our clouded sky.  
East, West, and North, the shout is heard,  
Of freemen rising for the right:  
Each valley hath its rallying word,  
Each hill its signal light.  
O'er Massachusetts' rocks of gray,  
The strengthening light of freedom shines,  
Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay,  
And Vermont's snow-hung pines!  
From Hudson's frowning palisades  
To Alleghany's laurelled crest,  
O'er lakes and prairies, streams and glades,  
It shines upon the West.  
Speed on the light to those who dwell  
In Slavery's land of woe and sin,  
And through the blackness of that hell,  
Let Heaven's own light break in.  
So shall the Southern conscience quake  
Before that light poured full and strong,  
So shall the Southern heart awake  
To all the bondman's wrong.  
And from that rich and sunny land  
The song of grateful millions rise,  
Like that of Israel's ransomed band  
Beneath Arabians skies:  
And all who now are bound beneath  
Our banner's shade, our eagle's wing,  
From Slavery's night of moral death  
To light and life shall spring.  
Broken the bondman's chain, and gone  
The master's guilt, and hate, and fear,  
And unto both alike shall dawn  
A New and Happy Year.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Norsemen ( From Narrative And Legendary Poems )

GIFT from the cold and silent Past!  
A relic to the present cast,  
Left on the ever-changing strand  
Of shifting and unstable sand,  
Which wastes beneath the steady chime  
And beating of the waves of Time!  
Who from its bed of primal rock  
First wrenched thy dark, unshapely block?  
Whose hand, of curious skill untaught,  
Thy rude and savage outline wrought?  
The waters of my native stream  
Are glancing in the sun's warm beam;  
From sail-urged keel and flashing oar  
The circles widen to its shore;  
And cultured field and peopled town  
Slope to its willowed margin down.  
Yet, while this morning breeze is bringing  
The home-life sound of school-bells ringing,  
And rolling wheel, and rapid jar  
Of the fire-winged and steedless car,  
And voices from the wayside near  
Come quick and blended on my ear,--  
A spell is in this old gray stone,  
My thoughts are with the Past alone!

A change! -- The steeped town no more  
Stretches along the sail-thronged shore;  
Like palace-domes in sunset's cloud,  
Fade sun-gilt spire and mansion proud:  
Spectrally rising where they stood,  
I see the old, primeval wood;  
Dark, shadow-like, on either hand  
I see its solemn waste expand;  
It climbs the green and cultured hill,

It arches o'er the valley's rill,  
And leans from cliff and crag to throw  
Its wild arms o'er the stream below.  
Unchanged, alone, the same bright river  
Flows on, as it will flow forever!  
I listen, and I hear the low  
Soft ripple where its water go;  
I hear behind the panther's cry,  
The wild-bird's scream goes thrilling by,  
And shyly on the river's brink  
The deer is stooping down to drink.

But hard! -- from wood and rock flung back,  
What sound come up the Merrimac?  
What sea-worn barks are those which throw  
The light spray from each rushing prow?  
Have they not in the North Sea's blast  
Bowed to the waves the straining mast?  
Their frozen sails the low, pale sun  
Of Thulë's night has shone upon;  
Flapped by the sea-wind's gusty sweep  
Round icy drift, and headland steep.  
Wild Jutland's wives and Lochlin's daughters  
Have watched them fading o'er the waters,  
Lessening through driving mist and spray,  
Like white-winged sea-birds on their way!

Onward they glide, -- and now I view  
Their iron-armed and stalwart crew;  
Joy glistens in each wild blue eye,  
Turned to green earth and summer sky.  
Each broad, seamed breast has cast aside  
Its cumbering vest of shaggy hide;  
Bared to the sun and soft warm air,  
Streams back the Northmen's yellow hair.  
I see the gleam of axe and spear,  
A sound of smitten shields I hear,  
Keeping a harsh and fitting time  
To Saga's chant, and Runic rhyme;  
Such lays as Zetland's Scald has sung,  
His gray and naked isles among;  
Or mutter low at midnight hour

Round Odin's mossy stone of power.  
The wolf beneath the Arctic moon  
Has answered to that startling rune;  
The Gael has heard its stormy swell,  
The light Frank knows its summons well;  
Iona's sable-stoled Culdee  
Has heard it sounding o'er the sea,  
And swept, with hoary beard and hair,  
His altar's foot in trembling prayer!

'T is past, -- the 'wildering vision dies  
In darkness on my dreaming eyes!  
The forest vanishes in air,  
Hill-slope and vale lie starkly bare;  
I hear the common tread of men,  
And hum of work-day life again;  
The mystic relic seems alone  
A broken mass of common stone;  
And if it be the chiselled limb  
Of Berserker or idol grim,  
A fragment of Valhalla's Thor,  
The stormy Viking's god of War,  
Or Praga of the Runic lay,  
Or love-awakening Siona,  
I know not, -- for no graven line,  
Nor Druid mark, nor Runic sign,  
Is left me here, by which to trace  
Its name, or origin, or place.  
Yet, for this vision of the Past,  
This glance upon its darkness cast,  
My spirit bows in gratitude  
Before the Giver of all good,  
Who fashioned so the human mind,  
That, from the waste of Time behind,  
A simple stone, or mound of earth,  
Can summon the departed forth;  
Quicken the Past to life again,  
The Present lose in what hath been,  
And in their primal freshness show  
The buried forms of long ago.  
As if a portion of that Thought  
By which the Eternal will is wrought,

Whose impulse fills anew with breath  
The frozen solitude of Death,  
To mortal mind were sometimes lent,  
To mortal musing sometimes sent,  
To whisper -- even when it seems  
But Memory's fantasy of dreams --  
Through the mind's waste of woe and sin,  
Of an immortal origin!

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John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Old Burying-Ground

Our vales are sweet with fern and rose,  
Our hills are maple-crowned;  
But not from them our fathers chose  
The village burying-ground.

The dreariest spot in all the land  
To Death they set apart;  
With scanty grace from Nature's hand,  
And none from that of Art.

A winding wall of mossy stone,  
Frost-flung and broken, lines  
A lonesome acre thinly grown  
With grass and wandering vines.

Without the wall a birch-tree shows  
Its drooped and tasselled head;  
Within, a stag-horned sumach grows,  
Fern-leafed, with spikes of red.

There, sheep that graze the neighboring plain  
Like white ghosts come and go,  
The farm-horse drags his fetlock chain,  
The cow-bell tinkles slow.

Low moans the river from its bed,  
The distant pines reply;  
Like mourners shrinking from the dead,  
They stand apart and sigh.

Unshaded smites the summer sun,  
Unchecked the winter blast;  
The school-girl learns the place to shun,  
With glances backward cast.

For thus our fathers testified,  
That he might read who ran,  
The emptiness of human pride,  
The nothingness of man.

They dared not plant the grave with flowers,  
Nor dress the funeral sod,  
Where, with a love as deep as ours,  
They left their dead with God.

The hard and thorny path they kept  
From beauty turned aside;  
Nor missed they over those who slept  
The grace to life denied.

Yet still the wilding flowers would blow,  
The golden leaves would fall,  
The seasons come, the seasons go,  
And God be good to all.

Above the graves the' blackberry hung  
In bloom and green its wreath,  
And harebells swung as if they rung  
The chimes of peace beneath.

The beauty Nature loves to share,  
The gifts she hath for all,  
The common light, the common air,  
O'ercrept the graveyard's wall.

It knew the glow of eventide,  
The sunrise and the noon,  
And glorified and sanctified  
It slept beneath the moon.

With flowers or snow-flakes for its sod,  
Around the seasons ran,  
And evermore the love of God  
Rebuked the fear of man.

We dwell with fears on either hand,  
Within a daily strife,  
And spectral problems waiting stand  
Before the gates of life.

The doubts we vainly seek to solve,

The truths we know, are one;  
The known and nameless stars revolve  
Around the Central Sun.

And if we reap as we have sown,  
And take the dole we deal,  
The law of pain is love alone,  
The wounding is to heal.

Unharm'd from change to change we glide,  
We fall as in our dreams;  
The far-off terror at our side  
A smiling angel seems.

Secure on God's all-tender heart  
Alike rest great and small;  
Why fear to lose our little part,  
When He is pledged for all?

O fearful heart and troubled brain  
Take hope and strength from this,--  
That Nature never hints in vain,  
Nor prophecies amiss.

Her wild birds sing the same sweet stave,  
Her lights and airs are given  
Alike to playground and the grave;  
And over both is Heaven.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Over-Heart

Above, below, in sky and sod,  
In leaf and spar, in star and man,  
Well might the wise Athenian scan  
The geometric signs of God,  
The measured order of His plan.

And India's mystics sang aright  
Of the One Life pervading all,--  
One Being's tidal rise and fall  
In soul and form, in sound and sight,--  
Eternal outflow and recall.

God is: and man in guilt and fear  
The central fact of Nature owns;  
Kneels, trembling, by his altar-stones,  
And darkly dreams the ghastly smear  
Of blood appeases and atones.

Guilt shapes the Terror: deep within  
The human heart the secret lies  
Of all the hideous deities;  
And, painted on a ground of sin,  
The fabled gods of torment rise!

And what is He? The ripe grain nods,  
The sweet dew falls, the sweet flowers blow;  
But darker signs His presence show  
The earthquake and the storm are God's,  
And good and evil interflow.

O hearts of love! O souls that turn  
Like sunflowers to the pure and best!  
To you the truth is manifest:  
For they the mind of Christ discern  
Who lean like John upon His breast!

In him of whom the sibyl told,  
For whom the prophet's harp was toned,  
Whose need the sage and magian owned,

The loving heart of God behold,  
The hope for which the ages groaned!

Fade, pomp of dreadful imagery  
Wherewith mankind have deified  
Their hate, and selfishness, and pride!  
Let the scared dreamer wake to see  
The Christ of Nazareth at his side!

What doth that holy Guide require?  
No rite of pain, nor gift of blood,  
But man a kindly brotherhood,  
Looking, where duty is desire,  
To Him, the beautiful and good.

Gone be the faithlessness of fear,  
And let the pitying heaven's sweet rain  
Wash out the altar's bloody stain;  
The law of Hatred disappear,  
The law of Love alone remain.

How fall the idols false and grim!  
And to! their hideous wreck above  
The emblems of the Lamb and Dove!  
Man turns from God, not God from him;  
And guilt, in suffering, whispers Love!

The world sits at the feet of Christ,  
Unknowing, blind, and unconsoled;  
It yet shall touch His garment's fold,  
And feel the heavenly Alchemist  
Transform its very dust to gold.

The theme befitting angel tongues  
Beyond a mortal's scope has grown.  
O heart of mine! with reverence own  
The fulness which to it belongs,  
And trust the unknown for the known.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pageant

A sound as if from bells of silver,  
Or elfin cymbals smitten clear,  
Through the frost-pictured panes I hear.

A brightness which outshines the morning,  
A splendor brooking no delay,  
Beckons and tempts my feet away.

I leave the trodden village highway  
For virgin snow-paths glimmering through  
A jewelled elm-tree avenue;

Where, keen against the walls of sapphire,  
The gleaming tree-bolls, ice-embossed,  
Hold up their chandeliers of frost.

I tread in Orient halls enchanted,  
I dream the Saga's dream of caves  
Gem-lit beneath the North Sea waves!

I walk the land of Eldorado,  
I touch its mimic garden bowers,  
Its silver leaves and diamond flowers!

The flora of the mystic mine-world  
Around me lifts on crystal stems  
The petals of its clustered gems!

What miracle of weird transforming  
In this wild work of frost and light,  
This glimpse of glory infinite!

This foregleam of the Holy City  
Like that to him of Patmos given,  
The white bride coming down from heaven!

How flash the ranked and mail-clad alders,  
Through what sharp-glancing spears of reeds  
The brook its muffled water leads!

Yon maple, like the bush of Horeb,  
Burns unconsumed: a white, cold fire  
Rays out from every grassy spire.

Each slender rush and spike of mullein,  
Low laurel shrub and drooping fern,  
Transfigured, blaze where'er I turn.

How yonder Ethiopian hemlock  
Crowned with his glistening circlet stands!  
What jewels light his swarthy hands!

Here, where the forest opens southward,  
Between its hospitable pines,  
As through a door, the warm sun shines.

The jewels loosen on the branches,  
And lightly, as the soft winds blow,  
Fall, tinkling, on the ice below.

And through the clashing of their cymbals  
I hear the old familiar fall  
Of water down the rocky wall,

Where, from its wintry prison breaking,  
In dark and silence hidden long,  
The brook repeats its summer song.

One instant flashing in the sunshine,  
Keen as a sabre from its sheath,  
Then lost again the ice beneath.

I hear the rabbit lightly leaping,  
The foolish screaming of the jay,  
The chopper's axe-stroke far away;

The clamor of some neighboring barn-yard,  
The lazy cock's belated crow,  
Or cattle-tramp in crispy snow.

And, as in some enchanted forest

The lost knight hears his comrades sing,  
And, near at hand, their bridles ring,--

So welcome I these sounds and voices,  
These airs from far-off summer blown,  
This life that leaves me not alone.

For the white glory overawes me;  
The crystal terror of the seer  
Of Chebar's vision blinds me here.

Rebuke me not, O sapphire heaven!  
Thou stainless earth, lay not on me,  
Thy keen reproach of purity,

If, in this August presence-chamber,  
I sigh for summer's leaf-green gloom  
And warm airs thick with odorous bloom!

Let the strange frost-work sink and crumble,  
And let the loosened tree-boughs swing,  
Till all their bells of silver ring.

Shine warmly down, thou sun of noontime,  
On this chill pageant, melt and move  
The winter's frozen heart with love.

And, soft and low, thou wind south-blowing,  
Breathe through a veil of tenderest haze  
Thy prophecy of summer days.

Come with thy green relief of promise,  
And to this dead, cold splendor bring  
The living jewels of the spring!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Palatine

Leagues north, as fly the gull and auk,  
Point Judith watches with eye of hawk;  
Leagues south, thy beacon flames, Montauk!

Lonely and wind-shorn, wood-forsaken,  
With never a tree for Spring to waken,  
For tryst of lovers or farewells taken,

Circled by waters that never freeze,  
Beaten by billow and swept by breeze,  
Lieth the island of Manisees,

Set at the mouth of the Sound to hold  
The coast lights up on its turret old,  
Yellow with moss and sea-fog mould.

Dreary the land when gust and sleet  
At its doors and windows howl and beat,  
And Winter laughs at its fires of peat!

But in summer time, when pool and pond,  
Held in the laps of valleys fond,  
Are blue as the glimpses of sea beyond;

When the hills are sweet with the brier-rose,  
And, hid in the warm, soft dells, unclose  
Flowers the mainland rarely knows;

When boats to their morning fishing go,  
And, held to the wind and slanting low,  
Whitening and darkening the small sails show,--

Then is that lonely island fair;  
And the pale health-seeker findeth there  
The wine of life in its pleasant air.

No greener valleys the sun invite,  
On smoother beaches no sea-birds light,  
No blue waves shatter to foam more white!

There, circling ever their narrow range,  
Quaint tradition and legend strange  
Live on unchallenged, and know no change.

Old wives spinning their webs of tow,  
Or rocking weirdly to and fro  
In and out of the peat's dull glow,

And old men mending their nets of twine,  
Talk together of dream and sign,  
Talk of the lost ship Palatine,--

The ship that, a hundred years before,  
Freighted deep with its goodly store,  
In the gales of the equinox went ashore.

The eager islanders one by one  
Counted the shots of her signal gun,  
And heard the crash when she drove right on!

Into the teeth of death she sped  
(May God forgive the hands that fed  
The false lights over the rocky Head!)

O men and brothers! what sights were there!  
White upturned faces, hands stretched in prayer!  
Where waves had pity, could ye not spare?

Down swooped the wreckers, like birds of prey  
Tearing the heart of the ship away,  
And the dead had never a word to say.

And then, with ghastly shimmer and shine  
Over the rocks and the seething brine,  
They burned the wreck of the Palatine.

In their cruel hearts, as they homeward sped,  
'The sea and the rocks are dumb,' they said  
'There 'll be no reckoning with the dead.'

But the year went round, and when once more

Along their foam-white curves of shore  
They heard the line-storm rave and roar,

Behold! again, with shimmer and shine,  
Over the rocks and the seething brine,  
The flaming wreck of the Palatine!

So, haply in fitter words than these,  
Mending their nets on their patient knees  
They tell the legend of Manisees.

Nor looks nor tones a doubt betray;  
'It is known to us all,' they quietly say;  
'We too have seen it in our day.'

Is there, then, no death for a word once spoken?  
Was never a deed but left its token  
Written on tables never broken?

Do the elements subtle reflections give?  
Do pictures of all the ages live  
On Nature's infinite negative,

Which, half in sport, in malice half,  
She shows at times, with shudder or laugh,  
Phantom and shadow in photograph?

For still, on many a moonless night,  
From Kingston Head and from Montauk light  
The spectre kindles and burns in sight.

Now low and dim, now clear and higher,  
Leaps up the terrible Ghost of Fire,  
Then, slowly sinking, the flames expire.

And the wise Sound skippers, though skies be fine,  
Reef their sails when they see the sign  
Of the blazing wreck of the Palatine!

. . . . .

'A fitter tale to scream than sing,'

The Book-man said. 'Well, fancy, then,'  
The Reader answered, 'on the wing  
The sea-birds shriek it, not for men,  
But in the ear of wave and breeze!'  
The Traveller mused: 'Your Manisees  
Is fairy-land: off Narragansett shore  
Who ever saw the isle or heard its name before?

'T is some strange land of Flyaway,  
Whose dreamy shore the ship beguiles,  
St. Brandan's in its sea-mist gray,  
Or sunset loom of Fortunate Isles!'  
'No ghost, but solid turf and rock  
Is the good island known as Block,'  
The Reader said. 'For beauty and for ease  
I chose its Indian name, soft-flowing Manisees!

'But let it pass; here is a bit  
Of unrhymed story, with a hint  
Of the old preaching mood in it,  
The sort of sidelong moral squint  
Our friend objects to, which has grown,  
I fear, a habit of my own.  
'Twas written when the Asian plague drew near,  
And the land held its breath and paled with sudden fear.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Palm-Tree

Is it the palm, the cocoa-palm,  
On the Indian Sea, by the isles of balm?  
Or is it a ship in the breezeless calm?

A ship whose keel is of palm beneath,  
Whose ribs of palm have a palm-bark sheath,  
And a rudder of palm it steereth with.

Branches of palm are its spars and rails,  
Fibres of palm are its woven sails,  
And the rope is of palm that idly trails!

What does the good ship bear so well?  
The cocoa-nut with its stony shell,  
And the milky sap of its inner cell.

What are its jars, so smooth and fine,  
But hollowed nuts, filled with oil and wine,  
And the cabbage that ripens under the Line?

Who smokes his nargileh, cool and calm?  
The master, whose cunning and skill could charm  
Cargo and ship from the bounteous palm.

In the cabin he sits on a palm-mat soft,  
From a beaker of palm his drink is quaffed,  
And a palm-thatch shields from the sun aloft!

His dress is woven of palmy strands,  
And he holds a palm-leaf scroll in his hands,  
Traced with the Prophet's wise commands!

The turban folded about his head  
Was daintily wrought of the palm-leaf braid,  
And the fan that cools him of palm was made.

Of threads of palm was the carpet spun  
Whereon he kneels when the day is done,  
And the foreheads of Islam are bowed as one!

To him the palm is a gift divine,  
Wherein all uses of man combine,--  
House, and raiment, and food, and wine!

And, in the hour of his great release,  
His need of the palm shall only cease  
With the shroud wherein he lieth in peace.

'Allah il Allah!' he sings his psalm,  
On the Indian Sea, by the isles of balm;  
'Thanks to Allah who gives the palm!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Panorama

' A! fredome is a nobill thing!  
Fredome mayse man to haif liking.  
Fredome all solace to man giffis;  
He levys at ese that frely levys!  
A nobil hart may haif nane ese  
Na ellys nocht that may him plese  
Gyff Fredome failythe.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pass Of The Sierra

ALL night above their rocky bed  
They saw the stars march slow;  
The wild Sierra overhead,  
The desert's death below.  
The Indian from his lodge of bark,  
The gray bear from his den,  
Beyond their camp-fire's wall of dark,  
Glared on the mountain men.  
Still upward turned, with anxious strain,  
Their leader's sleepless eye,  
Where splinters of the mountain chain  
Stood black against the sky.  
The night waned slow: at last, a glow,  
A gleam of sudden fire,  
Shot up behind the walls of snow,  
And tipped each icy spire.  
'Up, men!' he cried, 'yon rocky cone,  
To-day, please God, we'll pass,  
And look from Winter's frozen throne  
On Summer's flowers and grass!'  
They set their faces to the blast,  
They trod the eternal snow,  
And faint, worn, bleeding, hailed at last  
The promised land below.  
Behind, they saw the snow-cloud tossed  
By many an icy horn;  
Before, warm valleys, wood-embossed,  
And green with vines and corn.  
They left the Winter at their backs  
To flap his baffled wing,  
And downward, with the cataracts,  
Leaped to the lap of Spring.  
Strong leader of that mountain band,  
Another task remains,  
To break from Slavery's desert land  
A path to Freedom's plains.  
The winds are wild, the way is drear,  
Yet, flashing through the night,  
Lo! icy ridge and rocky spear

Blaze out in morning light!  
Rise up, Frémont! and go before;  
The Hour must have its Man;  
Put on the hunting-shirt once more,  
And lead in Freedom's van!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pastoral Letter

So, this is all, — the utmost reach  
Of priestly power the mind to fetter!  
When laymen think, when women preach,  
A war of words, a 'Pastoral Letter!'  
Now, shame upon ye, parish Popes!  
Was it thus with those, your predecessors,  
Who sealed with racks, and fire, and ropes  
Their loving-kindness to transgressors?  
A 'Pastoral Letter,' grave and dull;  
Alas! in hoof and horns and features,  
How different is your Brookfield bull  
From him who bellows from St. Peter's!  
Your pastoral rights and powers from harm,  
Think ye, can words alone preserve them?  
Your wiser fathers taught the arm  
And sword of temporal power to serve them.  
Oh, glorious days, when Church and State  
Were wedded by your spiritual fathers!  
And on submissive shoulders sat  
Your Wilsons and your Cotton Mathers,  
No vile 'itinerant' then could mar  
The beauty of your tranquil Zion,  
But at his peril of the scar  
Of hangman's whip and branding-iron.  
Then, wholesome laws relieved the Church  
Of heretic and mischief-maker,  
And priest and bailiff joined in search,  
By turns, of Papist, witch, and Quaker!  
The stocks were at each church's door,  
The gallows stood on Boston Common,  
A Papist's ears the pillory bore, —  
The gallows-rope, a Quaker woman!  
Your fathers dealt not as ye deal  
With 'non-professing' frantic teachers;  
They bored the tongue with red-hot steel,  
And flayed the backs of 'female preachers.'  
Old Hampton, had her fields a tongue,  
And Salem's streets could tell their story,  
Of fainting woman dragged along,

Gashed by the whip accursed and gory!  
And will ye ask me, why this taunt  
Of memories sacred from the scorner?  
And why with reckless hand I plant  
A nettle on the graves ye honor?  
Not to reproach New England's dead  
This record from the past I summon,  
Of manhood to the scaffold led,  
And suffering and heroic woman.  
No, for yourselves alone, I turn  
The pages of intolerance over,  
That, in their spirit, dark and stern,  
Ye haply may your own discover!  
For, if ye claim the 'pastoral right'  
To silence Freedom's voice of warning,  
And from your precincts shut the light  
Of Freedom's day around ye dawning;  
If when an earthquake voice of power  
And signs in earth and heaven are showing  
That forth, in its appointed hour,  
The Spirit of the Lord is going!  
And, with that Spirit, Freedom's light  
On kindred, tongue, and people breaking,  
Whose slumbering millions, at the sight,  
In glory and in strength are waking!  
When for the sighing of the poor,  
And for the needy, God hath risen,  
And chains are breaking, and a door  
Is opening for the souls in prison!  
If then ye would, with puny hands,  
Arrest the very work of Heaven,  
And bind anew the evil bands  
Which God's right arm of power hath riven;  
What marvel that, in many a mind,  
Those darker deeds of bigot madness  
Are closely with your own combined,  
Yet 'less in anger than in sadness '?  
What marvel, if the people learn  
To claim the right of free opinion?  
What marvel, if at times they spurn  
The ancient yoke of your dominion?  
A glorious remnant linger yet,

Whose lips are wet at Freedom's fountains,  
The coming of whose welcome feet  
Is beautiful upon our mountains!  
Men, who the gospel tidings bring  
Of Liberty and Love forever,  
Whose joy is an abiding spring,  
Whose peace is as a gentle river!  
But ye, who scorn the thrilling tale  
Of Carolina's high-souled daughters,  
Which echoes here the mournful wail  
Of sorrow from Edisto's waters,  
Close while ye may the public ear,  
With malice vex, with slander wound them,  
The pure and good shall throng to hear,  
And tried and manly hearts surround them.  
Oh, ever may the power which led  
Their way to such a fiery trial,  
And strengthened womanhood to tread  
The wine-press of such self-denial,  
Be round them in an evil land,  
With wisdom and with strength from Heaven,  
With Miriam's voice, and Judith's hand,  
And Deborah's song, for triumph given!  
And what are ye who strive with God  
Against the ark of His salvation,  
Moved by the breath of prayer abroad,  
With blessings for a dying nation?  
What, but the stubble and the hay  
To perish, even as flax consuming,  
With all that bars His glorious way,  
Before the brightness of His coming?  
And thou, sad Angel, who so long  
Hast waited for the glorious token,  
That Earth from all her bonds of wrong  
To liberty and light has broken, —  
Angel of Freedom! soon to thee  
The sounding trumpet shall be given,  
And over Earth's full jubilee  
Shall deeper joy be felt in Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Peace Autumn

THANK God for rest, where none molest,  
And none can make afraid;  
For Peace that sits as Plenty's guest  
Beneath the homestead shade!  
Bring pike and gun, the sword's red scourge,  
The negro's broken chains,  
And beat them at the blacksmith's forge  
To ploughshares for our plains.  
Alike henceforth our hills of snow,  
And vales where cotton flowers;  
All streams that flow, all winds that blow,  
Are Freedom's motive-powers.  
Henceforth to Labor's chivalry  
Be knightly honors paid;  
For nobler than the sword's shall be  
The sickle's accolade.  
Build up an altar to the Lord,  
O grateful hearts of ours!  
And shape it of the greenest sward  
That ever drank the showers.  
Lay all the bloom of gardens there,  
And there the orchard fruits;  
Bring golden grain from sun and air,  
From earth her goodly roots.  
There let our banners droop and flow,  
The stars uprising and fall;  
Our roll of martyrs, sad and slow,  
Let sighing breezes call.  
Their names let hands of horn and tan  
And rough-shod feet applaud,  
Who died to make the slave a man,  
And link with toil reward.  
There let the common heart keep time  
To such an anthem sung  
As never swelled on poet's rhyme,  
Or thrilled on singer's tongue.  
Song of our burden and relief,  
Of peace and long annoy;  
The passion of our mighty grief

And our exceeding joy!  
A song of praise to Him who filled  
The harvests sown in years,  
And gave each field a double yield  
To feed our battle-years!  
A song of faith that trusts the end  
To match the good begun,  
Nor doubts the power of Love to blend  
The hearts of men as one!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Peace Convention At Brussels

STILL in thy streets, O Paris! doth the stain  
Of blood defy the cleansing autumn rain;  
Still breaks the smoke Messina's ruins through,  
And Naples mourns that new Bartholomew,  
When squalid beggary, for a dole of bread,  
At a crowned murderer's beck of license, fed  
The yawning trenches with her noble dead;  
Still, doomed Vienna, through thy stately halls  
The shell goes crashing and the red shot falls,  
And, leagued to crush thee, on the Danube's side,  
The bearded Croat and Bosniak spearman ride;  
Still in that vale where Himalaya's snow  
Melts round the cornfields and the vines below,  
The Sikh's hot cannon, answering ball for ball,  
Flames in the breach of Moultan's shattered wall;  
On Chenab's side the vulture seeks the slain,  
And Sutlej paints with blood its banks again.  
'What folly, then,' the faithless critic cries,  
With sneering lip, and wise world-knowing eyes,  
'While fort to fort, and post to post, repeat  
The ceaseless challenge of the war-drum's beat,  
And round the green earth, to the church-bell's chime,  
The morning drum-roll of the camp keeps time,  
To dream of peace amidst a world in arms,  
Of swords to ploughshares changed by Scriptural charms,  
Of nations, drunken with the wine of blood,  
Staggering to take the Pledge of Brotherhood,  
Like tipplers answering Father Mathew's call;  
The sullen Spaniard, and the mad-cap Gaul,  
The bull-dog Briton, yielding but with life,  
The Yankee swaggering with his bowie-knife,  
The Russ, from banquets with the vulture shared,  
The blood still dripping from his amber beard,  
Quitting their mad Berserker dance to hear  
The dull, meek droning of a drab-coat seer;  
Leaving the sport of Presidents and Kings,  
Where men for dice each titled gambler flings,  
To meet alternate on the Seine and Thames,  
For tea and gossip, like old country dames!

No! let the cravens plead the weakling's cant,  
Let Cobden cipher, and let Vincent rant,  
Let Sturge preach peace to democratic throngs,  
And Burritt, stammering through his hundred tongues,  
Repeat, in all, his ghostly lessons o'er,  
Timed to the pauses of the battery's roar;  
Check Ban or Kaiser with the barricade  
Of 'Olive-leaves' and Resolutions made,  
Spike guns with pointed Scripture-texts, and hope  
To capsize navies with a windy trope;  
Still shall the glory and the pomp of War  
Along their train the shouting millions draw;  
Still dusty Labor to the passing Brave  
His cap shall doff, and Beauty's kerchief wave;  
Still shall the bard to Valor tune his song,  
Still Hero-worship kneel before the Strong;  
Rosy and sleek, the sable-gowned divine,  
O'er his third bottle of suggestive wine,  
To plumed and sworded auditors, shall prove  
Their trade accordant with the Law of Love;  
And Church for State, and State for Church, shall fight,  
And both agree, that 'Might alone is Right!'  
Despite of sneers like these, O faithful few,  
Who dare to hold God's word and witness true,  
Whose clear-eyed faith transcends our evil time,  
And o'er the present wilderness of crime  
Sees the calm future, with its robes of green,  
Its fleece-flecked mountains, and soft streams between,—  
Still keep the path which duty bids ye tread,  
Though worldly wisdom shake the cautious head;  
No truth from Heaven descends upon our sphere,  
Without the greeting of the skeptic's sneer;  
Denied and mocked at, till its blessings fall,  
Common as dew and sunshine, over all.  
'Then, o'er Earth's war-field, till the strife shall cease,  
Like Morven's harpers, sing your song of peace;  
As in old fable rang the Thracian's lyre,  
Midst howl of fiends and roar of penal fire,  
Till the fierce din to pleasing murmurs fell,  
And love subdued the maddened heart of hell.  
Lend, once again, that holy song a tongue,  
Which the glad angels of the Advent sung,

Their cradle-anthem for the Saviour's birth,  
Glory to God, and peace unto the earth!  
Through the mad discord send that calming word  
Which wind and wave on wild Genesareth heard,  
Lift in Christ's name his Cross against the Sword!  
Not vain the vision which the prophets saw,  
Skirting with green the fiery waste of war,  
Through the hot sand-gleam, looming soft and calm  
On the sky's rim, the fountain-shading palm.  
Still lives for Earth, which fiends so long have trod,  
The great hope resting on the truth of God, —  
Evil shall cease and Violence pass away,  
And the tired world breathe free through a long Sabbath day.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Peace Of Europe

'GREAT peace in Europe! Order reigns  
From Tiber's hills to Danube's plains!  
So say her kings and priests; so say  
The lying prophets of our day.  
Go lay to earth a listening ear;  
The tramp of measured marches hear;  
The rolling of the cannon's wheel,  
The shotted musket's murderous peal,  
The night alarm, the sentry's call,  
The quick-eared spy in hut and hall!  
From Polar sea and tropic fen  
The dying-groans of exiled men!  
The bolted cell, the galley's chains,  
The scaffold smoking with its stains!  
Order, the hush of brooding slaves!  
Peace, in the dungeon-vaults and graves!  
O Fisher! of the world-wide net,  
With meshes in all waters set,  
Whose fabled keys of heaven and hell  
Bolt hard the patriot's prison-cell,  
And open wide the banquet-hall,  
Where kings and priests hold carnival!  
Weak vassal tricked in royal guise,  
Boy Kaiser with thy lip of lies;  
Base gambler for Napoleon's crown,  
Barnacle on his dead renown!  
Thou, Bourbon Neapolitan,  
Crowned scandal, loathed of God and man;  
And thou, fell Spider of the North!  
Stretching thy giant feelers forth,  
Within whose web the freedom dies  
Of nations eaten up like flies!  
Speak, Prince and Kaiser, Priest and Czar!  
If this be Peace, pray what is War?  
White Angel of the Lord! unmeet  
That soft accursed for thy pure feet.  
Never in Slavery's desert flows  
The fountain of thy charmed repose;  
No tyrant's hand thy chaplet weaves

Of lilies and of olive-leaves;  
Not with the wicked shalt thou dwell,  
Thus saith the Eternal Oracle;  
Thy home is with the pure and free!  
Stern herald of thy better day,  
Before thee, to prepare thy way,  
The Baptist Shade of Liberty,  
Gray, scarred and hairy-robed, must press  
With bleeding feet the wilderness!  
Oh that its voice might pierce the ear  
Of princes, trembling while they hear  
A cry as of the Hebrew seer:  
Repent! God's kingdom draweth near!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pennsylvania Pilgrim

## Prelude

I sing the Pilgrim of a softer clime  
And milder speech than those brave men's who brought  
To the ice and iron of our winter time  
A will as firm, a creed as stern, and wrought  
With one mailed hand, and with the other fought.  
Simply, as fits my theme, in homely rhyme  
I sing the blue-eyed German Spener taught,  
Through whose veiled, mystic faith the Inward Light,  
Steady and still, an easy brightness, shone,  
Transfiguring all things in its radiance white.  
The garland which his meekness never sought  
I bring him; over fields of harvest sown  
With seeds of blessing, now to ripeness grown,  
I bid the sower pass before the reapers' sight.

## The Pennsylvania Pilgrim

Never in tenderer quiet lapsed the day  
From Pennsylvania's vales of spring away,  
Where, forest-walled, the scattered hamlets lay

Along the wedded rivers. One long bar  
Of purple cloud, on which the evening star  
Shone like a jewel on a scimitar,

Held the sky's golden gateway. Through the deep  
Hush of the woods a murmur seemed to creep,  
The Schuylkill whispering in a voice of sleep.

All else was still. The oxen from their ploughs  
Rested at last, and from their long day's browse  
Came the dun files of Krisheim's home-bound cows.

And the young city, round whose virgin zone  
The rivers like two mighty arms were thrown,  
Marked by the smoke of evening fires alone,

Lay in the distance, lovely even then  
With its fair women and its stately men  
Gracing the forest court of William Penn,

Urban yet sylvan; in its rough-hewn frames  
Of oak and pine the dryads held their claims,  
And lent its streets their pleasant woodland names.

Anna Pastorius down the leafy lane  
Looked city-ward, then stooped to prune again  
Her vines and simples, with a sigh of pain.

For fast the streaks of ruddy sunset paled  
In the oak clearing, and, as daylight failed,  
Slow, overhead, the dusky night-birds sailed.

Again she looked: between green walls of shade,  
With low-bent head as if with sorrow weighed,  
Daniel Pastorius slowly came and said,

'God's peace be with thee, Anna!' Then he stood  
Silent before her, wrestling with the mood  
Of one who sees the evil and not good.

'What is it, my Pastorius?' As she spoke,  
A slow, faint smile across his features broke,  
Sadder than tears. 'Dear heart,' he said, 'our folk

'Are even as others. Yea, our goodliest Friends  
Are frail; our elders have their selfish ends,  
And few dare trust the Lord to make amends

'For duty's loss. So even our feeble word  
For the dumb slaves the startled meeting heard  
As if a stone its quiet waters stirred;

'And, as the clerk ceased reading, there began  
A ripple of dissent which downward ran  
In widening circles, as from man to man.

'Somewhat was said of running before sent,

Of tender fear that some their guide outwent,  
Troublers of Israel. I was scarce intent

'On hearing, for behind the reverend row  
Of gallery Friends, in dumb and piteous show,  
I saw, methought, dark faces full of woe.

'And, in the spirit, I was taken where  
They toiled and suffered; I was made aware  
Of shame and wrath and anguish and despair!

'And while the meeting smothered our poor plea  
With cautious phrase, a Voice there seemed to be,  
As ye have done to these ye do to me!'

'So it all passed; and the old tithe went on  
Of anise, mint, and cumin, till the sun  
Set, leaving still the weightier work undone.

'Help, for the good man faileth! Who is strong,  
If these be weak? Who shall rebuke the wrong,  
If these consent? How long, O Lord! how long!'

He ceased; and, bound in spirit with the bound,  
With folded arms, and eyes that sought the ground,  
Walked musingly his little garden round.

About him, beaded with the falling dew,  
Rare plants of power and herbs of healing grew,  
Such as Van Helmont and Agrippa knew.

For, by the lore of Gorlitz' gentle sage,  
With the mild mystics of his dreamy age  
He read the herbal signs of nature's page,

As once he heard in sweet Von Merlau's' bowers  
Fair as herself, in boyhood's happy hours,  
The pious Spener read his creed in flowers.

'The dear Lord give us patience!' said his wife,  
Touching with finger-tip an aloe, rife  
With leaves sharp-pointed like an Aztec knife

Or Carib spear, a gift to William Penn  
From the rare gardens of John Evelyn,  
Brought from the Spanish Main by merchantmen.

'See this strange plant its steady purpose hold,  
And, year by year, its patient leaves unfold,  
Till the young eyes that watched it first are old.

'But some time, thou hast told me, there shall come  
A sudden beauty, brightness, and perfume,  
The century-moulded bud shall burst in bloom.

'So may the seed which hath been sown to-day  
Grow with the years, and, after long delay,  
Break into bloom, and God's eternal Yea!

'Answer at last the patient prayers of them  
Who now, by faith alone, behold its stem  
Crowned with the flowers of Freedom's diadem.

'Meanwhile, to feel and suffer, work and wait,  
Remains for us. The wrong indeed is great,  
But love and patience conquer soon or late.'

'Well hast thou said, my Anna!' Tenderer  
Than youth's caress upon the head of her  
Pastorius laid his hand. 'Shall we demur

'Because the vision tarrieth? In an hour  
We dream not of, the slow-grown bud may flower,  
And what was sown in weakness rise in power!'

Then through the vine-draped door whose legend read,  
'Procul este profani!' Anna led  
To where their child upon his little bed

Looked up and smiled. 'Dear heart,' she said, 'if we  
Must bearers of a heavy burden be,  
Our boy, God willing, yet the day shall see

'When from the gallery to the farthest seat,

Slave and slave-owner shall no longer meet,  
But all sit equal at the Master's feet.'

On the stone hearth the blazing walnut block  
Set the low walls a-glimmer, showed the cock  
Rebuking Peter on the Van Wyck clock,

Shone on old tomes of law and physic, side  
By side with Fox and Belimen, played at hide  
And seek with Anna, midst her household pride

Of flaxen webs, and on the table, bare  
Of costly cloth or silver cup, but where,  
Tasting the fat shads of the Delaware,

The courtly Penn had praised the goodwife's cheer,  
And quoted Horace o'er her home brewed beer,  
Till even grave Pastorius smiled to hear.

In such a home, beside the Schuylkill's wave,  
He dwelt in peace with God and man, and gave  
Food to the poor and shelter to the slave.

For all too soon the New World's scandal shamed  
The righteous code by Penn and Sidney framed,  
And men withheld the human rights they claimed.

And slowly wealth and station sanction lent,  
And hardened avarice, on its gains intent,  
Stifled the inward whisper of dissent.

Yet all the while the burden rested sore  
On tender hearts. At last Pastorius bore  
Their warning message to the Church's door

In God's name; and the leaven of the word  
Wrought ever after in the souls who heard,  
And a dead conscience in its grave-clothes stirred

To troubled life, and urged the vain excuse  
Of Hebrew custom, patriarchal use,  
Good in itself if evil in abuse.

Gravely Pastorius listened, not the less  
Discerning through the decent fig-leaf dress  
Of the poor plea its shame of selfishness.

One Scripture rule, at least, was unforgot;  
He hid the outcast, and betrayed him not;  
And, when his prey the human hunter sought,

He scrupled not, while Anna's wise delay  
And proffered cheer prolonged the master's stay,  
To speed the black guest safely on his way.

Yet, who shall guess his bitter grief who lends  
His life to some great cause, and finds his friends  
Shame or betray it for their private ends?

How felt the Master when his chosen strove  
In childish folly for their seats above;  
And that fond mother, blinded by her love,

Besought him that her sons, beside his throne,  
Might sit on either hand? Amidst his own  
A stranger oft, companionless and lone,

God's priest and prophet stands. The martyr's pain  
Is not alone from scourge and cell and chain;  
Sharper the pang when, shouting in his train,

His weak disciples by their lives deny  
The loud hosannas of their daily cry,  
And make their echo of his truth a lie.

His forest home no hermit's cell he found,  
Guests, motley-minded, drew his hearth around,  
And held armed truce upon its neutral ground.

There Indian chiefs with battle-bows unstrung,  
Strong, hero-limbed, like those whom Homer sung,  
Pastorius fancied, when the world was young,

Came with their tawny women, lithe and tall,

Like bronzes in his friend Von Rodeck's hall,  
Comely, if black, and not unpleasing all.

There hungry folk in homespun drab and gray  
Drew round his board on Monthly Meeting day,  
Genial, half merry in their friendly way.

Or, haply, pilgrims from the Fatherland,  
Weak, timid, homesick, slow to understand  
The New World's promise, sought his helping hand.

Or painful Kelpius from his hermit den  
By Wissahickon, maddest of good men,  
Dreamed o'er the Chiliast dreams of Petersen.

Deep in the woods, where the small river slid  
Snake-like in shade, the Helmstadt Mystic hid,  
Weird as a wizard, over arts forbid,

Reading the books of Daniel and of John,  
And Behmen's Morning-Redness, through the Stone  
Of Wisdom, vouchsafed to his eyes alone,

Whereby he read what man ne'er read before,  
And saw the visions man shall see no more,  
Till the great angel, striding sea and shore,

Shall bid all flesh await, on land or ships,  
The warning trump of the Apocalypse,  
Shattering the heavens before the dread eclipse.

Or meek-eyed Mennonist his bearded chin  
Leaned o'er the gate; or Ranter, pure within,  
Aired his perfection in a world of sin.

Or, talking of old home scenes, Op der Graaf  
Teased the low back-log with his shodden staff,  
Till the red embers broke into a laugh

And dance of flame, as if they fain would cheer  
The rugged face, half tender, half austere,  
Touched with the pathos of a homesick tear!

Or Sluyter, saintly familist, whose word  
As law the Brethren of the Manor heard,  
Announced the speedy terrors of the Lord,

And turned, like Lot at Sodom, from his race,  
Above a wrecked world with complacent face  
Riding secure upon his plank of grace!

Haply, from Finland's birchen groves exiled,  
Manly in thought, in simple ways a child,  
His white hair floating round his visage mild,

The Swedish pastor sought the Quaker's door,  
Pleased from his neighbor's lips to hear once more  
His long-disused and half-forgotten lore.

For both could baffle Babel's lingual curse,  
And speak in Bion's Doric, and rehearse  
Cleanthes' hymn or Virgil's sounding verse.

And oft Pastorius and the meek old man  
Argued as Quaker and as Lutheran,  
Ending in Christian love, as they began.

With lettered Lloyd on pleasant morns he strayed  
Where Sommerhausen over vales of shade  
Looked miles away, by every flower delayed,

Or song of bird, happy and free with one  
Who loved, like him, to let his memory run  
Over old fields of learning, and to sun

Himself in Plato's wise philosophies,  
And dream with Philo over mysteries  
Whereof the dreamer never finds the keys;

To touch all themes of thought, nor weakly stop  
For doubt of truth, but let the buckets drop  
Deep down and bring the hidden waters up

For there was freedom in that wakening time

Of tender souls; to differ was not crime;  
The varying bells made up the perfect chime.

On lips unlike was laid the altar's coal,  
The white, clear light, tradition-colored, stole  
Through the stained oriel of each human soul.

Gathered from many sects, the Quaker brought  
His old beliefs, adjusting to the thought  
That moved his soul the creed his fathers taught.

One faith alone, so broad that all mankind  
Within themselves its secret witness find,  
The soul's communion with the Eternal Mind,

The Spirit's law, the Inward Rule and Guide,  
Scholar and peasant, lord and serf, allied,  
The polished Penn and Cromwell's Ironside.

As still in Hemskerck's Quaker Meeting, face  
By face in Flemish detail, we may trace  
How loose-mouthed boor and fine ancestral grace

Sat in close contrast,-the clipt-headed churl,  
Broad market-dame, and simple serving-girl  
By skirt of silk and periwig in curl

For soul touched soul; the spiritual treasure-trove  
Made all men equal, none could rise above  
Nor sink below that level of God's love.

So, with his rustic neighbors sitting down,  
The homespun frock beside the scholar's gown,  
Pastorius to the manners of the town

Added the freedom of the woods, and sought  
The bookless wisdom by experience taught,  
And learned to love his new-found home, while not

Forgetful of the old; the seasons went  
Their rounds, and somewhat to his spirit lent  
Of their own calm and measureless content.

Glad even to tears, he heard the robin sing  
His song of welcome to the Western spring,  
And bluebird borrowing from the sky his wing.

And when the miracle of autumn came,  
And all the woods with many-colored flame  
Of splendor, making summer's greenness tame,

Burned, unconsumed, a voice without a sound  
Spake to him from each kindled bush around,  
And made the strange, new landscape holy ground

And when the bitter north-wind, keen and swift,  
Swept the white street and piled the dooryard drift,  
He exercised, as Friends might say, his gift

Of verse, Dutch, English, Latin, like the hash  
Of corn and beans in Indian succotash;  
Dull, doubtless, but with here and there a flash

Of wit and fine conceit,-the good man's play  
Of quiet fancies, meet to while away  
The slow hours measuring off an idle day.

At evening, while his wife put on her look  
Of love's endurance, from its niche he took  
The written pages of his ponderous book.

And read, in half the languages of man,  
His 'Rusca Apium,' which with bees began,  
And through the gamut of creation ran.

Or, now and then, the missive of some friend  
In gray Altorf or storied Nurnberg penned  
Dropped in upon him like a guest to spend

The night beneath his roof-tree. Mystical  
The fair Von Merlau spake as waters fall  
And voices sound in dreams, and yet withal

Human and sweet, as if each far, low tone,

Over the roses of her gardens blown  
Brought the warm sense of beauty all her own.

Wise Spener questioned what his friend could trace  
Of spiritual influx or of saving grace  
In the wild natures of the Indian race.

And learned Schurmburg, fain, at times, to look  
From Talmud, Koran, Veds, and Pentateuch,  
Sought out his pupil in his far-off nook,

To query with him of climatic change,  
Of bird, beast, reptile, in his forest range,  
Of flowers and fruits and simples new and strange.

And thus the Old and New World reached their hands  
Across the water, and the friendly lands  
Talked with each other from their severed strands.

Pastorius answered all: while seed and root  
Sent from his new home grew to flower and fruit  
Along the Rhine and at the Spessart's foot;

And, in return, the flowers his boyhood knew  
Smiled at his door, the same in form and hue,  
And on his vines the Rhenish clusters grew.

No idler he; whoever else might shirk,  
He set his hand to every honest work,-  
Farmer and teacher, court and meeting clerk.

Still on the town seal his device is found,  
Grapes, flax, and thread-spool on a trefoil ground,  
With 'Vinum, Linum et Textrinum' wound.

One house sufficed for gospel and for law,  
Where Paul and Grotius, Scripture text and saw,  
Assured the good, and held the rest in awe.

Whatever legal maze he wandered through,  
He kept the Sermon on the Mount in view,  
And justice always into mercy grew.

No whipping-post he needed, stocks, nor jail,  
Nor ducking-stool; the orchard-thief grew pale  
At his rebuke, the vixen ceased to rail,

The usurer's grasp released the forfeit land;  
The slanderer faltered at the witness-stand,  
And all men took his counsel for command.

Was it caressing air, the brooding love  
Of tenderer skies than German land knew of,  
Green calm below, blue quietness above,

Still flow of water, deep repose of wood  
That, with a sense of loving Fatherhood  
And childlike trust in the Eternal Good,

Softened all hearts, and dulled the edge of hate,  
Hushed strife, and taught impatient zeal to wait  
The slow assurance of the better state?

Who knows what goadings in their sterner way  
O'er jagged ice, relieved by granite gray,  
Blew round the men of Massachusetts Bay?

What hate of heresy the east-wind woke?  
What hints of pitiless power and terror spoke  
In waves that on their iron coast-line broke?

Be it as it may: within the Land of Penn  
The sectary yielded to the citizen,  
And peaceful dwelt the many-creeded men.

Peace brooded over all. No trumpet stung  
The air to madness, and no steeple flung  
Alarums down from bells at midnight rung.

The land slept well. The Indian from his face  
Washed all his war-paint off, and in the place  
Of battle-marches sped the peaceful chase,

Or wrought for wages at the white man's side,-

Giving to kindness what his native pride  
And lazy freedom to all else denied.

And well the curious scholar loved the old  
Traditions that his swarthy neighbors told  
By wigwam-fires when nights were growing cold,

Discerned the fact round which their fancy drew  
Its dreams, and held their childish faith more true  
To God and man than half the creeds he knew.

The desert blossomed round him; wheat-fields rolled  
Beneath the warm wind waves of green and gold;  
The planted ear returned its hundred-fold.

Great clusters ripened in a warmer sun  
Than that which by the Rhine stream shines upon  
The purpling hillsides with low vines o'errun.

About each rustic porch the humming-bird  
Tried with light bill, that scarce a petal stirred,  
The Old World flowers to virgin soil transferred;

And the first-fruits of pear and apple, bending  
The young boughs down, their gold and russet blending,  
Made glad his heart, familiar odors lending

To the fresh fragrance of the birch and pine,  
Life-everlasting, bay, and eglantine,  
And all the subtle scents the woods combine.

Fair First-Day mornings, steeped in summer calm,  
Warm, tender, restful, sweet with woodland balm,  
Came to him, like some mother-hallowed psalm

To the tired grinder at the noisy wheel  
Of labor, winding off from memory's reel  
A golden thread of music. With no peal

Of bells to call them to the house of praise,  
The scattered settlers through green forest-ways  
Walked meeting-ward. In reverent amaze

The Indian trapper saw them, from the dim  
Shade of the alders on the rivulet's rim,  
Seek the Great Spirit's house to talk with Him.

There, through the gathered stillness multiplied  
And made intense by sympathy, outside  
The sparrows sang, and the gold-robin cried,

A-swing upon his elm. A faint perfume  
Breathed through the open windows of the room  
From locust-trees, heavy with clustered bloom.

Thither, perchance, sore-tried confessors came,  
Whose fervor jail nor pillory could tame,  
Proud of the cropped ears meant to be their shame,

Men who had eaten slavery's bitter bread  
In Indian isles; pale women who had bled  
Under the hangman's lash, and bravely said

God's message through their prison's iron bars;  
And gray old soldier-converts, seamed with scars  
From every stricken field of England's wars.

Lowly before the Unseen Presence knelt  
Each waiting heart, till haply some one felt  
On his moved lips the seal of silence melt.

Or, without spoken words, low breathings stole  
Of a diviner life from soul to soul,  
Baptizing in one tender thought the whole.

When shaken hands announced the meeting o'er,  
The friendly group still lingered at the door,  
Greeting, inquiring, sharing all the store

Of weekly tidings. Meanwhile youth and maid  
Down the green vistas of the woodland strayed,  
Whispered and smiled and oft their feet delayed.

Did the boy's whistle answer back the thrushes?

Did light girl laughter ripple through the bushes,  
As brooks make merry over roots and rushes?

Unvexed the sweet air seemed. Without a wound  
The ear of silence heard, and every sound  
Its place in nature's fine accordance found.

And solemn meeting, summer sky and wood,  
Old kindly faces, youth and maidenhood  
Seemed, like God's new creation, very good!

And, greeting all with quiet smile and word,  
Pastorius went his way. The unscared bird  
Sang at his side; scarcely the squirrel stirred

At his hushed footstep on the mossy sod;  
And, wheresoe'er the good man looked or trod,  
He felt the peace of nature and of God.

His social life wore no ascetic form,  
He loved all beauty, without fear of harm,  
And in his veins his Teuton blood ran warm.

Strict to himself, of other men no spy,  
He made his own no circuit-judge to try  
The freer conscience of his neighbors by.

With love rebuking, by his life alone,  
Gracious and sweet, the better way was shown,  
The joy of one, who, seeking not his own,

And faithful to all scruples, finds at last  
The thorns and shards of duty overpast,  
And daily life, beyond his hope's forecast,

Pleasant and beautiful with sight and sound,  
And flowers upspringing in its narrow round,  
And all his days with quiet gladness crowned.

He sang not; but, if sometimes tempted strong,  
He hummed what seemed like Altorf's Burschen-song;  
His good wife smiled, and did not count it wrong.

For well he loved his boyhood's brother band;  
His Memory, while he trod the New World's strand,  
A double-ganger walked the Fatherland

If, when on frosty Christmas eves the light  
Shone on his quiet hearth, he missed the sight  
Of Yule-log, Tree, and Christ-child all in white;

And closed his eyes, and listened to the sweet  
Old wait-songs sounding down his native street,  
And watched again the dancers' mingling feet;

Yet not the less, when once the vision passed,  
He held the plain and sober maxims fast  
Of the dear Friends with whom his lot was cast.

Still all attuned to nature's melodies,  
He loved the bird's song in his dooryard trees,  
And the low hum of home-returning bees;

The blossomed flax, the tulip-trees in bloom  
Down the long street, the beauty and perfume  
Of apple-boughs, the mingling light and gloom

Of Sommerhausen's woodlands, woven through  
With sun-threads; and the music the wind drew,  
Mournful and sweet, from leaves it overblew.

And evermore, beneath this outward sense,  
And through the common sequence of events,  
He felt the guiding hand of Providence

Reach out of space. A Voice spake in his ear,  
And to all other voices far and near  
Died at that whisper, full of meanings clear.

The Light of Life shone round him; one by one  
The wandering lights, that all-misleading run,  
Went out like candles paling in the sun.

That Light he followed, step by step, where'er

It led, as in the vision of the seer  
The wheels moved as the spirit in the clear

And terrible crystal moved, with all their eyes  
Watching the living splendor sink or rise,  
Its will their will, knowing no otherwise.

Within himself he found the law of right,  
He walked by faith and not the letter's sight,  
And read his Bible by the Inward Light.

And if sometimes the slaves of form and rule,  
Frozen in their creeds like fish in winter's pool,  
Tried the large tolerance of his liberal school,

His door was free to men of every name,  
He welcomed all the seeking souls who came,  
And no man's faith he made a cause of blame.

But best he loved in leisure hours to see  
His own dear Friends sit by him knee to knee,  
In social converse, genial, frank, and free.

There sometimes silence (it were hard to tell  
Who owned it first) upon the circle fell,  
Hushed Anna's busy wheel, and laid its spell

On the black boy who grimaced by the hearth,  
To solemnize his shining face of mirth;  
Only the old clock ticked amidst the dearth

Of sound; nor eye was raised nor hand was stirred  
In that soul-sabbath, till at last some word  
Of tender counsel or low prayer was heard.

Then guests, who lingered but farewell to say  
And take love's message, went their homeward way;  
So passed in peace the guileless Quaker's day.

His was the Christian's unsung Age of Gold,  
A truer idyl than the bards have told  
Of Arno's banks or Arcady of old.

Where still the Friends their place of burial keep,  
And century-rooted mosses o'er it creep,  
The Nurnberg scholar and his helpmeet sleep.

And Anna's aloe? If it flowered at last  
In Bartram's garden, did John Woolman cast  
A glance upon it as he meekly passed?

And did a secret sympathy possess  
That tender soul, and for the slave's redress  
Lend hope, strength, patience? It were vain to guess.

Nay, were the plant itself but mythical,  
Set in the fresco of tradition's wall  
Like Jotham's bramble, mattereth not at all.

Enough to know that, through the winter's frost  
And summer's heat, no seed of truth is lost,  
And every duty pays at last its cost.

For, ere Pastorius left the sun and air,  
God sent the answer to his life-long prayer;  
The child was born beside the Delaware,

Who, in the power a holy purpose lends,  
Guided his people unto nobler ends,  
And left them worthier of the name of Friends.

And to! the fulness of the time has come,  
And over all the exile's Western home,  
From sea to sea the flowers of freedom bloom!

And joy-bells ring, and silver trumpets blow;  
But not for thee, Pastorius! Even so  
The world forgets, but the wise angels know.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pine Tree

LIFT again the stately emblem on the Bay State's rusted shield,  
Give to Northern winds the Pine-Tree on our banner's tattered field.  
Sons of men who sat in council with their Bibles round the board,  
Answering England's royal missive with a firm, 'Thus saith the Lord!'  
Rise again for home and freedom! set the battle in array!  
What the fathers did of old time we their sons must do to-day.  
Tell us not of banks and tariffs, cease your paltry pedler cries;  
Shall the good State sink her honor that your gambling stocks may rise?  
Would ye barter man for cotton? That your gains may sum up higher,  
Must we kiss the feet of Moloch, pass our children through the fire?  
Is the dollar only real? God and truth and right a dream?  
Weighed against your lying ledgers must our manhood kick the beam?  
O my God! for that free spirit, which of old in Boston town  
Smote the Province House with terror, struck the crest of Andros down!  
For another strong-voiced Adams in the city's streets to cry,  
'Up for God and Massachusetts! Set your feet on Mammon's lie!  
Perish banks and perish traffic, spin your cotton's latest pound,  
But in Heaven's name keep your honor, keep the heart o' the Bay State sound!  
Where's the man for Massachusetts! Where's the voice to speak her free?  
Where's the hand to light up bonfires from her mountains to the sea?  
Beats her Pilgrim pulse no longer? Sits she dumb in her despair?  
Has she none to break the silence? Has she none to do and dare?  
O my God! for one right worthy to lift up her rushed shield,  
And to plant again the Pine-Tree in her banner's tattered field!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pipes At Lucknow

Pipes of the misty moorlands,  
Voice of the glens and hills;  
The droning of the torrents,  
The treble of the rills!  
Not the braes of bloom and heather,  
Nor the mountains dark with rain,  
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,  
Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,  
And plaided mountaineer, -  
To the cottage and the castle  
The Scottish pipes are dear; -  
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch  
O'er mountain, loch, and glade;  
But the sweetest of all music  
The pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger  
Louder yelled, and nearer crept;  
Round and round the jungle-serpent  
Near and nearer circles swept.  
'Pray for rescue, wives and mothers, -  
Pray to-day!' the soldier said;  
'To-morrow, death's between us  
And the wrong and shame we dread.'

Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,  
Till their hope became despair;  
And the sobs of low bewailing  
Filled the pauses of their prayer.  
Then up spake a Scottish maiden.  
With her ear unto the ground:  
'Dinna ye hear it? - dinna ye hear it?  
The pipes o' Havelock sound!'

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;  
Hushed the wife her little ones;  
Alone they heard the drum-roll

And the roar of Sepoy guns.  
But to sounds of home and childhood  
The Highland ear was true; -  
As her mother's cradle-crooning  
The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music  
Through the vision of the seer,  
More of feeling than of hearing,  
Of the heart than of the ear,  
She knew the droning pibroch,  
She knew the Campbell's call:  
'Hark! hear ye no MacGregor's,  
The grandest o' them all!'

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,  
And they caught the sound at last;  
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee  
Rose and fell the piper's blast!  
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving  
Mingled woman's voice and man's;  
'God be praised! - the march of Havelock!  
The piping of the clans!'

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,  
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,  
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,  
Stinging all the air to life.  
But when the far-off dust-cloud  
To plaided legions grew,  
Full tenderly and blithesomely  
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow.  
Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,  
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,  
The air of Auld Lang Syne.  
O'er the cruel roll of war-drums  
Rose that sweet and homelike strain;  
And the tartan clove the turban,  
As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper  
And plaided mountaineer, -  
To the cottage and the castle  
The piper's song is dear.  
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch  
O'er mountain, glen, and glade;  
But the sweetest of all music  
The pipes at Lucknow played!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Poet And The Children

LONGFELLOW.

WITH a glory of winter sunshine  
Over his locks of gray,  
In the old historic mansion  
He sat on his last birthday;

With his books and his pleasant pictures,  
And his household and his kin,  
While a sound as of myriads singing  
From far and near stole in.

It came from his own fair city,  
From the prairie's boundless plain,  
From the Golden Gate of sunset,  
And the cedarn woods of Maine.

And his heart grew warm within him,  
And his moistening eyes grew dim,  
For he knew that his country's children  
Were singing the songs of him,

The lays of his life's glad morning,  
The psalms of his evening time,  
Whose echoes shall float forever  
On the winds of every clime.

All their beautiful consolations,  
Sent forth like birds of cheer,  
Came flocking back to his windows,  
And sang in the Poet's ear.

Grateful, but solemn and tender,  
The music rose and fell  
With a joy akin to sadness  
And a greeting like farewell.

With a sense of awe he listened  
To the voices sweet and young;

The last of earth and the first of heaven  
Seemed in the songs they sung.

And waiting a little longer  
For the wonderful change to come,  
He heard the Summoning Angel,  
Who calls God's children home!

And to him in a holier welcome  
Was the mystical meaning given  
Of the words of the blessed Master  
'Of such is the kingdom of heaven!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Poor Voter On Election Day

THE proudest now is but my peer,  
The highest not more high;  
To-day, of all the weary year,  
A king of men am I.  
To-day, alike are great and small,  
The nameless and the known;  
My palace is the people's hall,  
The ballot-box my throne!  
Who serves to-day upon the list  
Beside the served shall stand;  
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,  
The gloved and dainty hand!  
The rich is level with the poor,  
The weak is strong to-day;  
And sleekest broadcloth counts no more  
Than homespun frock of gray.  
To-day let pomp and vain pretence  
My stubborn right abide;  
I set a plain man's common sense  
Against the pedant's pride.  
To-day shall simple manhood try  
The strength of gold and land;  
The wide world has not wealth to buy  
The power in my right hand!  
While there's a grief to seek redress,  
Or balance to adjust,  
Where weighs our living manhood less  
Than Mammon's vilest dust, —  
While there's a right to need my vote,  
A wrong to sweep away,  
Up! clouted knee and ragged coat!  
A man's a man to-day!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Prayer Of Agassiz

On the isle of Penikese,  
Ringed about by sapphire seas,  
Fanned by breezes salt and cool,  
Stood the Master with his school.  
Over sails that not in vain  
Wooed the west-wind's steady strain,  
Line of coast that low and far  
Stretched its undulating bar,  
Wings aslant along the rim  
Of the waves they stooped to skim,  
Rock and isle and glistening bay,  
Fell the beautiful white day.

Said the Master to the youth  
'We have come in search of truth,  
Trying with uncertain key  
Door by door of mystery;  
We are reaching, through His laws,  
To the garment-hem of Cause,  
Him, the endless, unbegun,  
The Unnamable, the One  
Light of all our light the Source,  
Life of life, and Force of force.  
As with fingers of the blind,  
We are groping here to find  
What the hieroglyphics mean  
Of the Unseen in the seen,  
What the Thought which underlies  
Nature's masking and disguise,  
What it is that hides beneath  
Blight and bloom and birth and death.  
By past efforts unavailing,  
Doubt and error, loss and failing,  
Of our weakness made aware,  
On the threshold of our task  
Let us light and guidance ask,  
Let us pause in silent prayer!'

Then the Master in his place

Bowed his head a little space,  
And the leaves by soft airs stirred,  
Lapse of wave and cry of bird,  
Left the solemn hush unbroken  
Of that wordless prayer unspoken,  
While its wish, on earth unsaid,  
Rose to heaven interpreted.  
As, in life's best hours, we hear  
By the spirit's finer ear  
His low voice within us, thus  
The All-Father heareth us;  
And His holy ear we pain  
With our noisy words and vain.  
Not for Him our violence  
Storming at the gates of sense,  
His the primal language, His  
The eternal silences!

Even the careless heart was moved,  
And the doubting gave assent,  
With a gesture reverent,  
To the Master well-beloved.  
As thin mists are glorified  
By the light they cannot hide,  
All who gazed upon him saw,  
Through its veil of tender awe,  
How his face was still uplit  
By the old sweet look of it.  
Hopeful, trustful, full of cheer,  
And the love that casts out fear.  
Who the secret may declare  
Of that brief, unuttered prayer?  
Did the shade before him come  
Of th' inevitable doom,  
Of the end of earth so near,  
And Eternity's new year?

In the lap of sheltering seas  
Rests the isle of Penikese;  
But the lord of the domain  
Comes not to his own again  
Where the eyes that follow fail,

On a vaster sea his sail  
Drifts beyond our beck and hail.  
Other lips within its bound  
Shall the laws of life expound;  
Other eyes from rock and shell  
Read the world's old riddles well  
But when breezes light and bland  
Blow from Summer's blossomed land,  
When the air is glad with wings,  
And the blithe song-sparrow sings,  
Many an eye with his still face  
Shall the living ones displace,  
Many an ear the word shall seek  
He alone could fitly speak.  
And one name forevermore  
Shall be uttered o'er and o'er  
By the waves that kiss the shore,  
By the curlew's whistle sent  
Down the cool, sea-scented air;  
In all voices known to her,  
Nature owns her worshipper,  
Half in triumph, half lament.  
Thither Love shall tearful turn,  
Friendship pause uncovered there,  
And the wisest reverence learn  
From the Master's silent prayer.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Prayer-Seeker

Along the aisle where prayer was made,  
A woman, all in black arrayed,  
Close-veiled, between the kneeling host,  
With gliding motion of a ghost,  
Passed to the desk, and laid thereon  
A scroll which bore these words alone,  
\_Pray for me\_!

Back from the place of worshipping  
She glided like a guilty thing  
The rustle of her draperies, stirred  
By hurrying feet, alone was heard;  
While, full of awe, the preacher read,  
As out into the dark she sped:  
'\_Pray for me\_!'

Back to the night from whence she came,  
To unimagined grief or shame!  
Across the threshold of that door  
None knew the burden that she bore;  
Alone she left the written scroll,  
The legend of a troubled soul,--  
\_Pray for me\_!

Glide on, poor ghost of woe or sin!  
Thou leav'st a common need within;  
Each bears, like thee, some nameless weight,  
Some misery inarticulate,  
Some secret sin, some shrouded dread,  
Some household sorrow all unsaid.  
\_Pray for us\_!

Pass on! The type of all thou art,  
Sad witness to the common heart!  
With face in veil and seal on lip,  
In mute and strange companionship,  
Like thee we wander to and fro,  
Dumbly imploring as we go  
\_Pray for us\_!

Ah, who shall pray, since he who pleads  
Our want perchance hath greater needs?  
Yet they who make their loss the gain  
Of others shall not ask in vain,  
And Heaven bends low to hear the prayer  
Of love from lips of self-despair  
\_Pray for us\_!

In vain remorse and fear and hate  
Beat with bruised bands against a fate  
Whose walls of iron only move  
And open to the touch of love.  
He only feels his burdens fall  
Who, taught by suffering, pities all.  
\_Pray for us\_!

He prayeth best who leaves unguessed  
The mystery of another's breast.  
Why cheeks grow pale, why eyes o'erflow,  
Or heads are white, thou need'st not know.  
Enough to note by many a sign  
That every heart hath needs like thine.  
\_Pray for us\_!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Preacher

Its windows flashing to the sky,  
Beneath a thousand roofs of brown,  
Far down the vale, my friend and I  
Beheld the old and quiet town;  
The ghostly sails that out at sea  
Flapped their white wings of mystery;  
The beaches glimmering in the sun,  
And the low wooded capes that run  
Into the sea-mist north and south;  
The sand-bluffs at the river's mouth;  
The swinging chain-bridge, and, afar,  
The foam-line of the harbor-bar.

Over the woods and meadow-lands  
A crimson-tinted shadow lay,  
Of clouds through which the setting day  
Flung a slant glory far away.  
It glittered on the wet sea-sands,  
It flamed upon the city's panes,  
Smote the white sails of ships that wore  
Outward or in, and glided o'er  
The steeples with their veering vanes!

Awhile my friend with rapid search  
O'erran the landscape. 'Yonder spire  
Over gray roofs, a shaft of fire;  
What is it, pray?'-'The Whitefield Church!  
Walled about by its basement stones,  
There rest the marvellous prophet's bones.'  
Then as our homeward way we walked,  
Of the great preacher's life we talked;  
And through the mystery of our theme  
The outward glory seemed to stream,  
And Nature's self interpreted  
The doubtful record of the dead;  
And every level beam that smote  
The sails upon the dark afloat  
A symbol of the light became,  
Which touched the shadows of our blame,

With tongues of Pentecostal flame.

Over the roofs of the pioneers  
Gathers the moss of a hundred years;  
On man and his works has passed the change  
Which needs must be in a century's range.  
The land lies open and warm in the sun,  
Anvils clamor and mill-wheels run,-  
Flocks on the hillsides, herds on the plain,  
The wilderness gladdened with fruit and grain!  
But the living faith of the settlers old  
A dead profession their children hold;  
To the lust of office and greed of trade  
A stepping-stone is the altar made.

The church, to place and power the door,  
Rebukes the sin of the world no more,  
Nor sees its Lord in the homeless poor.  
Everywhere is the grasping hand,  
And eager adding of land to land;  
And earth, which seemed to the fathers meant  
But as a pilgrim's wayside tent,-  
A nightly shelter to fold away  
When the Lord should call at the break of day,-  
Solid and steadfast seems to be,  
And Time has forgotten Eternity!

But fresh and green from the rotting roots  
Of primal forests the young growth shoots;  
From the death of the old the new proceeds,  
And the life of truth from the rot of creeds  
On the ladder of God, which upward leads,  
The steps of progress are human needs.  
For His judgments still are a mighty deep,  
And the eyes of His providence never sleep  
When the night is darkest He gives the morn;  
When the famine is sorest, the wine and corn!

In the church of the wilderness Edwards wrought,  
Shaping his creed at the forge of thought;  
And with Thor's own hammer welded and bent  
The iron links of his argument,

Which strove to grasp in its mighty span  
The purpose of God and the fate of man  
Yet faithful still, in his daily round  
To the weak, and the poor, and sin-sick found,  
The schoolman's lore and the casuist's art  
Drew warmth and life from his fervent heart.

Had he not seen in the solitudes  
Of his deep and dark Northampton woods  
A vision of love about him fall?  
Not the blinding splendor which fell on Saul,  
But the tenderer glory that rests on them  
Who walk in the New Jerusalem,  
Where never the sun nor moon are known,  
But the Lord and His love are the light alone  
And watching the sweet, still countenance  
Of the wife of his bosom rapt in trance,  
Had he not treasured each broken word  
Of the mystical wonder seen and heard;  
And loved the beautiful dreamer more  
That thus to the desert of earth she bore  
Clusters of Eshcol from Canaan's shore?

As the barley-winnower, holding with pain  
Aloft in waiting his chaff and grain,  
Joyfully welcomes the far-off breeze  
Sounding the pine-tree's slender keys,  
So he who had waited long to hear  
The sound of the Spirit drawing near,  
Like that which the son of Iddo heard  
When the feet of angels the myrtles stirred,  
Felt the answer of prayer, at last,  
As over his church the afflatus passed,  
Breaking its sleep as breezes break  
To sun-bright ripples a stagnant lake.

At first a tremor of silent fear,  
The creep of the flesh at danger near,  
A vague foreboding and discontent,  
Over the hearts of the people went.  
All nature warned in sounds and signs  
The wind in the tops of the forest pines

In the name of the Highest called to prayer,  
As the muezzin calls from the minaret stair.  
Through ceiled chambers of secret sin  
Sudden and strong the light shone in;  
A guilty sense of his neighbor's needs  
Startled the man of title-deeds;  
The trembling hand of the worldling shook  
The dust of years from the Holy Book;  
And the psalms of David, forgotten long,  
Took the place of the scoffer's song.

The impulse spread like the outward course  
Of waters moved by a central force;  
The tide of spiritual life rolled down  
From inland mountains to seaboard town.

Prepared and ready the altar stands  
Waiting the prophet's outstretched hands  
And prayer availing, to downward call  
The fiery answer in view of all.  
Hearts are like wax in the furnace; who  
Shall mould, and shape, and cast them anew?  
Lo! by the Merrimac Whitefield stands  
In the temple that never was made by hands,-  
Curtains of azure, and crystal wall,  
And dome of the sunshine over all-  
A homeless pilgrim, with dubious name  
Blown about on the winds of fame;  
Now as an angel of blessing classed,  
And now as a mad enthusiast.  
Called in his youth to sound and gauge  
The moral lapse of his race and age,  
And, sharp as truth, the contrast draw  
Of human frailty and perfect law;  
Possessed by the one dread thought that lent  
Its goad to his fiery temperament,  
Up and down the world he went,  
A John the Baptist crying, Repent!

No perfect whole can our nature make;  
Here or there the circle will break;  
The orb of life as it takes the light

On one side leaves the other in night.  
Never was saint so good and great  
As to give no chance at St. Peter's gate  
For the plea of the Devil's advocate.  
So, incomplete by his being's law,  
The marvellous preacher had his flaw;  
With step unequal, and lame with faults,  
His shade on the path of History halts.

Wisely and well said the Eastern bard  
Fear is easy, but love is hard,-  
Easy to glow with the Santon's rage,  
And walk on the Meccan pilgrimage;  
But he is greatest and best who can  
Worship Allah by loving man.  
Thus he,-to whom, in the painful stress  
Of zeal on fire from its own excess,  
Heaven seemed so vast and earth so small  
That man was nothing, since God was all,-  
Forgot, as the best at times have done,  
That the love of the Lord and of man are one.  
Little to him whose feet unshod  
The thorny path of the desert trod,  
Careless of pain, so it led to God,  
Seemed the hunger-pang and the poor man's wrong,  
The weak ones trodden beneath the strong.  
Should the worm be chooser?-the clay withstand  
The shaping will of the potter's hand?

In the Indian fable Arjoon hears  
The scorn of a god rebuke his fears  
'Spare thy pity!' Krishna saith;  
'Not in thy sword is the power of death!  
All is illusion,-loss but seems;  
Pleasure and pain are only dreams;  
Who deems he slayeth doth not kill;  
Who counts as slain is living still.  
Strike, nor fear thy blow is crime;  
Nothing dies but the cheats of time;  
Slain or slayer, small the odds  
To each, immortal as Indra's gods!'

So by Savannah's banks of shade,  
The stones of his mission the preacher laid  
On the heart of the negro crushed and rent,  
And made of his blood the wall's cement;  
Bade the slave-ship speed from coast to coast,  
Fanned by the wings of the Holy Ghost;  
And begged, for the love of Christ, the gold  
Coined from the hearts in its groaning hold.  
What could it matter, more or less  
Of stripes, and hunger, and weariness?  
Living or dying, bond or free,  
What was time to eternity?

Alas for the preacher's cherished schemes!  
Mission and church are now but dreams;  
Nor prayer nor fasting availed the plan  
To honor God through the wrong of man.  
Of all his labors no trace remains  
Save the bondman lifting his hands in chains.  
The woof he wove in the righteous warp  
Of freedom-loving Oglethorpe,  
Clothes with curses the goodly land,  
Changes its greenness and bloom to sand;  
And a century's lapse reveals once more  
The slave-ship stealing to Georgia's shore.  
Father of Light! how blind is he  
Who sprinkles the altar he rears to Thee  
With the blood and tears of humanity!

He erred: shall we count His gifts as naught?  
Was the work of God in him unwrought?  
The servant may through his deafness err,  
And blind may be God's messenger;  
But the Errand is sure they go upon,-  
The word is spoken, the deed is done.  
Was the Hebrew temple less fair and good  
That Solomon bowed to gods of wood?  
For his tempted heart and wandering feet,  
Were the songs of David less pure and sweet?  
So in light and shadow the preacher went,  
God's erring and human instrument;  
And the hearts of the people where he passed

Swayed as the reeds sway in the blast,  
Under the spell of a voice which took  
In its compass the flow of Siloa's brook,  
And the mystical chime of the bells of gold  
On the ephod's hem of the priest of old,-  
Now the roll of thunder, and now the awe  
Of the trumpet heard in the Mount of Law.

A solemn fear on the listening crowd  
Fell like the shadow of a cloud.  
The sailor reeling from out the ships  
Whose masts stood thick in the river-slips  
Felt the jest and the curse die on his lips.  
Listened the fisherman rude and hard,  
The calker rough from the builder's yard;  
The man of the market left his load,  
The teamster leaned on his bending goad,  
The maiden, and youth beside her, felt  
Their hearts in a closer union melt,  
And saw the flowers of their love in bloom  
Down the endless vistas of life to come.  
Old age sat feebly brushing away  
From his ears the scanty locks of gray;  
And careless boyhood, living the free  
Unconscious life of bird and tree,  
Suddenly wakened to a sense  
Of sin and its guilty consequence.  
It was as if an angel's voice  
Called the listeners up for their final choice;  
As if a strong hand rent apart  
The veils of sense from soul and heart,  
Showing in light ineffable  
The joys of heaven and woes of hell  
All about in the misty air  
The hills seemed kneeling in silent prayer;  
The rustle of leaves, the moaning sedge,  
The water's lap on its gravelled edge,  
The wailing pines, and, far and faint,  
The wood-dove's note of sad complaint,-  
To the solemn voice of the preacher lent  
An undertone as of low lament;  
And the note of the sea from its sand coast,

On the easterly wind, now heard, now lost,  
Seemed the murmurous sound of the judgment host.

Yet wise men doubted, and good men wept,  
As that storm of passion above them swept,  
And, comet-like, adding flame to flame,  
The priests of the new Evangel came,-  
Davenport, flashing upon the crowd,  
Charged like summer's electric cloud,  
Now holding the listener still as death  
With terrible warnings under breath,  
Now shouting for joy, as if he viewed  
The vision of Heaven's beatitude!  
And Celtic Tennant, his long coat bound  
Like a monk's with leathern girdle round,  
Wild with the toss of unshorn hair,  
And wringing of hands, and, eyes aglare,  
Groaning under the world's despair!  
Grave pastors, grieving their flocks to lose,  
Prophesied to the empty pews  
That gourds would wither, and mushrooms die,  
And noisiest fountains run soonest dry,  
Like the spring that gushed in Newbury Street,  
Under the tramp of the earthquake's feet,  
A silver shaft in the air and light,  
For a single day, then lost in night,  
Leaving only, its place to tell,  
Sandy fissure and sulphurous smell.  
With zeal wing-clipped and white-heat cool,  
Moved by the spirit in grooves of rule,  
No longer harried, and cropped, and fleeced,  
Flogged by sheriff and cursed by priest,  
But by wiser counsels left at ease  
To settle quietly on his lees,  
And, self-concentred, to count as done  
The work which his fathers well begun,  
In silent protest of letting alone,  
The Quaker kept the way of his own,-  
A non-conductor among the wires,  
With coat of asbestos proof to fires.  
And quite unable to mend his pace  
To catch the falling manna of grace,

He hugged the closer his little store  
Of faith, and silently prayed for more.  
And vague of creed and barren of rite,  
But holding, as in his Master's sight,  
Act and thought to the inner light,  
The round of his simple duties walked,  
And strove to live what the others talked.

And who shall marvel if evil went  
Step by step with the good intent,  
And with love and meekness, side by side,  
Lust of the flesh and spiritual pride?-  
That passionate longings and fancies vain  
Set the heart on fire and crazed the brain?  
That over the holy oracles  
Folly sported with cap and bells?  
That goodly women and learned men  
Marvelling told with tongue and pen  
How unweaned children chirped like birds  
Texts of Scripture and solemn words,  
Like the infant seers of the rocky glens  
In the Puy de Dome of wild Cevennes  
Or baby Lamas who pray and preach  
From Tartir cradles in Buddha's speech?

In the war which Truth or Freedom wages  
With impious fraud and the wrong of ages,  
Hate and malice and self-love mar  
The notes of triumph with painful jar,  
And the helping angels turn aside  
Their sorrowing faces the shame to bide.  
Never on custom's oiled grooves  
The world to a higher level moves,  
But grates and grinds with friction hard  
On granite boulder and flinty shard.  
The heart must bleed before it feels,  
The pool be troubled before it heals;  
Ever by losses the right must gain,  
Every good have its birth of pain;  
The active Virtues blush to find  
The Vices wearing their badge behind,  
And Graces and Charities feel the fire

Wherein the sins of the age expire;  
The fiend still rends as of old he rent  
The tortured body from which he went.

But Time tests all. In the over-drift  
And flow of the Nile, with its annual gift,  
Who cares for the Hadji's relics sunk?  
Who thinks of the drowned-out Coptic monk?  
The tide that loosens the temple's stones,  
And scatters the sacred ibis-bones,  
Drives away from the valley-land  
That Arab robber, the wandering sand,  
Moistens the fields that know no rain,  
Fringes the desert with belts of grain,  
And bread to the sower brings again.  
So the flood of emotion deep and strong  
Troubled the land as it swept along,  
But left a result of holier lives,  
Tenderer-mothers and worthier wives.  
The husband and father whose children fled  
And sad wife wept when his drunken tread  
Frightened peace from his roof-tree's shade,  
And a rock of offence his hearthstone made,  
In a strength that was not his own began  
To rise from the brute's to the plane of man.  
Old friends embraced, long held apart  
By evil counsel and pride of heart;  
And penitence saw through misty tears,  
In the bow of hope on its cloud of fears,  
The promise of Heaven's eternal years,-  
The peace of God for the world's annoy,-  
Beauty for ashes, and oil of joy  
Under the church of Federal Street,  
Under the tread of its Sabbath feet,  
Walled about by its basement stones,  
Lie the marvellous preacher's bones.  
No saintly honors to them are shown,  
No sign nor miracle have they known;  
But he who passes the ancient church  
Stops in the shade of its belfry-porch,  
And ponders the wonderful life of him  
Who lies at rest in that charnel dim.

Long shall the traveller strain his eye  
From the railroad car, as it plunges by,  
And the vanishing town behind him search  
For the slender spire of the Whitefield Church;  
And feel for one moment the ghosts of trade,  
And fashion, and folly, and pleasure laid,  
By the thought of that life of pure intent,  
That voice of warning yet eloquent,  
Of one on the errands of angels sent.  
And if where he labored the flood of sin  
Like a tide from the harbor-bar sets in,  
And over a life of tune and sense  
The church-spires lift their vain defence,  
As if to scatter the bolts of God  
With the points of Calvin's thunder-rod,-  
Still, as the gem of its civic crown,  
Precious beyond the world's renown,  
His memory hallows the ancient town!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pressed Gentian

The time of gifts has come again,  
And, on my northern window-pane,  
Outlined against the day's brief light,  
A Christmas token hangs in sight.

The wayside travellers, as they pass,  
Mark the gray disk of clouded glass;  
And the dull blankness seems, perchance,  
Folly to their wise ignorance.

They cannot from their outlook see  
The perfect grace it hath for me;  
For there the flower, whose fringes through  
The frosty breath of autumn blew,  
Turns from without its face of bloom  
To the warm tropic of my room,  
As fair as when beside its brook  
The hue of bending skies it took.

So from the trodden ways of earth,  
Seem some sweet souls who veil their worth,  
And offer to the careless glance  
The clouding gray of circumstance.  
They blossom best where hearth-fires burn,  
To loving eyes alone they turn  
The flowers of inward grace, that hide  
Their beauty from the world outside.

But deeper meanings come to me,  
My half-immortal flower, from thee!  
Man judges from a partial view,  
None ever yet his brother knew;  
The Eternal Eye that sees the whole  
May better read the darkened soul,  
And find, to outward sense denied,  
The flower upon its inmost side

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Prisoner For Debt

LOOK on him! through his dungeon grate,  
Feebly and cold, the morning light  
Comes stealing round him, dim and late,  
As if it loathed the sight.  
Reclining on his strawy bed,  
His hand upholds his drooping head;  
His bloodless cheek is seamed and hard,  
Unshorn his gray, neglected beard;  
And o'er his bony fingers flow  
His long, dishevelled locks of snow.  
No grateful fire before him glows,  
And yet the winter's breath is chill;  
And o'er his half-clad person goes  
The frequent ague thrill!  
Silent, save ever and anon,  
A sound, half murmur and half groan,  
Forces apart the painful grip  
Of the old sufferer's bearded lip;  
Oh, sad and crushing is the fate  
Of old age chained and desolate!  
Just God! why lies that old man there?  
A murderer shares his prison bed,  
Whose eyeballs, through his horrid hair,  
Gleam on him, fierce and red;  
And the rude oath and heartless jeer  
Fall ever on his loathing ear,  
And, or in wakefulness or sleep,  
Nerve, flesh, and pulses thrill and creep  
Whene'er that ruffian's tossing limb,  
Crimson with murder, touches him!  
What has the gray-haired prisoner done?  
Has murder stained his hands with gore?  
Not so; his crime's a fouler one;  
God made the old man poor!  
For this he shares a felon's cell,  
The fittest earthly type of hell!  
For this, the boon for which he poured  
His young blood on the invader's sword,  
And counted light the fearful cost;

His blood-gained liberty is lost!  
And so, for such a place of rest,  
Old prisoner, dropped thy blood as rain  
On Concord's field, and Bunker's crest,  
And Saratoga's plain?  
Look forth, thou man of many scars,  
Through thy dim dungeon's iron bars;  
It must be joy, in sooth, to see  
Yon monument upreared to thee;  
Piled granite and a prison cell, —  
The land repays thy service well!  
Go, ring the bells and fire the guns,  
And fling the starry banner out;  
Shout 'Freedom!' till your lisping ones  
Give back their cradle-shout;  
Let boastful eloquence declaim  
Of honor, liberty, and fame;  
Still let the poet's strain be heard,  
With glory for each second word,  
And everything with breath agree  
To praise 'our glorious liberty!'  
But when the patron cannon jars  
That prison's cold and gloomy wall,  
And through its grates the stripes and stars  
Rise on the wind, and fall,  
Think ye that prisoner's aged ear  
Rejoices in the general cheer?  
Think ye his dim and failing eye  
Is kindled at your pageantry?  
Sorrowing of soul, and chained of limb,  
What is your carnival to him?  
Down with the law that binds him thus!  
Unworthy freemen, let it find  
No refuge from the withering curse  
Of God and human-kind!  
Open the prison's living tomb,  
And usher from its brooding gloom  
The victims of your savage code  
To the free sun and air of God;  
No longer dare as crime to brand  
The chastening of the Almighty's hand.



# The Prisoners Of Naples

I HAVE been thinking of the victims bound  
In Naples, dying for the lack of air  
And sunshine, in their close, damp cells of pain,  
Where hope is not, and innocence in vain  
Appeals against the torture and the chain!  
Unfortunates! whose crime it was to share  
Our common love of freedom, and to dare,  
In its behalf, Rome's harlot triple-crowned,  
And her base pander, the most hateful thing  
Who upon Christian or on Pagan ground  
Makes vile the old heroic name of king.  
O God most merciful! Father just and kind!  
Whom man hath bound let thy right hand unbind.  
Or, if thy purposes of good behind  
Their ills lie hidden, let the sufferers find  
Strong consolations; leave them not to doubt  
Thy providential care, nor yet without  
The hope which all thy attributes inspire,  
That not in vain the martyr's robe of fire  
Is worn, nor the sad prisoner's fretting chain;  
Since all who suffer for thy truth send forth,  
Electrical, with every throb of pain,  
Unquenchable sparks, thy own baptismal rain  
Of fire and spirit over all the earth,  
Making the dead in slavery live again.  
Let this great hope be with them, as they lie  
Shut from the light, the greenness, and the sky;  
From the cool waters and the pleasant breeze,  
The smell of flowers, and shade of summer trees;  
Bound with the felon lepers, whom disease  
And sins abhorred make loathsome; let them share  
Pellico's faith, Foresti's strength to bear  
Years of unutterable torment, stern and still,  
As the chained Titan victor through his will!  
Comfort them with thy future; let them see  
The day-dawn of Italian liberty;  
For that, with all good things, is hid with Thee,  
And, perfect in thy thought, awaits its time to be!  
I, who have spoken for freedom at the cost

Of some weak friendships, or some paltry prize  
Of name or place, and more than I have lost  
Have gained in wider reach of sympathies,  
And free communion with the good and wise;  
May God forbid that I should ever boast  
Such easy self-denial, or repine  
That the strong pulse of health no more is mine;  
That, overworn at noonday, I must yield  
To other hands the gleaning of the field;  
A tired on-looker through the day's decline.  
For blest beyond deserving still, and knowing  
That kindly Providence its care is showing  
In the withdrawal as in the bestowing,  
Scarcely I dare for more or less to pray.  
Beautiful yet for me this autumn day  
Melts on its sunset hills; and, far away,  
For me the Ocean lifts its solemn psalm,  
To me the pine-woods whisper; and for me  
Yon river, winding through its vales of calm,  
By greenest banks, with asters purple-starred,  
And gentian bloom and golden-rod made gay,  
Flows down in silent gladness to the sea,  
Like a pure spirit to its great reward!  
Nor lack I friends, long-tried and near and dear,  
Whose love is round me like this atmosphere,  
Warm, soft, and golden. For such gifts to me  
What shall I render, O my God, to thee?  
Let me not dwell upon my lighter share  
Of pain and ill that human life must bear;  
Save me from selfish pining; let my heart,  
Drawn from itself in sympathy, forget  
The bitter longings of a vain regret,  
The anguish of its own peculiar smart.  
Remembering others, as I have to-day,  
In their great sorrows, let me live always  
Not for myself alone, but have a part,  
Such as a frail and erring spirit may,  
In love which is of Thee, and which indeed Thou art!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Problem

I.

NOT without envy Wealth at times must look  
On their brown strength who wield the reaping-hook.'  
And scythe, or at the forge-fire shape the plough  
Or the steel harness of the steeds of steam;  
All who, by skill and patience, anyhow  
Make service noble, and the earth redeem  
From savageness. By kingly accolade  
Than theirs was never worthier knighthood made.  
Well for them, if, while demagogues their vain  
And evil counsels proffer, they maintain  
Their honest manhood unseduced, and wage  
No war with Labor's right to Labor's gain  
Of sweet home-comfort, rest of hand and brain,  
And softer pillow for the head of Age.

II.

And well for Gain if it ungrudging yields  
Labor its just demand; and well for Ease  
If in the uses of its own, it sees  
No wrong to him who tills its pleasant fields  
And spreads the table of its luxuries.  
The interests of the rich man and the poor  
Are one and same, inseparable evermore;  
And, when scant wage or labor fail to give  
Food, shelter, raiment, wherewithal to live,  
Need has its rights, necessity its claim.  
Yea, even self-wrought misery and shame  
Test well the charity suffering long and kind.  
The home-pressed question of the age can find  
No answer in the catch-words of the blind  
Leaders of blind. Solution there is none  
Save in the Golden Rule of Christ alone.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Proclamation

SAINT PATRICK, slave to Milcho of the herds  
Of Ballymena, wakened with these words:  
'Arise, and flee  
Out from the land of bondage, and be free!' Glad as a soul in pain, who hears from heaven  
The angels singing of his sins forgiven,  
And, wondering, sees  
His prison opening to their golden keys,  
He rose a man who laid him down a slave,  
Shook from his locks the ashes of the grave,  
And outward trod  
Into the glorious liberty of God.  
He east the symbols of his shame away;  
And, passing where the sleeping Milcho lay,  
Though back and limb  
Smarted with wrong, he prayed, 'God pardon him!' So went he forth; but in God's time he came  
To light on Uilline's hills a holy flame;  
And, dying, gave  
The land a saint that lost him as a slave.  
O dark, sad millions, patiently and dumb  
Waiting for God, your hour at last has come,  
And freedom's song  
Breaks the long silence of your night of wrong!  
Arise and flee! shake off the vile restraint  
Of ages; but, like Ballymena's saint,  
The oppressor spare,  
Heap only on his head the coals of prayer.  
Go forth, like him! like him return again,  
To bless the land whereon in bitter pain  
Ye toiled at first,  
And heal with freedom what your slavery cursed.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Prophecy Of Samuel Sewall

Up and down the village streets  
Strange are the forms my fancy meets,  
For the thoughts and things of to-day are hid,  
And through the veil of a closed lid  
The ancient worthies I see again  
I hear the tap of the elder's cane,  
And his awful periwig I see,  
And the silver buckles of shoe and knee.  
Stately and slow, with thoughtful air,  
His black cap hiding his whitened hair,  
Walks the Judge of the great Assize,  
Samuel Sewall the good and wise.  
His face with lines of firmness wrought,  
He wears the look of a man unbought,  
Who swears to his hurt and changes not;  
Yet, touched and softened nevertheless  
With the grace of Christian gentleness,  
The face that a child would climb to kiss!  
True and tender and brave and just,  
That man might honor and woman trust.

Touching and sad, a tale is told,  
Like a penitent hymn of the Psalmist old,  
Of the fast which the good man lifelong kept to  
With a haunting sorrow that never slept,  
As the circling year brought round the time  
Of an error that left the sting of crime,  
When he sat on the bench of the witchcraft courts,  
With the laws of Moses and Hale's Reports,  
And spake, in the name of both, the word  
That gave the witch's neck to the cord,  
And piled the oaken planks that pressed  
The feeble life from the warlock's breast!  
All the day long, from dawn to dawn,  
His door was bolted, his curtain drawn;  
No foot on his silent threshold trod,  
No eye looked on him save that of God,  
As he baffled the ghosts of the dead with charms  
Of penitent tears, and prayers, and psalms,

And, with precious proofs from the sacred word  
Of the boundless pity and love of the Lord,  
His faith confirmed and his trust renewed  
That the sin of his ignorance, sorely rued,  
Might be washed away in the mingled flood  
Of his human sorrow and Christ's dear blood!

Green forever the memory be  
Of the Judge of the old Theocracy,  
Whom even his errors glorified,  
Like a far-seen, sunlit mountain-side  
By the cloudy shadows which o'er it glide I  
Honor and praise to the Puritan  
Who the halting step of his age outran,  
And, seeing the infinite worth of man  
In the priceless gift the Father gave,  
In the infinite love that stooped to save,  
Dared not brand his brother a slave  
'Who doth such wrong,' he was wont to say,  
In his own quaint, picture-loving way,  
'Flings up to Heaven a hand-grenade  
Which God shall cast down upon his head!'

Widely as heaven and hell, contrast  
That brave old jurist of the past  
And the cunning trickster and knave of courts  
Who the holy features of Truth distorts,  
Ruling as right the will of the strong,  
Poverty, crime, and weakness wrong;  
Wide-eared to power, to the wronged and weak  
Deaf as Egypt's gods of leek;  
Scoffing aside at party's nod  
Order of nature and law of God;  
For whose dabbled ermine respect were waste,  
Reverence folly, and awe misplaced;  
Justice of whom 't were vain to seek  
As from Koordish robber or Syrian Sheik!  
Oh, leave the wretch to his bribes and sins;  
Let him rot in the web of lies he spins!  
To the saintly soul of the early day,  
To the Christian judge, let us turn and say  
'Praise and thanks for an honest man!-

Glory to God for the Puritan!'

I see, far southward, this quiet day,  
The hills of Newbury rolling away,  
With the many tints of the season gay,  
Dreamily blending in autumn mist  
Crimson, and gold, and amethyst.  
Long and low, with dwarf trees crowned,  
Plum Island lies, like a whale aground,  
A stone's toss over the narrow sound.  
Inland, as far as the eye can go,  
The hills curve round like a bended bow;  
A silver arrow from out them sprung,  
I see the shine of the Quasycung;  
And, round and round, over valley and hill,  
Old roads winding, as old roads will,  
Here to a ferry, and there to a mill;  
And glimpses of chimneys and gabled eaves,  
Through green elm arches and maple leaves,-  
Old homesteads sacred to all that can  
Gladden or sadden the heart of man,  
Over whose thresholds of oak and stone  
Life and Death have come and gone  
There pictured tiles in the fireplace show,  
Great beams sag from the ceiling low,  
The dresser glitters with polished wares,  
The long clock ticks on the foot-worn stairs,  
And the low, broad chimney shows the crack  
By the earthquake made a century back.  
Up from their midst springs the village spire  
With the crest of its cock in the sun afire;  
Beyond are orchards and planting lands,  
And great salt marshes and glimmering sands,  
And, where north and south the coast-lines run,  
The blink of the sea in breeze and sun!

I see it all like a chart unrolled,  
But my thoughts are full of the past and old,  
I hear the tales of my boyhood told;  
And the shadows and shapes of early days  
Flit dimly by in the veiling haze,  
With measured movement and rhythmic chime

Weaving like shuttles my web of rhyme.  
I think of the old man wise and good  
Who once on yon misty hillsides stood,  
(A poet who never measured rhyme,  
A seer unknown to his dull-eared time,)  
And, propped on his staff of age, looked down,  
With his boyhood's love, on his native town,  
Where, written, as if on its hills and plains,  
His burden of prophecy yet remains,  
For the voices of wood, and wave, and wind  
To read in the ear of the musing mind:-

'As long as Plum Island, to guard the coast  
As God appointed, shall keep its post;  
As long as a salmon shall haunt the deep  
Of Merrimac River, or sturgeon leap;  
As long as pickerel swift and slim,  
Or red-backed perch, in Crane Pond swim;  
As long as the annual sea-fowl know  
Their time to come and their time to go;  
As long as cattle shall roam at will  
The green, grass meadows by Turkey Hill;  
As long as sheep shall look from the side  
Of Oldtown Hill on marishes wide,  
And Parker River, and salt-sea tide;  
As long as a wandering pigeon shall search  
The fields below from his white-oak perch,  
When the barley-harvest is ripe and shorn,  
And the dry husks fall from the standing corn;  
As long as Nature shall not grow old,  
Nor drop her work from her doting hold,  
And her care for the Indian corn forget,  
And the yellow rows in pairs to set;-  
So long shall Christians here be born,  
Grow up and ripen as God's sweet corn!-  
By the beak of bird, by the breath of frost,  
Shall never a holy ear be lost,  
But, husked by Death in the Planter's sight,  
Be sown again in the fields of light!'

The Island still is purple with plums,  
Up the river the salmon comes,

The sturgeon leaps, and the wild-fowl feeds  
On hillside berries and marish seeds,-  
All the beautiful signs remain,  
From spring-time sowing to autumn rain  
The good man's vision returns again!  
And let us hope, as well we can,  
That the Silent Angel who garners man  
May find some grain as of old lie found  
In the human cornfield ripe and sound,  
And the Lord of the Harvest deign to own  
The precious seed by the fathers sown!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Pumpkin

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

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

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

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

Then thanks for thy present! none sweeter or better  
E'er smoked from an oven or circled a platter!  
Fairer hands never wrought at a pastry more fine,

Brighter eyes never watched o'er its baking, than thine!  
And the prayer, which my mouth is too full to express,  
Swells my heart that thy shadow may never be less,  
That the days of thy lot may be lengthened below,  
And the fame of thy worth like a pumpkin-vine grow,  
And thy life be as sweet, and its last sunset sky  
Golden-tinted and fair as thy own Pumpkin pie!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Quaker Alumni

From the well-springs of Hudson, the sea-cliffs of Maine,  
Grave men, sober matrons, you gather again;  
And, with hearts warmer grown as your heads grow more cool,  
Play over the old game of going to school.

All your strifes and vexations, your whims and complaints,  
(You were not saints yourselves, if the children of saints!)  
All your petty self-seekings and rivalries done,  
Round the dear Alma Mater your hearts beat as one!

How widely soe'er you have strayed from the fold,  
Though your 'thee' has grown 'you,' and your drab blue and gold,  
To the old friendly speech and the garb's sober form,  
Like the heart of Argyle to the tartan, you warm.

But, the first greetings over, you glance round the hall;  
Your hearts call the roll, but they answer not all  
Through the turf green above them the dead cannot hear;  
Name by name, in the silence, falls sad as a tear!

In love, let us trust, they were summoned so soon  
From the morning of life, while we toil through its noon;  
They were frail like ourselves, they had needs like our own,  
And they rest as we rest in God's mercy alone.

Unchanged by our changes of spirit and frame,  
Past, now, and henceforward the Lord is the same;  
Though we sink in the darkness, His arms break our fall,  
And in death as in life, He is Father of all!

We are older: our footsteps, so light in the play  
Of the far-away school-time, move slower to-day;--  
Here a beard touched with frost, there a bald, shining crown,  
And beneath the cap's border gray mingles with brown.

But faith should be cheerful, and trust should be glad,  
And our follies and sins, not our years, make us sad.  
Should the heart closer shut as the bonnet grows prim,  
And the face grow in length as the hat grows in brim?

Life is brief, duty grave; but, with rain-folded wings,  
Of yesterday's sunshine the grateful heart sings;  
And we, of all others, have reason to pay  
The tribute of thanks, and rejoice on our way;

For the counsels that turned from the follies of youth;  
For the beauty of patience, the whiteness of truth;  
For the wounds of rebuke, when love tempered its edge;  
For the household's restraint, and the discipline's hedge;

For the lessons of kindness vouchsafed to the least  
Of the creatures of God, whether human or beast,  
Bringing hope to the poor, lending strength to the frail,  
In the lanes of the city, the slave-hut, and jail;

For a womanhood higher and holier, by all  
Her knowledge of good, than was Eve ere her fall,--  
Whose task-work of duty moves lightly as play,  
Serene as the moonlight and warm as the day;

And, yet more, for the faith which embraces the whole,  
Of the creeds of the ages the life and the soul,  
Wherein letter and spirit the same channel run,  
And man has not severed what God has made one!

For a sense of the Goodness revealed everywhere,  
As sunshine impartial, and free as the air;  
For a trust in humanity, Heathen or Jew,  
And a hope for all darkness the Light shineth through.

Who scoffs at our birthright?--the words of the seers,  
And the songs of the bards in the twilight of years,  
All the foregleams of wisdom in santon and sage,  
In prophet and priest, are our true heritage.

The Word which the reason of Plato discerned;  
The truth, as whose symbol the Mithra-fire burned;  
The soul of the world which the Stoic but guessed,  
In the Light Universal the Quaker confessed!

No honors of war to our worthies belong;

Their plain stem of life never flowered into song;  
But the fountains they opened still gush by the way,  
And the world for their healing is better to-day.

He who lies where the minster's groined arches curve down  
To the tomb-crowded transept of England's renown,  
The glorious essayist, by genius enthroned,  
Whose pen as a sceptre the Muses all owned,--

Who through the world's pantheon walked in his pride,  
Setting new statues up, thrusting old ones aside,  
And in fiction the pencils of history dipped,  
To gild o'er or blacken each saint in his crypt,--

How vainly he labored to sully with blame  
The white bust of Penn, in the niche of his fame!  
Self-will is self-wounding, perversity blind  
On himself fell the stain for the Quaker designed!

For the sake of his true-hearted father before him;  
For the sake of the dear Quaker mother that bore him;  
For the sake of his gifts, and the works that outlive him,  
And his brave words for freedom, we freely forgive him!

There are those who take note that our numbers are small,--  
New Gibbons who write our decline and our fall;  
But the Lord of the seed-field takes care of His own,  
And the world shall yet reap what our sowers have sown.

The last of the sect to his fathers may go,  
Leaving only his coat for some Barnum to show;  
But the truth will outlive him, and broaden with years,  
Till the false dies away, and the wrong disappears.

Nothing fails of its end. Out of sight sinks the stone,  
In the deep sea of time, but the circles sweep on,  
Till the low-rippled murmurs along the shores run,  
And the dark and dead waters leap glad in the sun.

Meanwhile shall we learn, in our ease, to forget  
To the martyrs of Truth and of Freedom our debt?--  
Hide their words out of sight, like the garb that they wore,

And for Barclay's Apology offer one more?

Shall we fawn round the priestcraft that glutted the shears,  
And festooned the stocks with our grandfathers' ears?  
Talk of Woolman's unsoundness? count Penn heterodox?  
And take Cotton Mather in place of George Fox?

Make our preachers war-chaplains? quote Scripture to take  
The hunted slave back, for Onesimus' sake?  
Go to burning church-candles, and chanting in choir,  
And on the old meeting-house stick up a spire?

No! the old paths we'll keep until better are shown,  
Credit good where we find it, abroad or our own;  
And while 'Lo here' and 'Lo there' the multitude call,  
Be true to ourselves, and do justice to all.

The good round about us we need not refuse,  
Nor talk of our Zion as if we were Jews;  
But why shirk the badge which our fathers have worn,  
Or beg the world's pardon for having been born?

We need not pray over the Pharisee's prayer,  
Nor claim that our wisdom is Benjamin's share;  
Truth to us and to others is equal and one  
Shall we bottle the free air, or hoard up the sun?

Well know we our birthright may serve but to show  
How the meanest of weeds in the richest soil grow;  
But we need not disparage the good which we hold;  
Though the vessels be earthen, the treasure is gold!

Enough and too much of the sect and the name.  
What matters our label, so truth be our aim?  
The creed may be wrong, but the life may be true,  
And hearts beat the same under drab coats or blue.

So the man be a man, let him worship, at will,  
In Jerusalem's courts, or on Gerizim's hill.  
When she makes up her jewels, what cares yon good town  
For the Baptist of Wayland, the Quaker of Brown?

And this green, favored island, so fresh and seablown,  
When she counts up the worthies her annals have known,  
Never waits for the pitiful gaugers of sect  
To measure her love, and mete out her respect.

Three shades at this moment seem walking her strand,  
Each with head halo-crowned, and with palms in his hand,--  
Wise Berkeley, grave Hopkins, and, smiling serene  
On prelate and puritan, Channing is seen.

One holy name bearing, no longer they need  
Credentials of party, and pass-words of creed  
The new song they sing hath a threefold accord,  
And they own one baptism, one faith, and one Lord!

But the golden sands run out: occasions like these  
Glide swift into shadow, like sails on the seas  
While we sport with the mosses and pebbles ashore,  
They lessen and fade, and we see them no more.

Forgive me, dear friends, if my vagrant thoughts seem  
Like a school-boy's who idles and plays with his theme.  
Forgive the light measure whose changes display  
The sunshine and rain of our brief April day.

There are moments in life when the lip and the eye  
Try the question of whether to smile or to cry;  
And scenes and reunions that prompt like our own  
The tender in feeling, the playful in tone.

I, who never sat down with the boys and the girls  
At the feet of your Slocums, and Cartlands, and Earles,--  
By courtesy only permitted to lay  
On your festival's altar my poor gift, to-day,--

I would joy in your joy: let me have a friend's part  
In the warmth of your welcome of hand and of heart,--  
On your play-ground of boyhood unbend the brow's care,  
And shift the old burdens our shoulders must bear.

Long live the good School! giving out year by year  
Recruits to true manhood and womanhood dear

Brave boys, modest maidens, in beauty sent forth,  
The living epistles and proof of its worth!

In and out let the young life as steadily flow  
As in broad Narragansett the tides come and go;  
And its sons and its daughters in prairie and town  
Remember its honor, and guard its renown.

Not vainly the gift of its founder was made;  
Not prayerless the stones of its corner were laid  
The blessing of Him whom in secret they sought  
Has owned the good work which the fathers have wrought.

To Him be the glory forever! We bear  
To the Lord of the Harvest our wheat with the tare.  
What we lack in our work may He find in our will,  
And winnow in mercy our good from the ill!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Quaker Of The Olden Time

THE Quaker of the olden time!  
How calm and firm and true,  
Unspotted by its wrong and crime,  
He walked the dark earth through.  
The lust of power, the love of gain,  
The thousand lures of sin  
Around him, had no power to stain  
The purity within.  
With that deep insight which detects  
All great things in the small,  
And knows how each man's life affects  
The spiritual life of all,  
He walked by faith and not by sight,  
By love and not by law;  
The presence of the wrong or right  
He rather felt than saw.  
He felt that wrong with wrong partakes,  
That nothing stands alone,  
That whoso gives the motive, makes  
His brother's sin his own.  
And, pausing not for doubtful choice  
Of evils great or small,  
He listened to that inward voice  
Which called away from all.  
O Spirit of that early day,  
So pure and strong and true,  
Be with us in the narrow way  
Our faithful fathers knew.  
Give strength the evil to forsake,  
The cross of Truth to bear,  
And love and reverent fear to make  
Our daily lives a prayer!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Ranger

ROBERT RAWLIN!--Frosts were falling  
When the ranger's horn was calling  
Through the woods to Canada.

Gone the winter's sleet and snowing,  
Gone the spring-time's bud and blowing,  
Gone the summer's harvest mowing,  
And again the fields are gray.  
Yet away, he's away!  
Faint and fainter hope is growing  
In the hearts that mourn his stay.

Where the lion, crouching high on  
Abraham's rock with teeth of iron,  
Glares o'er wood and wave away,  
Faintly thence, as pines far sighing,  
Or as thunder spent and dying,  
Come the challenge and replying,  
Come the sounds of flight and fray.  
Well-a-day! Hope and pray!  
Some are living, some are lying  
In their red graves far away.

Stragglers rangers, worn with dangers,  
Homeward faring, weary strangers  
Pass the farm-gate on their way;  
Tidings of the dead and living,  
Forest march and ambush, giving,  
Till the maidens leave their weaving,  
And the lads forget their play.  
'Still away, still away!'  
Sighs a sad one, sick with grieving,  
'Why does Robert still delay!'

Nowhere fairer, sweeter, rarer,  
Does the golden-locked fruit bearer  
Through his painted woodlands stray,  
Than where hillside oaks and beeches  
Overlook the long, blue reaches,

Silver coves and pebbled beaches,  
And green isles of Casco Bay;  
Nowhere day, for delay,  
With a tenderer look beseeches,  
'Let me with my charmed earth stay.'

On the grain-lands of the mainlands  
Stands the serried corn like train-bands,  
Plume and pennon rustling gay;  
Out at sea, the islands wooded,  
Silver birches, golden-hooded,  
Set with maples, crimson-blooded,  
White sea-foam and sand-hills gray,  
Stretch away, far away.  
Dim and dreamy, over-brooded  
By the hazy autumn day.

Gayly chattering to the clattering  
Of the brown nuts downward pattering,  
Leap the squirrels, red and gray.  
On the grass-land, on the fallow,  
Drop the apples, red and yellow;  
Drop the russet pears and mellow,  
Drop the red leaves all the day.  
And away, swift away,  
Sun and cloud, o'er hill and hollow  
Chasing, weave their web of play.

'Martha Mason, Martha Mason,  
Prithee tell us of the reason  
Why you mope at home to-day  
Surely smiling is not sinning;  
Leave, your quilling, leave your spinning;  
What is all your store of linen,  
If your heart is never gay?  
Come away, come away!  
Never yet did sad beginning  
Make the task of life a play.'

Overbending, till she's blending  
With the flaxen skein she's tending  
Pale brown tresses smoothed away

From her face of patient sorrow,  
Sits she, seeking but to borrow,  
From the trembling hope of morrow,  
Solace for the weary day.  
'Go your way, laugh and play;  
Unto Him who heeds the sparrow  
And the lily, let me pray.'

'With our rally, rings the valley,--  
Join us!' cried the blue-eyed Nelly;  
'Join us!' cried the laughing May,  
'To the beach we all are going,  
And, to save the task of rowing,  
West by north the wind is blowing,  
Blowing briskly down the bay  
Come away, come away!  
Time and tide are swiftly flowing,  
Let us take them while we may!

'Never tell us that you'll fail us,  
Where the purple beach-plum mellows  
On the bluffs so wild and gray.  
Hasten, for the oars are falling;  
Hark, our merry mates are calling;  
Time it is that we were all in,  
Singing tideward down the bay!  
'Nay, nay, let me stay;  
Sore and sad for Robert Rawlin  
Is my heart,' she said, 'to-day.'

'Vain your calling for Rob Rawlin  
Some red squaw his moose-meat's broiling,  
Or some French lass, singing gay;  
Just forget as he's forgetting;  
What avails a life of fretting?  
If some stars must needs be setting,  
Others rise as good as they.'  
'Cease, I pray; go your way!'  
Martha cries, her eyelids wetting;  
'Foul and false the words you say!'

'Martha Mason, hear to reason!--

Prithee, put a kinder face on!  
'Cease to vex me,' did she say;  
'Better at his side be lying,  
With the mournful pine-trees sighing,  
And the wild birds o'er us crying,  
Than to doubt like mine a prey;  
While away, far away,  
Turns my heart, forever trying  
Some new hope for each new day.

'When the shadows veil the meadows,  
And the sunset's golden ladders  
Sink from twilight's walls of gray,--  
From the window of my dreaming,  
I can see his sickle gleaming,  
Cheery-voiced, can hear him teaming  
Down the locust-shaded way;  
But away, swift away,  
Fades the fond, delusive seeming,  
And I kneel again to pray.

'When the growing dawn is showing,  
And the barn-yard cock is crowing,  
And the horned moon pales away  
From a dream of him awaking,  
Every sound my heart is making  
Seems a footstep of his taking;  
Then I hush the thought, and say,  
'Nay, nay, he's away!'  
Ah! my heart, my heart is breaking  
For the dear one far away.'

Look up, Martha! worn and swarthy,  
Glow a face of manhood worthy  
'Robert!' 'Martha!' all they say.  
O'er went wheel and reel together,  
Little cared the owner whither;  
Heart of lead is heart of feather,  
Noon of night is noon of day!  
Come away, come away!  
When such lovers meet each other,  
Why should prying idlers stay?

Quench the timber's fallen embers,  
Quench the red leaves in December's  
Hoary rime and chilly spray.

But the hearth shall kindle clearer,  
Household welcomes sound sincerer,  
Heart to loving heart draw nearer,  
When the bridal bells shall say:  
'Hope and pray, trust alway;  
Life is sweeter, love is dearer,  
For the trial and delay!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Red River Voyageur

Out and in the river is winding  
The links of its long, red chain,  
Through belts of dusky pine-land  
And gusty leagues of plain.

Only, at times, a smoke-wreath  
With the drifting cloud-rack joins,-  
The smoke of the hunting-lodges  
Of the wild Assiniboins.

Drearly blows the north-wind  
From the land of ice and snow;  
The eyes that look are weary,  
And heavy the hands that row.

And with one foot on the water,  
And one upon the shore,  
The Angel of Shadow gives warning  
That day shall be no more.

Is it the clang of wild-geese?  
Is it the Indian's yell,  
That lends to the voice of the north-wind  
The tones of a far-off bell?

The voyageur smiles as he listens  
To the sound that grows apace;  
Well he knows the vesper ringing  
Of the bells of St. Boniface.

The bells of the Roman Mission,  
That call from their turrets twain,  
To the boatman on the river,  
To the hunter on the plain!

Even so in our mortal journey  
The bitter north-winds blow,  
And thus upon life's Red River  
Our hearts, as oarsmen, row.

And when the Angel of Shadow  
Rests his feet on wave and shore,  
And our eyes grow dim with watching  
And our hearts faint at the oar,

Happy is he who heareth  
The signal of his release  
In the bells of the Holy City,  
The chimes of eternal peace!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Reformer

ALL grim and soiled and brown with tan,  
I saw a Strong One, in his wrath,  
Smiting the godless shrines of man  
Along his path.  
The Church, beneath her trembling dome,  
Essayed in vain her ghostly charm:  
Wealth shook within his gilded home  
With strange alarm.  
Fraud from his secret chambers fled  
Before the sunlight bursting in:  
Sloth drew her pillow o'er her head  
To drown the din.  
'Spare,' Art implored, 'yon holy pile;  
That grand, old, time-worn turret spare;'  
Meek Reverence, kneeling in the aisle,  
Cried out, 'Forbear!'  
Gray-bearded Use, who, deaf and blind,  
Groped for his old accustomed stone,  
Leaned on his staff, and wept to find  
His seat o'erthrown.  
Young Romance raised his dreamy eyes,  
O'erhung with paly locks of gold, —  
'Why smite,' he asked in sad surprise,  
'The fair, the old?'  
Yet louder rang the Strong One's stroke,  
Yet nearer flashed his axe's gleam;  
Shuddering and sick of heart I woke,  
As from a dream.  
I looked: aside the dust-cloud rolled,  
The Waster seemed the Builder too;  
Upspringing from the ruined Old  
I saw the New.  
'T was but the ruin of the bad, —  
The wasting of the wrong and ill;  
Whate'er of good the old time had  
Was living still.  
Calm grew the brows of him I feared;  
The frown which awed me passed away,  
And left behind a smile which cheered

Like breaking day.  
The grain grew green on battle-plains,  
O'er swarded war-mounds grazed the cow;  
The slave stood forging from his chains  
The spade and plough.  
Where frowned the fort, pavilions gay  
And cottage windows, flower-entwined,  
Looked out upon the peaceful bay  
And hills behind.  
Through vine-wreathed cups with wine once red,  
The lights on brimming crystal fell,  
Drawn, sparkling, from the rivulet head  
And mossy well.  
Through prison walls, like Heaven-sent hope,  
Fresh breezes blew, and sunbeams strayed,  
And with the idle gallows-rope  
The young child played.  
Where the doomed victim in his cell  
Had counted o'er the weary hours,  
Glad school-girls, answering to the bell,  
Came crowed with flowers.  
Grown wiser for the lesson given,  
I fear no longer, for I know  
That, where the share is deepest driven,  
The best fruits grow.  
The outworn rite, the old abuse,  
The pious fraud transparent grown,  
The good held captive in the use  
Of wrong alone, —  
These wait their doom, from that great law  
Which makes the past time serve to-day;  
And fresher life the world shall draw  
From their decay.  
Oh, backward-looking son of time!  
The new is old, the old is new,  
The cycle of a change sublime  
Still sweeping through.  
So wisely taught the Indian seer;  
Destroying Seva, forming Brahm,  
Who wake by turns Earth's love and fear,  
Are one, the same.  
Idly as thou, in that old day

Thou mournest, did thy sire repine;  
So, in his time, thy child grown gray  
Shall sigh for thine.  
But life shall on and upward go;  
Th' eternal step of Progress beats  
To that great anthem, calm and slow,  
Which God repeats.  
Take heart! the Waster builds again, —  
A charm'd life old Goodness hath;  
The tares may perish, but the grain  
Is not for death.  
God works in all things; all obey  
His first propulsion from the night:  
Wake thou and watch! the world is gray  
With morning light!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Relic

TOKEN Of friendship true and tried,  
From one whose fiery heart of youth  
With mine has beaten, side by side,  
For Liberty and Truth;  
With honest pride the gift I take,  
And prize it for the giver's sake.  
But not alone because it tells  
Of generous hand and heart sincere;  
Around that gift of friendship dwells  
A memory doubly dear;  
Earth's noblest aim, man's holiest thought,  
With that memorial frail inwrought!  
Pure thoughts and sweet like flowers unfold,  
And precious memories round it cling,  
Even as the Prophet's rod of old  
In beauty blossoming:  
And buds of feeling, pure and good,  
Spring from its cold unconscious wood.  
Relic of Freedom's shrine! a brand  
Plucked from its burning! let it be  
Dear as a jewel from the hand  
Of a lost friend to me!  
Flower of a perished garland left,  
Of life and beauty unbereft!  
Oh, if the young enthusiast bears,  
O'er weary waste and sea, the stone  
Which crumbled from the Forum's stairs,  
Or round the Parthenon;  
Or olive-bough from some wild tree  
Hung over old Thermopylæ:  
If leaflets from some hero's tomb,  
Or moss-wreath torn from ruins hoary;  
Or faded flowers whose sisters bloom  
On fields renowned in story;  
Or fragment from the Alhambra's crest,  
Or the gray rock by Druids blessed;  
Sad Erin's shamrock greenly growing  
Where Freedom led her stalwart kern,  
Or Scotia's 'rough bur thistle' blowing

On Bruce's Bannockburn;  
Or Runnymede's wild English rose,  
Or lichen plucked from Sempach's snows!  
If it be true that things like these  
To heart and eye bright visions bring,  
Shall not far holier memories  
To this memorial cling?  
Which needs no mellowing mist of time  
To hide the crimson stains of crime!  
Wreck of a temple, unprofaned;  
Of courts where Peace with Freedom trod,  
Lifting on high, with hands unstained,  
Thanksgiving unto God;  
Where Mercy's voice of love was pleading  
For human hearts in bondage bleeding!  
Where, midst the sound of rushing feet  
And curses on the night-air flung,  
That pleading voice rose calm and sweet  
From woman's earnest tongue;  
And Riot turned his scowling glance,  
Awed, from her tranquil countenance!  
That temple now in ruin lies!  
The fire-stain on its shattered wall,  
And open to the changing skies  
Its black and roofless hall,  
It stands before a nation's sight  
A gravestone over buried Right!  
But from that ruin, as of old,  
The fire-scorched stones themselves are crying,  
And from their ashes white and cold  
Its timbers are replying!  
A voice which slavery cannot kill  
Speaks from the crumbling arches still!  
And even this relic from thy shrine,  
O holy Freedom! hath to me  
A potent power, a voice and sign  
To testify of thee;  
And, grasping it, methinks I feel  
A deeper faith, a stronger zeal.  
And not unlike that mystic rod,  
Of old stretched o'er the Egyptian wave,  
Which opened, in the strength of God,

A pathway for the slave,  
It yet may point the bondman's way,  
And turn the spoiler from his prey.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Rendition

I HEARD the train's shrill whistle call,  
I saw an earnest look beseech,  
And rather by that look than speech  
My neighbor told me all.  
And, as I thought of Liberty  
Marched handcuffed down that sworded street,  
The solid earth beneath my feet  
Reeled fluid as the sea.  
I felt a sense of bitter loss, —  
Shame, tearless grief, and stifling wrath,  
And loathing fear, as if my path  
A serpent stretched across.  
All love of home, all pride of place,  
All generous confidence and trust,  
Sank smothering in that deep disgust  
And anguish of disgrace.  
Down on my native hills of June,  
And home's green quiet, hiding all,  
Fell sudden darkness like the fall  
Of midnight upon noon!  
And Law, an unloosed maniac, strong,  
Blood-drunken, through the blackness trod,  
Hoarse-shouting in the ear of God  
The blasphemy of wrong.  
'O Mother, from thy memories proud,  
Thy old renown, dear Commonwealth,  
Lend this dead air a breeze of health,  
And smite with stars this cloud.  
'Mother of Freedom, wise and brave,  
Rise awful in thy strength,' I said;  
Ah me! I spake but to the dead;  
I stood upon her grave!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Reunion

The gulf of seven and fifty years  
We stretch our welcoming hands across;  
The distance but a pebble's toss  
Between us and our youth appears.

For in life's school we linger on  
The remnant of a once full list;  
Conning our lessons, undismissed,  
With faces to the setting sun.

And some have gone the unknown way,  
And some await the call to rest;  
Who knoweth whether it is best  
For those who went or those who stay?

And yet despite of loss and ill,  
If faith and love and hope remain,  
Our length of days is not in vain,  
And life is well worth living still.

Still to a gracious Providence  
The thanks of grateful hearts are due,  
For blessings when our lives were new,  
For all the good vouchsafed us since.

The pain that spared us sorer hurt,  
The wish denied, the purpose crossed,  
And pleasure's fond occasions lost,  
Were mercies to our small desert.

'T is something that we wander back,  
Gray pilgrims, to our ancient ways,  
And tender memories of old days  
Walk with us by the Merrimac;

That even in life's afternoon  
A sense of youth comes back again,  
As through this cool September rain  
The still green woodlands dream of June.

The eyes grown dim to present things  
Have keener sight for bygone years,  
And sweet and clear, in deafening ears,  
The bird that sang at morning sings.

Dear comrades, scattered wide and far,  
Send from their homes their kindly word,  
And dearer ones, unseen, unheard,  
Smile on us from some heavenly star.

For life and death with God are one,  
Unchanged by seeming change His care  
And love are round us here and there;  
He breaks no thread His hand has spun.

Soul touches soul, the muster roll  
Of life eternal has no gaps;  
And after half a century's lapse  
Our school-day ranks are closed and whole.

Hail and farewell! We go our way;  
Where shadows end, we trust in light;  
The star that ushers in the night  
Is herald also of the day!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Reward

Who, looking backward from his manhood's prime,  
Sees not the spectre of his misspent time?  
And, through the shade  
Of funeral cypress planted thick behind,  
Hears no reproachful whisper on the wind  
From his loved dead?

Who bears no trace of passion's evil force?  
Who shuns thy sting, O terrible Remorse?  
Who does not cast  
On the thronged pages of his memory's book,  
At times, a sad and half-reluctant look,  
Regretful of the past?

Alas! the evil which we fain would shun  
We do, and leave the wished-for good undone  
Our strength to-day  
Is but to-morrow's weakness, prone to fall;  
Poor, blind, unprofitable servants all  
Are we always.

Yet who, thus looking backward o'er his years,  
Feels not his eyelids wet with grateful tears,  
If he hath been  
Permitted, weak and sinful as he was,  
To cheer and aid, in some ennobling cause,  
His fellow-men?

If he hath hidden the outcast, or let in  
A ray of sunshine to the cell of sin;  
If he hath lent  
Strength to the weak, and, in an hour of need,  
Over the suffering, mindless of his creed  
Or home, hath bent;

He has not lived in vain, and while he gives  
The praise to Him, in whom he moves and lives,  
With thankful heart;  
He gazes backward, and with hope before,

Knowing that from his works he nevermore  
Can henceforth part.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The River Path

No bird-song floated down the hill,  
The tangled bank below was still;

No rustle from the birchen stem,  
No ripple from the water's hem.

The dusk of twilight round us grew,  
We felt the falling of the dew;

For, from us, ere the day was done,  
The wooded hills shut out the sun.

But on the river's farther side  
We saw the hill-tops glorified,--

A tender glow, exceeding fair,  
A dream of day without its glare.

With us the damp, the chill, the gloom  
With them the sunset's rosy bloom;

While dark, through willowy vistas seen,  
The river rolled in shade between.

From out the darkness where we trod,  
We gazed upon those bills of God,

Whose light seemed not of moon or sun.  
We spake not, but our thought was one.

We paused, as if from that bright shore  
Beckoned our dear ones gone before;

And stilled our beating hearts to hear  
The voices lost to mortal ear!

Sudden our pathway turned from night;  
The hills swung open to the light;

Through their green gates the sunshine showed,  
A long, slant splendor downward flowed.

Down glade and glen and bank it rolled;  
It bridged the shaded stream with gold;

And, borne on piers of mist, allied  
The shadowy with the sunlit side!

'So,' prayed we, 'when our feet draw near  
The river dark, with mortal fear,

'And the night cometh chill with dew,  
O Father! let Thy light break through!

'So let the hills of doubt divide,  
So bridge with faith the sunless tide!

'So let the eyes that fail on earth  
On Thy eternal hills look forth;

'And in Thy beckoning angels know  
The dear ones whom we loved below!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Robin

MY old Welsh neighbor over the way  
Crept slowly out in the sun of spring,  
Pushed from her ears the locks of gray,  
And listened to hear the robin sing.

Her grandson, playing at marbles, stopped,  
And, cruel in sport as boys will be,  
Tossed a stone at the bird, who hopped  
From bough to bough in the apple-tree.

'Nay!' said the grandmother; 'have you not heard,  
My poor, bad boy! of the fiery pit,  
And how, drop by drop, this merciful bird  
Carries the water that quenches it?

'He brings cool dew in his little bill,  
And lets it fall on the souls of sin  
You can see the mark on his red breast still  
Of fires that scorch as he drops it in.

'My poor Bron rhuddyn! my breast-burned bird,  
Singing so sweetly from limb to limb,  
Very dear to the heart of Our Lord  
Is he who pities the lost like Him!'

'Amen!' I said to the beautiful myth;  
'Sing, bird of God, in my heart as well:  
Each good thought is a drop wherewith  
To cool and lessen the fires of hell.

'Prayers of love like rain-drops fall,  
Tears of pity are cooling dew,  
And dear to the heart of Our Lord are all  
Who suffer like Him in the good they do! '

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Rock In El Ghor

Dead Petra in her hill-tomb sleeps,  
Her stones of emptiness remain;  
Around her sculptured mystery sweeps  
The lonely waste of Edom's plain.

From the doomed dwellers in the cleft  
The bow of vengeance turns not back;  
Of all her myriads none are left  
Along the Wady Mousa's track.

Clear in the hot Arabian day  
Her arches spring, her statues climb;  
Unchanged, the graven wonders pay  
No tribute to the spoiler, Time!

Unchanged the awful lithograph  
Of power and glory undertrod;  
Of nations scattered like the chaff  
Blown from the threshing-floor of God.

Yet shall the thoughtful stranger turn  
From Petra's gates with deeper awe,  
To mark afar the burial urn  
Of Aaron on the cliffs of Hor;

And where upon its ancient guard  
Thy Rock, El Ghor, is standing yet,--  
Looks from its turrets desertward,  
And keeps the watch that God has set.

The same as when in thunders loud  
It heard the voice of God to man,  
As when it saw in fire and cloud  
The angels walk in Israel's van,

Or when from Ezion-Geber's way  
It saw the long procession file,  
And heard the Hebrew timbrels play  
The music of the lordly Nile;

Or saw the tabernacle pause,  
Cloud-bound, by Kadesh Barnea's wells,  
While Moses graved the sacred laws,  
And Aaron swung his golden bells.

Rock of the desert, prophet-sung!  
How grew its shadowing pile at length,  
A symbol, in the Hebrew tongue,  
Of God's eternal love and strength.

On lip of bard and scroll of seer,  
From age to age went down the name,  
Until the Shiloh's promised year,  
And Christ, the Rock of Ages, came!

The path of life we walk to-day  
Is strange as that the Hebrews trod;  
We need the shadowing rock, as they,--  
We need, like them, the guides of God.

God send His angels, Cloud and Fire,  
To lead us o'er the desert sand!  
God give our hearts their long desire,  
His shadow in a weary land!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Rock-Tomb Of Bradore

A DREAR and desolate shore!  
Where no tree unfolds its leaves,  
And never the spring wind weaves  
Green grass for the hunter's tread;  
A land forsaken and dead,  
Where the ghostly icebergs go  
And come with the ebb and flow  
Of the waters of Bradore!

A wanderer, from a land  
By summer breezes fanned,  
Looked round him, awed, subdued,  
By the dreadful solitude,  
Hearing alone the cry  
Of sea-birds clanging by,  
The crash and grind of the floe,  
Wail of wind and wash of tide.  
'O wretched land!' he cried,  
'Land of all lands the worst,  
God forsaken and curst!  
Thy gates of rock should show  
The words the Tuscan seer  
Read in the Realm of Woe  
Hope entereth not here!'

Lo! at his feet there stood  
A block of smooth larch wood,  
Waif of some wandering wave,  
Beside a rock-closed cave  
By Nature fashioned for a grave;  
Safe from the ravening bear  
And fierce fowl of the air,  
Wherein to rest was laid  
A twenty summers' maid,  
Whose blood had equal share  
Of the lands of vine and snow,  
Half French, half Eskimo.  
In letters uneffaced,  
Upon the block were traced

The grief and hope of man,  
And thus the legend ran  
'We loved her!  
Words cannot tell how well!  
We loved her!  
God loved her!  
And called her home to peace and rest.  
We love her.'

The stranger paused and read.  
'O winter land!' he said,  
'Thy right to be I own;  
God leaves thee not alone.  
And if thy fierce winds blow  
Over drear wastes of rock and snow,  
And at thy iron gates  
The ghostly iceberg waits,  
Thy homes and hearts are dear.  
Thy sorrow o'er thy sacred dust  
Is sanctified by hope and trust;  
God's love and man's are here.  
And love where'er it goes  
Makes its own atmosphere;  
Its flowers of Paradise  
Take root in the eternal ice,  
And bloom through Polar snows!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Seeking Of The Waterfall

They left their home of summer ease  
Beneath the lowland's sheltering trees,  
To seek, by ways unknown to all,  
The promise of the waterfall.

Some vague, faint rumor to the vale  
Had crept--perchance a hunter's tale--  
Of its wild mirth of waters lost  
On the dark woods through which it tossed.

Somewhere it laughed and sang; somewhere  
Whirled in mad dance its misty hair;  
But who had raised its veil, or seen  
The rainbow skirts of that Undine?

They sought it where the mountain brook  
Its swift way to the valley took;  
Along the rugged slope they clomb,  
Their guide a thread of sound and foam.

Height after height they slowly won;  
The fiery javelins of the sun  
Smote the bare ledge; the tangled shade  
With rock and vine their steps delayed.

But, through leaf-openings, now and then  
They saw the cheerful homes of men,  
And the great mountains with their wall  
Of misty purple girdling all.

The leaves through which the glad winds blew  
Shared the wild dance the waters knew;  
And where the shadows deepest fell  
The wood-thrush rang his silver bell.

Fringing the stream, at every turn  
Swung low the waving fronds of fern;  
From stony cleft and mossy sod  
Pale asters sprang, and golden-rod.

And still the water sang the sweet,  
Glad song that stirred its gliding feet,  
And found in rock and root the keys  
Of its beguiling melodies.

Beyond, above, its signals flew  
Of tossing foam the birch-trees through;  
Now seen, now lost, but baffling still  
The weary seekers' slackening will.

Each called to each: 'Lo here! Lo there!  
Its white scarf flutters in the air!'  
They climbed anew; the vision fled,  
To beckon higher overhead.

So toiled they up the mountain-slope  
With faint and ever fainter hope;  
With faint and fainter voice the brook  
Still bade them listen, pause, and look.

Meanwhile below the day was done;  
Above the tall peaks saw the sun  
Sink, beam-shorn, to its misty set  
Behind the hills of violet.

'Here ends our quest!' the seekers cried,  
'The brook and rumor both have lied!  
The phantom of a waterfall  
Has led us at its beck and call.'

But one, with years grown wiser, said  
'So, always baffled, not misled,  
We follow where before us runs  
The vision of the shining ones.

'Not where they seem their signals fly,  
Their voices while we listen die;  
We cannot keep, however fleet,  
The quick time of their winged feet.

'From youth to age unresting stray

These kindly mockers in our way;  
Yet lead they not, the baffling elves,  
To something better than themselves?

'Here, though unreached the goal we sought,  
Its own reward our toil has brought:  
The winding water's sounding rush,  
The long note of the hermit thrush,

'The turquoise lakes, the glimpse of pond  
And river track, and, vast, beyond  
Broad meadows belted round with pines,  
The grand uplift of mountain lines!

'What matter though we seek with pain  
The garden of the gods in vain,  
If lured thereby we climb to greet  
Some wayside blossom Eden-sweet?

'To seek is better than to gain,  
The fond hope dies as we attain;  
Life's fairest things are those which seem,  
The best is that of which we dream.

'Then let us trust our waterfall  
Still flashes down its rocky wall,  
With rainbow crescent curved across  
Its sunlit spray from moss to moss.

'And we, forgetful of our pain,  
In thought shall seek it oft again;  
Shall see this aster-blossomed sod,  
This sunshine of the golden-rod,

'And haply gain, through parting boughs,  
Grand glimpses of great mountain brows  
Cloud-turbaned, and the sharp steel sheen  
Of lakes deep set in valleys green.

'So failure wins; the consequence  
Of loss becomes its recompense;  
And evermore the end shall tell

The unreached ideal guided well.

'Our sweet illusions only die  
Fulfilling love's sure prophecy;  
And every wish for better things  
An undreamed beauty nearer brings.

'For fate is servitor of love;  
Desire and hope and longing prove  
The secret of immortal youth,  
And Nature cheats us into truth.

'O kind allurers, wisely sent,  
Beguiling with benign intent,  
Still move us, through divine unrest,  
To seek the loveliest and the best!

'Go with us when our souls go free,  
And, in the clear, white light to be,  
Add unto Heaven's beatitude  
The old delight of seeking good!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Sentence Of John L. Brown

Ho! thou who seekest late and long  
A License from the Holy Book  
For brutal lust and fiendish wrong,  
Man of the Pulpit, look!  
Lift up those cold and atheist eyes,  
This ripe fruit of thy teaching see;  
And tell us how to heaven will rise  
The incense of this sacrifice —  
This blossom of the gallows tree!  
Search out for slavery's hour of need  
Some fitting text of sacred writ;  
Give heaven the credit of deed  
Which shames the nether pit.  
Kneel, smooth blasphemer, unto Him  
Whose truth is on thy lips a lie;  
Ask that His bright winged cherubim  
May bend around that scaffold grim  
To guard and bless and sanctify.  
O champion of the people's cause!  
Suspend thy loud and vain rebuke  
Of foreign wrong and Old World's laws,  
Man of the Senate, look!  
Was this the promise of the free,  
The great hope of our early time,  
That slavery's poison vine should be  
Upborne by Freedom's prayer-nursed tree  
O'erclustered with such fruits of crime?  
Send out the summons East and West,  
And South and North, let all be there  
Where he who pitied the oppressed  
Swings out in sun and air.  
Let not a Democratic hand  
The grisly hangman's task refuse;  
There let each loyal patriot stand,  
Awaiting slavery's command,  
To twist the rope and draw the noose!  
But vain is irony — unmeet  
Its cold rebuke for deeds which start  
In fiery and indignant beat

The pulses of the heart.  
Leave studied wit and guarded phrase  
For those who think but do not feel;  
Let men speak out in words which raise  
Where'er they fall, an answering blaze  
Like flints which strike the fire from steel.  
Still let a mousing priesthood ply  
Their garbled text and gloss of sin,  
And make the lettered scroll deny  
Its living soul within:  
Still let the place-fed, titled knave  
Plead robbery's right with purchased lips,  
And tell us that our fathers gave  
For Freedom's pedestal, a slave,  
The frieze and moulding, chains and whips!  
But ye who own that Higher Law  
Whose tablets in the heart are set,  
Speak out in words of power and awe  
That God is living yet!  
Breathe forth once more those tones sublime  
Which thrilled the burdened prophet's lyre,  
And in a dark and evil time  
Smote down on Israel's fast of crime  
And gift of blood, a rain of fire!  
Oh, not for us the graceful lay  
To whose soft measures lightly move  
The footsteps of the faun and fay,  
O'er-locked by mirth and love!  
But such a stern and startling strain  
As Britain's hunted bards flung down  
From Snowden to the conquered plain,  
Where harshly clanked the Saxon chain,  
On trampled field and smoking town.  
By Liberty's dishonored name,  
By man's lost hope and failing trust,  
By words and deeds which bow with shame  
Our foreheads to the dust,  
By the exulting strangers' sneer,  
Borne to us from the Old World's thrones,  
And by their victims' grief who hear,  
In sunless mines and dungeons drear,  
How Freedom's land her faith disowns!

Speak out in acts. The time for words  
Has passed, and deeds suffice alone;  
In vain against the clang of swords  
The wailing pipe is blown!  
Act, act in God's name, while ye may!  
Smite from the church her leprous limb!  
Throw open to the light of day.  
The bondman's cell, and break away  
The chains the state has bound on him!  
Ho! every true and living soul,  
To Freedom's perilled altar bear  
The Freeman's and the Christian's whole  
Tongue, pen, and vote, and prayer!  
One last, great battle for the right —  
One short, sharp struggle to be free!  
To do is to succeed — our fight  
Is waged in Heaven's approving sight;  
The smile of God is Victory.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Shadow And The Light

The fourteen centuries fall away  
Between us and the Afric saint,  
And at his side we urge, to-day,  
The immemorial quest and old complaint.

No outward sign to us is given,--  
From sea or earth comes no reply;  
Hushed as the warm Numidian heaven  
He vainly questioned bends our frozen sky.

No victory comes of all our strife,--  
From all we grasp the meaning slips;  
The Sphinx sits at the gate of life,  
With the old question on her awful lips.

In paths unknown we hear the feet  
Of fear before, and guilt behind;  
We pluck the wayside fruit, and eat  
Ashes and dust beneath its golden rind.

From age to age descends unchecked  
The sad bequest of sire to son,  
The body's taint, the mind's defect;  
Through every web of life the dark threads run.

Oh, why and whither? God knows all;  
I only know that He is good,  
And that whatever may befall  
Or here or there, must be the best that could.

Between the dreadful cherubim  
A Father's face I still discern,  
As Moses looked of old on Him,  
And saw His glory into goodness turn!

For He is merciful as just;  
And so, by faith correcting sight,  
I bow before His will, and trust  
Howe'er they seem He doeth all things right.

And dare to hope that Tie will make  
The rugged smooth, the doubtful plain;  
His mercy never quite forsake;  
His healing visit every realm of pain;

That suffering is not His revenge  
Upon His creatures weak and frail,  
Sent on a pathway new and strange  
With feet that wander and with eyes that fail;

That, o'er the crucible of pain,  
Watches the tender eye of Love  
The slow transmuting of the chain  
Whose links are iron below to gold above!

Ah me! we doubt the shining skies,  
Seen through our shadows of offence,  
And drown with our poor childish cries  
The cradle-hymn of kindly Providence.

And still we love the evil cause,  
And of the just effect complain  
We tread upon life's broken laws,  
And murmur at our self-inflicted pain;

We turn us from the light, and find  
Our spectral shapes before us thrown,  
As they who leave the sun behind  
Walk in the shadows of themselves alone.

And scarce by will or strength of ours  
We set our faces to the day;  
Weak, wavering, blind, the Eternal Powers  
Alone can turn us from ourselves away.

Our weakness is the strength of sin,  
But love must needs be stronger far,  
Outreaching all and gathering in  
The erring spirit and the wandering star.

A Voice grows with the growing years;

Earth, hushing down her bitter cry,  
Looks upward from her graves, and hears,  
'The Resurrection and the Life am I.'

O Love Divine!--whose constant beam  
Shines on the eyes that will not see,  
And waits to bless us, while we dream  
Thou leavest us because we turn from thee!

All souls that struggle and aspire,  
All hearts of prayer by thee are lit;  
And, dim or clear, thy tongues of fire  
On dusky tribes and twilight centuries sit.

Nor bounds, nor clime, nor creed thou know'st,  
Wide as our need thy favors fall;  
The white wings of the Holy Ghost  
Stoop, seen or unseen, o'er the heads of all.

O Beauty, old yet ever new!  
Eternal Voice, and Inward Word,  
The Logos of the Greek and Jew,  
The old sphere-music which the Samian heard!

Truth, which the sage and prophet saw,  
Long sought without, but found within,  
The Law of Love beyond all law,  
The Life o'erflooding mortal death and sin!

Shine on us with the light which glowed  
Upon the trance-bound shepherd's way.  
Who saw the Darkness overflowed  
And drowned by tides of everlasting Day.

Shine, light of God!--make broad thy scope  
To all who sin and suffer; more  
And better than we dare to hope  
With Heaven's compassion make our longings poor!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Ship-Builders

THE sky is ruddy in the east,  
The earth is gray below,  
And, spectral in the river-mist,  
The ship's white timbers show.  
Then let the sounds of measured stroke  
And grating saw begin;  
The broad-axe to the gnarléd oak,  
The mallet to the pin!  
Hark! roars the bellows, blast on blast,  
The sooty smithy jars,  
And fire-sparks, rising far and fast,  
Are fading with the stars.  
All day for us the smith shall stand  
Beside that flashing forge;  
All day for us his heavy hand  
The groaning anvil scourge.  
From far-off hills, the panting team  
For us is toiling near;  
For us the raftsmen down the stream  
Their island barges steer.  
Rings out for us the axe-man's stroke  
In forests old and still;  
For us the century-circled oak  
Falls crashing down his hill.  
Up! up! in nobler toil than ours  
No craftsmen bear a part:  
We make of Nature's giant powers  
The slaves of human Art.  
Lay rib to rib and beam to beam,  
And drive the treenails free;  
Nor faithless joint nor yawning seam  
Shall tempt the searching sea!  
Where'er the keel of our good ship  
The sea's rough field shall plough;  
Where'er her tossing spars shall drip  
With salt-spray caught below;  
That ship must heed her master's beck,  
Her helm obey his hand,  
And seamen tread her reeling deck

As if they trod the land.  
Her oaken ribs the vulture-beak  
Of Northern ice may peel;  
The sunken rock and coral peak  
May grate along her keel;  
And know we well the painted shell  
We give to wind and wave,  
Must float, the sailor's citadel,  
Or sink, the sailor's grave!  
Ho! strike away the bars and blocks,  
And set the good ship free!  
Why lingers on these dusty rocks  
The young bride of the sea?  
Look! how she moves adown the grooves,  
In graceful beauty now!  
How lowly on the breast she loves  
Sinks down her virgin prow!  
God bless-her! wheresoe'er the breeze  
Her snowy wing shall fan,  
Aside the frozen Hebrides,  
Or sultry Hindostan!  
Where'er, in mart or on the main,  
With peaceful flag unfurled,  
She helps to wind the silken chain  
Of commerce round the world!  
Speed on the ship! But let her bear  
No merchandise of sin,  
No groaning cargo of despair  
Her roomy hold within;  
No Lethean drug for Eastern lands,  
For poison-draught for ours;  
But honest fruits of toiling hands  
And Nature's sun and showers.  
Be hers the Prairie's golden grain,  
The Desert's golden sand,  
The clustered fruits of sunny Spain,  
The spice of Morning-land!  
Her pathway on the open main  
May blessings follow free,  
And glad hearts welcome back again  
Her white sails from the sea!



# The Shoemakers

Ho! workers of the old time styled  
The Gentle Craft of Leather!  
Young brothers of the ancient guild,  
Stand forth once more together!  
Call out again your long array,  
In the olden merry manner!  
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,  
Fling out your blazoned banner!  
Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone  
How falls the polished hammer!  
Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown  
A quick and merry clamor.  
Now shape the sole! now deftly curl  
The glossy vamp around it,  
And bless the while the bright-eyed girl  
Whose gentle fingers bound it!  
For you, along the Spanish main  
A hundred keels are ploughing;  
For you, the Indian on the plain  
His lasso-coil is throwing;  
For you, deep glens with hemlock dark  
The woodman's fire is lighting;  
For you, upon the oak's gray bark,  
The woodman's axe is smiting.  
For you, from Carolina's pine  
The rosin-gum is stealing;  
For you, the dark-eyed Florentine  
Her silken skein is reeling;  
For you, the dizzy goatherd roams  
His rugged Alpine ledges;  
For you, round all her shepherd homes,  
Bloom England's thorny hedges.  
The foremost still, by day or night,  
On moated mound or heather,  
Whete'er the need of trampled right  
Brought toiling men together;  
Where the free burghers from the wall  
Defied the mail-clad master,  
Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,

No craftsmen rallied faster.  
Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,  
Ye heed no idle scorner;  
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,  
And duty done, your honor.  
Ye dare to trust, for honest fame,  
The jury Time empanels,  
And leave to truth each noble name  
Which glorifies your annals.  
Thy songs, Han Sachs, are living yet,  
In strong and hearty German;  
And Bloomfield's lay, and Gifford's wit,  
And patriot fame of Sherman;  
Still from his book, a mystic seer,  
The soul of Behmen teaches,  
And England's priestcraft shakes to hear  
Of Fox's leathern breeches.  
The foot is yours; where'er it falls,  
It treads your well-wrought leather,  
On earthen floor, in marble halls,  
On carpet, or on heather.  
Still there the sweetest charm is found  
Of matron grace or vestal's,  
As Hebe's foot bore nectar round  
Among the old celestials!  
Rap, rap! — your stout and bluff brogan,  
With footsteps slow and weary,  
May wander where the sky's blue span  
Shuts down upon the prairie.  
On Beauty's foot your slippers glance,  
By Saratoga's fountains,  
Or twinkle down the summer dance  
Beneath the Crystal Mountains!  
The red brick to the mason's hand,  
The brown earth to the tiller's,  
The shoe in yours shall wealth command,  
Like fairy Cinderella's!  
As they who shunned the household maid  
Beheld the crown upon her,  
So all shall see your toil repaid  
With hearth and home and honor.  
Then let the toast be freely quaffed,

In water cool and brimming,  
'All honor to the good old Craft,  
Its merry men and women!'  
Call out again your long array,  
In the old time's pleasant manner:  
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,  
Fling out his blazoned banner!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Singer

Years since (but names to me before),  
Two sisters sought at eve my door;  
Two song-birds wandering from their nest,  
A gray old farm-house in the West.

How fresh of life the younger one,  
Half smiles, half tears, like rain in sun!  
Her gravest mood could scarce displace  
The dimples of her nut-brown face.

Wit sparkled on her lips not less  
For quick and tremulous tenderness;  
And, following close her merriest glance,  
Dreamed through her eyes the heart's romance.

Timid and still, the elder had  
Even then a smile too sweetly sad;  
The crown of pain that all must wear  
Too early pressed her midnight hair.

Yet ere the summer eve grew long,  
Her modest lips were sweet with song;  
A memory haunted all her words  
Of clover-fields and singing birds.

Her dark, dilating eyes expressed  
The broad horizons of the west;  
Her speech dropped prairie flowers; the gold  
Of harvest wheat about her rolled.

Fore-doomed to song she seemed to me  
I queried not with destiny  
I knew the trial and the need,  
Yet, all the more, I said, God speed?

What could I other than I did?  
Could I a singing-bird forbid?  
Deny the wind-stirred leaf? Rebuke  
The music of the forest brook?

She went with morning from my door,  
But left me richer than before;  
Thenceforth I knew her voice of cheer,  
The welcome of her partial ear.

Years passed: through all the land her name  
A pleasant household word became  
All felt behind the singer stood  
A sweet and gracious womanhood.

Her life was earnest work, not play;  
Her tired feet climbed a weary way;  
And even through her lightest strain  
We heard an undertone of pain.

Unseen of her her fair fame grew,  
The good she did she rarely knew,  
Ungessed of her in life the love  
That rained its tears her grave above.

When last I saw her, full of peace,  
She waited for her great release;  
And that old friend so sage and bland,  
Our later Franklin, held her hand.

For all that patriot bosoms stirs  
Had moved that woman's heart of hers,  
And men who toiled in storm and sun  
Found her their meet companion.

Our converse, from her suffering bed  
To healthful themes of life she led  
The out-door world of bud and bloom  
And light and sweetness filled her room.

Yet evermore an underthought  
Of loss to come within us wrought,  
And all the while we felt the strain  
Of the strong will that conquered pain.

God giveth quietness at last!

The common way that all have passed  
She went, with mortal yearnings fond,  
To fuller life and love beyond.

Fold the rapt soul in your embrace,  
My dear ones! Give the singer place  
To you, to her,--I know not where,--  
I lift the silence of a prayer.

For only thus our own we find;  
The gone before, the left behind,  
All mortal voices die between;  
The unheard reaches the unseen.

Again the blackbirds sing; the streams  
Wake, laughing, from their winter dreams,  
And tremble in the April showers  
The tassels of the maple flowers.

But not for her has spring renewed  
The sweet surprises of the wood;  
And bird and flower are lost to her  
Who was their best interpreter.

What to shut eyes has God revealed?  
What hear the ears that death has sealed?  
What undreamed beauty passing show  
Requites the loss of all we know?

O silent land, to which we move,  
Enough if there alone be love,  
And mortal need can ne'er outgrow  
What it is waiting to bestow!

O white soul! from that far-off shore  
Float some sweet song the waters o'er.  
Our faith confirm, our fears dispel,  
With the old voice we loved so well!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Sisters

ANNIE and Rhoda, sisters twain,  
Woke in the night to the sound of rain,

The rush of wind, the ramp and roar  
Of great waves climbing a rocky shore.

Annie rose up in her bed-gown white,  
And looked out into the storm and night.

'Hush, and hearken!' she cried in fear,  
'Hearest thou nothing, sister dear?'

'I hear the sea, and the splash of rain,  
And roar of the northeast hurricane.

'Get thee back to the bed so warm,  
No good comes of watching a storm.

'What is it to thee, I fain would know,  
That waves are roaring and wild winds blow?

'No lover of thine's afloat to miss  
The harbor-lights on a night like this.'

'But I heard a voice cry out my name,  
Up from the sea on the wind it came.

'Twice and thrice have I heard it call,  
And the voice is the voice of Estwick Hall!'

On her pillow the sister tossed her head.  
'Hall of the Heron is safe,' she said.

'In the tautest schooner that ever swam  
He rides at anchor in Anisquam.

'And, if in peril from swamping sea  
Or lee shore rocks, would he call on thee?'

But the girl heard only the wind and tide,  
And wringing her small white hands she cried,

'O sister Rhoda, there's something wrong;  
I hear it again, so loud and long.

"Annie! Annie!" I hear it call,  
And the voice is the voice of Estwick Hall!

Up sprang the elder, with eyes aflame,  
'Thou liest! He never would call thy name!

'If he did, I would pray the wind and sea  
To keep him forever from thee and me!

Then out of the sea blew a dreadful blast;  
Like the cry of a dying man it passed.

The young girl hushed on her lips a groan,  
But through her tears a strange light shone,--

The solemn joy of her heart's release  
To own and cherish its love in peace.

'Dearest!' she whispered, under breath,  
'Life was a lie, but true is death.

'The love I hid from myself away  
Shall crown me now in the light of day.

'My ears shall never to wooer list,  
Never by lover my lips be kissed.

'Sacred to thee am I henceforth,  
Thou in heaven and I on earth!'

She came and stood by her sister's bed  
'Hall of the Heron is dead!' she said.

'The wind and the waves their work have done,  
We shall see him no more beneath the sun.

'Little will reek that heart of thine,  
It loved him not with a love like mine.

'I, for his sake, were he but here,  
Could hem and 'broider thy bridal gear,

'Though hands should tremble and eyes be wet,  
And stitch for stitch in my heart be set.

'But now my soul with his soul I wed;  
Thine the living, and mine the dead!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Sisters - A Picture By Barry

The shade for me, but over thee  
The lingering sunshine still;  
As, smiling, to the silent stream  
Comes down the singing rill.

So come to me, my little one,--  
My years with thee I share,  
And mingle with a sister's love  
A mother's tender care.

But keep the smile upon thy lip,  
The trust upon thy brow;  
Since for the dear one God hath called  
We have an angel now.

Our mother from the fields of heaven  
Shall still her ear incline;  
Nor need we fear her human love  
Is less for love divine.

The songs are sweet they sing beneath  
The trees of life so fair,  
But sweetest of the songs of heaven  
Shall be her children's prayer.

Then, darling, rest upon my breast,  
And teach my heart to lean  
With thy sweet trust upon the arm  
Which folds us both unseen!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Slave Ships

'ALL ready?' cried the captain;  
'Ay, ay!' the seamen said;  
'Heave up the worthless lubbers, —  
The dying and the dead.'  
Up from the slave-ship's prison  
Fierce, bearded heads were thrust  
'Now let the sharks look to it,—  
Toss up the dead ones first!  
Corpse after corpse , —  
Death had been busy there;  
Where every blow is mercy,  
Why should the spoiler spare?  
Corpse after corpse they cast  
Sullenly from the ship,  
Yet bloody with the traces  
Of fetter-link and whip.  
Gloomily stood the captain,  
With his arms upon his breast,  
With his cold brow sternly knotted,  
And his iron lip compressed.  
'Are all the dead dogs over?'  
Growled through that matted lip;  
'The blind ones are no better,  
Let's lighten the good ship.'  
Hark! from the ship's dark bosom,  
The very sounds of hell!  
The ringing clank of iron,  
The maniac's short, sharp yell!  
The hoarse, low curse, throat-stified;  
The starving infant's moan,  
The horror of a breaking heart  
Poured through a mother's groan.  
Up from that loathsome prison  
The stricken blind ones came:  
Below, had all been darkness,  
Above, was still the same.  
Yet the holy breath of heaven  
Was sweetly breathing there,  
And the heated brow of fever

Cooled in the soft sea air.  
'Overboard with them, shipmates!'  
Cutlass and dirk were plied;  
Fettered and blind, one after one,  
Plunged down the vessel's side.  
The sabre smote above,  
Beneath, the lean shark lay,  
Waiting with wide and bloody jaw  
His quick and human prey.  
God of the earth! what cries  
Rang upward unto thee?  
Voices of agony and blood,  
From ship-deck and from sea.  
The last dull plunge was heard,  
The last wave caught its stain,  
And the unsated shark looked up  
For human hearts in vain.

. . . . .

Red glowed the western waters,  
The setting sun was there,  
Scattering alike on wave and cloud  
His fiery mesh of hair.  
Amidst a group in blindness,  
A solitary eye  
Gazed, from the burdened slaver's deck,  
Into that burning sky.  
'A storm,' spoke out the gazer,  
'Is gathering and at hand;  
Curse on't, I'd give my other eye  
For one firm rood of land.'  
And then he laughed, but only  
His echoed laugh replied,  
For the blinded and the suffering  
Alone were at his side.  
Night settled on the waters,  
And on a stormy heaven,  
While fiercely on that lone ship's track  
The thunder-gust was driven.  
'A sail! — thank God, a sail!'  
And as the helmsman spoke,  
Up through the stormy murmur  
A shout of gladness broke.

Down came the stranger vessel,  
Unheeding on her way,  
So near that on the slaver's deck  
Fell off her driven spray.  
' Ho! for the love of mercy,  
We're perishing and blind!'  
A wail of utter agony  
Came back upon the wind:  
' Help us! for we are stricken  
With blindness every one;  
Ten days we've floated fearfully,  
Unnoting star or sun.  
Our ship's the slaver Leon, —  
We're but a score on board;  
Our slaves are all gone over, —  
Help, for the love of God!'  
On livid brows of agony  
The broad red lightning shone;  
But the roar of wind and thunder  
Stifled the answering groan;  
Wailed from the broken waters  
A last despairing cry,  
As, kindling in the stormy light,  
The stranger ship went by.

. . . . .

In the sunny Guadaloupe  
A dark-hulled vessel lay,  
With a crew who noted never  
The nightfall or the day.  
The blossom of the orange  
Was white by every stream,  
And tropic leaf, and flower, and bird  
Were in the warm sunbeam.  
And the sky was bright as ever,  
And the moonlight slept as well,  
On the palm-trees by the hillside,  
And the streamlet of the dell:  
And the glances of the Creole  
Were still as archly deep,  
And her smiles as full as ever  
Of passion and of sleep.  
But vain were bird and blossom,

The green earth and the sky,  
And the smile of human faces,  
To the slaver's darkened eye;  
At the breaking of the morning,  
At the star-lit evening time,  
O'er a world of light and beauty  
Fell the blackness of his crime.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Slaves Of Martinique

BEAMS of noon, like burning lances, through the tree-tops flash and glisten,  
As she stands before her lover, with raised face to look and listen.  
Dark, but comely, like the maiden in the ancient Jewish song:  
Scarcely has the toil of task-fields done her graceful beauty wrong.  
He, the strong one and the manly, with the vassal's garb and hue,  
Holding still his spirit's birthright, to his higher nature true;  
Hiding deep the strengthening purpose of a freeman in his heart,  
As the gregree holds his Fetich from the white man's gaze apart.  
Ever foremost of his comrades, when the driver's morning horn  
Calls away to stifling mill-house, to the fields of cane and corn:  
Fall the keen and burning lashes never on his back or limb;  
Scarce with look or word of censure, turns the driver unto him.  
Yet, his brow is always thoughtful, and his eye is hard and stern;  
Slavery's last and humblest lesson he has never deigned to learn.  
And, at evening, when his comrades dance before their master's door,  
Folding arms and knitting forehead, stands he silent evermore.  
God be praised for every instinct which rebels against a lot  
Where the brute survives the human, and man's upright form is not!  
As the serpent-like bejuco winds his spiral fold on fold  
Round the tall and stately ceiba, till it withers in his hold;  
Slow decays the forest monarch, closer girds the fell embrace,  
Till the tree is seen no longer, and the vine is in its place;  
So a base and bestial nature round the vassal's manhood twines,  
And the spirit wastes beneath it, like the ceiba choked with vines.  
God is Love, saith the Evangel; and our world of woe and sin  
Is made light and happy only when a Love is shining in.  
Ye whose lives are free as sunshine, finding, wheresoe'er ye roam,  
Smiles of welcome, looks of kindness, making all the world like home;  
In the veins of whose affections kindred blood is but a part,  
Of one kindly current throbbing from the universal heart;  
Can ye know the deeper meaning of a love in Slavery nursed,  
Last flower of a lost Eden, blooming in that Soil accursed?  
Love of Home, and Love of Woman! — dear to all, but doubly dear  
To the heart whose pulses elsewhere measure only hate and fear.  
All around the desert circles, underneath a brazen sky,  
Only one green spot remaining where the dew is never dry!  
From the horror of that desert, from its atmosphere of hell,  
Turns the fainting spirit thither, as the diver seeks his bell.  
'Tis the fervid tropic noontime; faint and low the sea-waves beat;

Hazy rise the inland mountains through the glimmer of the heat, —  
Where, through mingled leaves and blossoms, arrowy sunbeams flash and  
glisten,  
Speaks her lover to the slave-girl, and she lifts her head to listen: —  
'We shall live as slaves no longer! Freedom's hour is close at hand!  
Rocks her bark upon the waters, rests the boat upon the strand!  
'I have seen the Haytien Captain; I have seen his swarthy crew,  
Haters of the pallid faces, to their race and color true.  
'They have sworn to wait our coming till the night has passed its noon,  
And the gray and darkening waters roll above the sunken moon!  
Oh, the blessed hope of freedom! how with joy and glad surprise,  
For an instant throbs her bosom, for an instant beam her eyes!  
But she looks across the valley, where her mother's hut is seen,  
Through the snowy bloom of coffee, and the lemon-leaves so green.  
And she answers, sad and earnest: 'It were wrong for thee to stay;  
God hath heard thy prayer for freedom, and his finger points the way.  
'Well I know with what endurance, for the sake of me and mine,  
Thou hast borne too long a burden never meant for souls like thine.  
'Go; and at the hour of midnight, when our last farewell is o'er,  
Kneeling on our place of parting, I will bless thee from the shore.  
'But for me, my mother, lying on her sick-bed all the day,  
Lifts her weary head to watch me, coming through the twilight gray.  
'Should I leave her sick and helpless, even freedom, shared with thee,  
Would be sadder far than bondage, lonely toil, and stripes to me.  
'For my heart would die within me, and my brain would soon be wild;  
I should hear my mother calling through the twilight for her child!  
Blazing upward from the ocean, shines the sun of morning-time,  
Through the coffee-trees in blossom, and green hedges of the lime.  
Side by side, amidst the slave-gang, toil the lover and the maid;  
Wherefore looks he o'er the waters, leaning forward on his spade?  
Sadly looks he, deeply sighs he: 't is the Haytien's sail he sees,  
Like a white cloud of the mountains, driven seaward by the breeze!  
But his arm a light hand presses, and he hears a low voice call:  
Hate of Slavery, hope of Freedom, Love is mightier than all.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Star Of Bethlehem

Where Time the measure of his hours  
By changeful bud and blossom keeps,  
And, like a young bride crowned with flowers,  
Fair Shiraz in her garden sleeps;

Where, to her poet's turban stone,  
The Spring her gift of flowers imparts,  
Less sweet than those his thoughts have sown  
In the warm soil of Persian hearts:

There sat the stranger, where the shade  
Of scattered date-trees thinly lay,  
While in the hot clear heaven delayed  
The long and still and weary day.

Strange trees and fruits above him hung,  
Strange odors filled the sultry air,  
Strange birds upon the branches swung,  
Strange insect voices murmured there.

And strange bright blossoms shone around,  
Turned sunward from the shadowy bowers,  
As if the Gheber's soul had found  
A fitting home in Iran's flowers.

Whate'er he saw, whate'er he heard,  
Awakened feelings new and sad,--  
No Christian garb, nor Christian word,  
Nor church with Sabbath-bell chimes glad,

But Moslem graves, with turban stones,  
And mosque-spires gleaming white, in view,  
And graybeard Mollahs in low tones  
Chanting their Koran service through.

The flowers which smiled on either hand,  
Like tempting fiends, were such as they  
Which once, o'er all that Eastern land,  
As gifts on demon altars lay.

As if the burning eye of Baal  
The servant of his Conqueror knew,  
From skies which knew no cloudy veil,  
The Sun's hot glances smote him through.

'Ah me!' the lonely stranger said,  
'The hope which led my footsteps on,  
And light from heaven around them shed,  
O'er weary wave and waste, is gone!

'Where are the harvest fields all white,  
For Truth to thrust her sickle in?  
Where flock the souls, like doves in flight,  
From the dark hiding-place of sin?

'A silent-horror broods o'er all,--  
The burden of a hateful spell,--  
The very flowers around recall  
The hoary magi's rites of hell!

'And what am I, o'er such a land  
The banner of the Cross to bear?  
Dear Lord, uphold me with Thy hand,  
Thy strength with human weakness share!

He ceased; for at his very feet  
In mild rebuke a floweret smiled;  
How thrilled his sinking heart to greet  
The Star-flower of the Virgin's child!

Sown by some wandering Frank, it drew  
Its life from alien air and earth,  
And told to Paynim sun and dew  
The story of the Saviour's birth.

From scorching beams, in kindly mood,  
The Persian plants its beauty screened,  
And on its pagan sisterhood,  
In love, the Christian floweret leaned.

With tears of joy the wanderer felt

The darkness of his long despair  
Before that hallowed symbol melt,  
Which God's dear love had nurtured there.

From Nature's face, that simple flower  
The lines of sin and sadness swept;  
And Magian pile and Paynim bower  
In peace like that of Eden slept.

Each Moslem tomb, and cypress old,  
Looked holy through the sunset air;  
And, angel-like, the Muezzin told  
From tower and mosque the hour of prayer.

With cheerful steps, the morrow's dawn  
From Shiraz saw the stranger part;  
The Star-flower of the Virgin-Born  
Still blooming in his hopeful heart!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Summons

MY ear is full of summer sounds,  
Of summer sights my languid eye;  
Beyond the dusty village bounds  
I loiter in my daily rounds,  
And in the noon-time shadows lie.  
I hear the wild bee wind his horn,  
The bird swings on the ripened wheat,  
The long green lances of the corn  
Are tilting in the winds of morn,  
The locust shrills his song of heat.  
Another sound my spirit hears,  
A deeper sound that drowns them all;  
A voice of pleading choked with tears,  
The call of human hopes and fears,  
The Macedonian cry to Paul!  
The storm-bell rings, the trumpet blows;  
I know the word and countersign;  
Wherever Freedom's vanguard goes,  
Where stand or fall her friends or foes,  
I know the place that should be mine.  
Shamed be the hands that idly fold,  
And lips that woo the reed's accord,  
When laggard Time the hour has tolled  
For true with false and new with old  
To fight the battles of the Lord!  
O brothers! blest by partial Fate  
With power to match the will and deed,  
To him your summons comes too late  
Who sinks beneath his armor's weight,  
And has no answer but God-speed!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Swan Song Of Parson Avery

When the reaper's task was ended, and the summer wearing late,  
Parson Avery sailed from Newbury, with his wife and children eight,  
Dropping down the river-harbor in the shallop 'Watch and Wait.'

Pleasantly lay the clearings in the mellow summer-morn,  
With the newly planted orchards dropping their fruits first-born,  
And the home-roofs like brown islands amid a sea of corn.

Broad meadows reached out 'seaward the tided creeks between,  
And hills rolled wave-like inland, with oaks and walnuts green;-  
A fairer home, a-goodlier land, his eyes had never seen.

Yet away sailed Parson Avery, away where duty led,  
And the voice of God seemed calling, to break the living bread  
To the souls of fishers starving on the rocks of Marblehead.

All day they sailed: at nightfall the pleasant land-breeze died,  
The blackening sky, at midnight, its starry lights denied,  
And far and low the thunder of tempest prophesied.

Blotted out were all the coast-lines, gone were rock, and wood, and sand;  
Grimly anxious stood the skipper with the rudder in his hand,  
And questioned of the darkness what was sea and what was land.

And the preacher heard his dear ones, nestled round him, weeping sore,  
'Never heed, my little children! Christ is walking on before;  
To the pleasant land of heaven, where the sea shall be no more.'

All at once the great cloud parted, like a curtain drawn aside,  
To let down the torch of lightning on the terror far and wide;  
And the thunder and the whirlwind together smote the tide.

There was wailing in the shallop, woman's wail and man's despair,  
A crash of breaking timbers on the rocks so sharp and bare,  
And, through it all, the murmur of Father Avery's prayer.

From his struggle in the darkness with the wild waves and the blast,  
On a rock, where every billow broke above him as it passed,  
Alone, of all his household, the man of God was cast.

There a comrade heard him praying, in the pause of wave and wind  
'All my own have gone before me, and I linger just behind;  
Not for life I ask, but only for the rest Thy ransomed find!

'In this night of death I challenge the promise of Thy word!-  
Let me see the great salvation of which mine ears have heard!-  
Let me pass from hence forgiven, through the grace of Christ, our Lord!

'In the baptism of these waters wash white my every sin,  
And let me follow up to Thee my household and my kin!  
Open the sea-gate of Thy heaven, and let me enter in!'

When the Christian sings his death-song, all the listening heavens draw near,  
And the angels, leaning over the walls of crystal, hear  
How the notes so faint and broken swell to music in God's ear.

The ear of God was open to His servant's last request;  
As the strong wave swept him downward the sweet hymn upward pressed,  
And the soul of Father Avery went, singing, to its rest.

There was wailing on the mainland, from the rocks of Marblehead;  
In the stricken church of Newbury the notes of prayer were read;  
And long, by board and hearthstone, the living mourned the dead.

And still the fishers outbound, or scudding from the squall,  
With grave and reverent faces, the ancient tale recall,  
When they see the white waves breaking on the Rock of Avery's Fall!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Sycamores

In the outskirts of the village  
On the river's winding shores  
Stand the Occidental plane-trees,  
Stand the ancient sycamores.

One long century hath been numbered,  
And another half-way told  
Since the rustic Irish gleeman  
Broke for them the virgin mould.

Deftly set to Celtic music  
At his violin's sound they grew,  
Through the moonlit eves of summer,  
Making Amphion's fable true.

Rise again, thou poor Hugh Tallant!  
Pass in erkin green along  
With thy eyes brim full of laughter,  
And thy mouth as full of song.

Pioneer of Erin's outcasts  
With his fiddle and his pack-  
Little dreamed the village Saxons  
Of the myriads at his back.

How he wrought with spade and fiddle,  
Delved by day and sang by night,  
With a hand that never wearied  
And a heart forever light,---

Still the gay tradition mingles  
With a record grave and drear  
Like the rollic air of Cluny  
With the solemn march of Mear.

When the box-tree, white with blossoms,  
Made the sweet May woodlands glad,  
And the Aronia by the river  
Lighted up the swarming shad,

And the bulging nets swept shoreward  
With their silver-sided haul,  
Midst the shouts of dripping fishers,  
He was merriest of them all.

When, among the jovial huskers  
Love stole in at Labor's side  
With the lusty airs of England  
Soft his Celtic measures vied.

Songs of love and wailing lyke-wake  
And the merry fair's carouse;  
Of the wild Red Fox of Erin  
And the Woman of Three Cows,

By the blazing hearths of winter  
Pleasant seemed his simple tales,  
Midst the grimmer Yorkshire legends  
And the mountain myths of Wales.

How the souls in Purgatory  
Scrambled up from fate forlorn  
On St. Keven's sackcloth ladder  
Slyly hitched to Satan's horn.

Of the fiddler who at Tara  
Played all night to ghosts of kings;  
Of the brown dwarfs, and the fairies  
Dancing in their moorland rings!

Jolliest of our birds of singing  
Best he loved the Bob-o-link.  
"Hush!" he'd say, "the tipsy fairies!  
Hear the little folks in drink!"

Merry-faced, with spade and fiddle,  
Singing through the ancient town,  
Only this, of poor Hugh Tallant  
Hath Tradition handed down.

Not a stone his grave discloses;

But if yet his spirit walks  
Tis beneath the trees he planted  
And when Bob-o-Lincoln talks.

Green memorials of the gleeman!  
Linking still the river-shores,  
With their shadows cast by sunset  
Stand Hugh Tallant's sycamores!

When the Father of his Country  
Through the north-land riding came  
And the roofs were starred with banners,  
And the steeples rang acclaim,---

When each war-scarred Continental  
Leaving smithy, mill, and farm,  
Waved his rusted sword in welcome,  
And shot off his old king's-arm,---

Slowly passed that august Presence  
Down the thronged and shouting street;  
Village girls as white as angels  
Scattering flowers around his feet.

Midway, where the plane-tree's shadow  
Deepest fell, his rein he drew:  
On his stately head, uncovered,  
Cool and soft the west-wind blew.

And he stood up in his stirrups,  
Looking up and looking down  
On the hills of Gold and Silver  
Rimming round the little town,---

On the river, full of sunshine,  
To the lap of greenest vales  
Winding down from wooded headlands,  
Willow-skirted, white with sails.

And he said, the landscape sweeping  
Slowly with his ungloved hand  
"I have seen no prospect fairer

In this goodly Eastern land."

Then the bugles of his escort  
Stirred to life the cavalcade:  
And that head, so bare and stately  
Vanished down the depths of shade.

Ever since, in town and farm-house,  
Life has had its ebb and flow;  
Thrice hath passed the human harvest  
To its garner green and low.

But the trees the gleeman planted,  
Through the changes, changeless stand;  
As the marble calm of Tadmor  
Mocks the deserts shifting sand.

Still the level moon at rising  
Silvers o'er each stately shaft;  
Still beneath them, half in shadow,  
Singing, glides the pleasure craft;

Still beneath them, arm-enfolded,  
Love and Youth together stray;  
While, as heart to heart beats faster,  
More and more their feet delay.

Where the ancient cobbler, Keezar,  
On the open hillside justice wrought,  
Singing, as he drew his stitches,  
Songs his German masters taught.

Singing, with his gray hair floating  
Round a rosy ample face,---  
Now a thousand Saxon craftsmen  
Stitch and hammer in his place.

All the pastoral lanes so grassy  
Now are Traffic's dusty streets;  
From the village, grown a city,  
Fast the rural grace retreats.

But, still green and tall and stately,  
On the river's winding shores,  
Stand the occidental plane-trees,  
Stand Hugh Tallant's sycamores.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Tent On The Beach

I would not sin, in this half-playful strain,--  
Too light perhaps for serious years, though born  
Of the enforced leisure of slow pain,--  
Against the pure ideal which has drawn  
My feet to follow its far-shining gleam.  
A simple plot is mine: legends and runes  
Of credulous days, old fancies that have lain  
Silent, from boyhood taking voice again,  
Warmed into life once more, even as the tunes  
That, frozen in the fabled hunting-horn,  
Thawed into sound:--a winter fireside dream  
Of dawns and-sunsets by the summer sea,  
Whose sands are traversed by a silent throng  
Of voyagers from that vaster mystery  
Of which it is an emblem;--and the dear  
Memory of one who might have tuned my song  
To sweeter music by her delicate ear.

When heats as of a tropic clime  
Burned all our inland valleys through,  
Three friends, the guests of summer time,  
Pitched their white tent where sea-winds blew.  
Behind them, marshes, seamed and crossed  
With narrow creeks, and flower-embossed,  
Stretched to the dark oak wood, whose leafy arms  
Screened from the stormy East the pleasant inland farms.

At full of tide their bolder shore  
Of sun-bleached sand the waters beat;  
At ebb, a smooth and glistening floor  
They touched with light, receding feet.  
Northward a 'green bluff broke the chain  
Of sand-hills; southward stretched a plain  
Of salt grass, with a river winding down,  
Sail-whitened, and beyond the steeples of the town,

Whence sometimes, when the wind was light  
And dull the thunder of the beach,

They heard the bells of morn and night  
Swing, miles away, their silver speech.  
Above low scarp and turf-grown wall  
They saw the fort-flag rise and fall;  
And, the first star to signal twilight's hour,  
The lamp-fire glimmer down from the tall light-house tower.

They rested there, escaped awhile  
From cares that wear the life away,  
To eat the lotus of the Nile  
And drink the poppies of Cathay,--  
To fling their loads of custom down,  
Like drift-weed, on the sand-slopes brown,  
And in the sea waves drown the restless pack  
Of duties, claims, and needs that barked upon their track.

One, with his beard scarce silvered, bore  
A ready credence in his looks,  
A lettered magnate, lording o'er  
An ever-widening realm of books.  
In him brain-currents, near and far,  
Converged as in a Leyden jar;  
The old, dead authors thronged him round about,  
And Elzevir's gray ghosts from leathern graves looked out.

He knew each living pundit well,  
Could weigh the gifts of him or her,  
And well the market value tell  
Of poet and philosopher.  
But if he lost, the scenes behind,  
Somewhat of reverence vague and blind,  
Finding the actors human at the best,  
No readier lips than his the good he saw confessed.

His boyhood fancies not outgrown,  
He loved himself the singer's art;  
Tenderly, gently, by his own  
He knew and judged an author's heart.  
No Rhadamanthine brow of doom  
Bowed the dazed pedant from his room;  
And bards, whose name is legion, if denied,  
Bore off alike intact their verses and their pride.

Pleasant it was to roam about  
The lettered world as he had, done,  
And see the lords of song without  
Their singing robes and garlands on.  
With Wordsworth paddle Rydal mere,  
Taste rugged Elliott's home-brewed beer,  
And with the ears of Rogers, at fourscore,  
Hear Garrick's buskined tread and Walpole's wit once more.

And one there was, a dreamer born,  
Who, with a mission to fulfil,  
Had left the Muses' haunts to turn  
The crank of an opinion-mill,  
Making his rustic reed of song  
A weapon in the war with wrong,  
Yoking his fancy to the breaking-plough  
That beam-deep turned the soil for truth to spring and grow.

Too quiet seemed the man to ride  
The winged Hippogriff Reform;  
Was his a voice from side to side  
To pierce the tumult of the storm?  
A silent, shy, peace-loving man,  
He seemed no fiery partisan  
To hold his way against the public frown,  
The ban of Church and State, the fierce mob's hounding down.

For while he wrought with strenuous will  
The work his hands had found to do,  
He heard the fitful music still  
Of winds that out of dream-land blew.  
The din about him could not drown  
What the strange voices whispered down;  
Along his task-field weird processions swept,  
The visionary pomp of stately phantoms stepped:

The common air was thick with dreams,--  
He told them to the toiling crowd;  
Such music as the woods and streams  
Sang in his ear he sang aloud;  
In still, shut bays, on windy capes,

He heard the call of beckoning shapes,  
And, as the gray old shadows prompted him,  
To homely moulds of rhyme he shaped their legends grim.

He rested now his weary hands,  
And lightly moralized and laughed,  
As, tracing on the shifting sands  
A burlesque of his paper-craft,  
He saw the careless waves o'errun  
His words, as time before had done,  
Each day's tide-water washing clean away,  
Like letters from the sand, the work of yesterday.

And one, whose Arab face was tanned  
By tropic sun and boreal frost,  
So travelled there was scarce a land  
Or people left him to exhaust,  
In idling mood had from him hurled  
The poor squeezed orange of the world,  
And in the tent-shade, as beneath a palm,  
Smoked, cross-legged like a Turk, in Oriental calm.

The very waves that washed the sand  
Below him, he had seen before  
Whitening the Scandinavian strand  
And sultry Mauritanian shore.  
From ice-rimmed isles, from summer seas  
Palm-fringed, they bore him messages;  
He heard the plaintive Nubian songs again,  
And mule-bells tinkling down the mountain-paths of Spain.

His memory round the ransacked earth  
On Puck's long girdle slid at ease;  
And, instant, to the valley's girth  
Of mountains, spice isles of the seas,  
Faith flowered in minster stones, Art's guess  
At truth and beauty, found access;  
Yet loved the while, that free cosmopolite,  
Old friends, old ways, and kept his boyhood's dreams in sight.

Untouched as yet by wealth and pride,  
That virgin innocence of beach

No shingly monster, hundred-eyed,  
Stared its gray sand-birds out of reach;  
Unhoused, save where, at intervals,  
The white tents showed their canvas walls,  
Where brief sojourners, in the cool, soft air,  
Forgot their inland heats, hard toil, and year-long care.

Sometimes along the wheel-deep sand  
A one-horse wagon slowly crawled,  
Deep laden with a youthful band,  
Whose look some homestead old recalled;  
Brother perchance, and sisters twain,  
And one whose blue eyes told, more plain  
Than the free language of her rosy lip,  
Of the still dearer claim of love's relationship.

With cheeks of russet-orchard tint,  
The light laugh of their native rills,  
The perfume of their garden's mint,  
The breezy freedom of the hills,  
They bore, in unrestrained delight,  
The motto of the Garter's knight,  
Careless as if from every gazing thing  
Hid by their innocence, as Gyges by his ring.

The clanging sea-fowl came and went,  
The hunter's gun in the marshes rang;  
At nightfall from a neighboring tent  
A flute-voiced woman sweetly sang.  
Loose-haired, barefooted, hand-in-hand,  
Young girls went tripping down the sand;  
And youths and maidens, sitting in the moon,  
Dreamed o'er the old fond dream from which we wake too soon.

At times their fishing-lines they plied,  
With an old Triton at the oar,  
Salt as the sea-wind, tough and dried  
As a lean cusk from Labrador.  
Strange tales he told of wreck and storm,--  
Had seen the sea-snake's awful form,  
And heard the ghosts on Haley's Isle complain,  
Speak him off shore, and beg a passage to old Spain!

And there, on breezy morns, they saw  
The fishing-schooners outward run,  
Their low-bent sails in tack and flaw  
Turned white or dark to shade and sun.  
Sometimes, in calms of closing day,  
They watched the spectral mirage play,  
Saw low, far islands looming tall and nigh,  
And ships, with upturned keels, sail like a sea the sky.

Sometimes a cloud, with thunder black,  
Stooped low upon the darkening main,  
Piercing the waves along its track  
With the slant javelins of rain.  
And when west-wind and sunshine warm  
Chased out to sea its wrecks of storm,  
They saw the prisms in thin spray showers  
Where the green buds of waves burst into white froth flowers.

And when along the line of shore  
The mists crept upward chill and damp,  
Stretched, careless, on their sandy floor  
Beneath the flaring lantern lamp,  
They talked of all things old and new,  
Read, slept, and dreamed as idlers do;  
And in the unquestioned freedom of the tent,  
Body and o'er-taxed mind to healthful ease unbent.

Once, when the sunset splendors died,  
And, trampling up the sloping sand,  
In lines outreaching far and wide,  
The white-waned billows swept to land,  
Dim seen across the gathering shade,  
A vast and ghostly cavalcade,  
They sat around their lighted kerosene,  
Hearing the deep bass roar their every pause between.

Then, urged thereto, the Editor  
Within his full portfolio dipped,  
Feigning excuse while seaching for  
(With secret pride) his manuscript.  
His pale face flushed from eye to beard,

With nervous cough his throat he cleared,  
And, in a voice so tremulous it betrayed  
The anxious fondness of an author's heart, he read:

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Three Bells

BENEATH the low-hung night cloud  
That raked her splintering mast  
The good ship settled slowly,  
The cruel leak gained fast.

Over the awful ocean  
Her signal guns pealed out.  
Dear God! was that Thy answer  
From the horror round about?

A voice came down the wild wind,  
'Ho! ship ahoy!' its cry  
'Our stout Three Bells of Glasgow  
Shall lay till daylight by!'

Hour after hour crept slowly,  
Yet on the heaving swells  
Tossed up and down the ship-lights,  
The lights of the Three Bells!

And ship to ship made signals,  
Man answered back to man,  
While oft, to cheer and hearten,  
The Three Bells nearer ran;

And the captain from her taffrail  
Sent down his hopeful cry  
'Take heart! Hold on!' he shouted;  
'The Three Bells shall lay by!'

All night across the waters  
The tossing lights shone clear;  
All night from reeling taffrail  
The Three Bells sent her cheer.

And when the dreary watches  
Of storm and darkness passed,  
Just as the wreck lurched under,  
All souls were saved at last.

Sail on, Three Bells, forever,  
In grateful memory sail!  
Ring on, Three Bells of rescue,  
Above the wave and gale!

Type of the Love eternal,  
Repeat the Master's cry,  
As tossing through our darkness  
The lights of God draw nigh!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Trailing Arbutus

I wandered lonely where the pine-trees made  
Against the bitter East their barricade,  
And, guided by its sweet  
Perfume, I found, within a narrow dell,  
The trailing spring flower tinted like a shell  
Amid dry leaves and mosses at my feet.

From under dead boughs, for whose loss the pines  
Moaned ceaseless overhead, the blossoming vines  
Lifted their glad surprise,  
While yet the bluebird smoothed in leafless trees  
His feathers ruffled by the chill sea-breeze,  
And snow-drifts lingered under April skies.

As, pausing, o'er the lonely flower I bent,  
I thought of lives thus lowly, clogged and pent,  
Which yet find room,  
Through care and cumber, coldness and decay,  
To lend a sweetness to the ungenial day  
And make the sad earth happier for their bloom.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Truce Of Piscataqua

Raze these long blocks of brick and stone,  
These huge mill-monsters overgrown;  
Blot out the humbler piles as well,  
Where, moved like living shuttles, dwell  
The weaving genii of the bell;  
Tear from the wild Cocheco's track  
The dams that hold its torrents back;  
And let the loud-rejoicing fall  
Plunge, roaring, down its rocky wall;  
And let the Indian's paddle play  
On the unbridged Piscataqua!  
Wide over hill and valley spread  
Once more the forest, dusk and dread,  
With here and there a clearing cut  
From the walled shadows round it shut;  
Each with its farm-house builded rude,  
By English yeoman squared and hewed,  
And the grim, flankered block-house bound  
With bristling palisades around.  
So, haply shall before thine eyes  
The dusty veil of centuries rise,  
The old, strange scenery overlay  
The tamer pictures of to-day,  
While, like the actors in a play,  
Pass in their ancient guise along  
The figures of my border song  
What time beside Cocheco's flood  
The white man and the red man stood,  
With words of peace and brotherhood;  
When passed the sacred calumet  
From lip to lip with fire-draught wet,  
And, puffed in scorn, the peace-pipe's smoke  
Through the gray beard of Waldron broke,  
And Squando's voice, in suppliant plea  
For mercy, struck the haughty key  
Of one who held, in any fate,  
His native pride inviolate!

'Let your ears be opened wide!

He who speaks has never lied.  
Waldron of Piscataqua,  
Hear what Squando has to say!

'Squando shuts his eyes and sees,  
Far off, Saco's hemlock-trees.  
In his wigwam, still as stone,  
Sits a woman all alone,

'Wampum beads and birchen strands  
Dropping from her careless hands,  
Listening ever for the fleet  
Patter of a dead child's feet!

'When the moon a year ago  
Told the flowers the time to blow,  
In that lonely wigwam smiled  
Menewee, our little child.

'Ere that moon grew thin and old,  
He was lying still and cold;  
Sent before us, weak and small,  
When the Master did not call!

'On his little grave I lay;  
Three times went and came the day,  
Thrice above me blazed the noon,  
Thrice upon me wept the moon.

'In the third night-watch I heard,  
Far and low, a spirit-bird;  
Very mournful, very wild,  
Sang the totem of my child.

"Menewee, poor Menewee,  
Walks a path he cannot see  
Let the white man's wigwam light  
With its blaze his steps aright.

"All-uncalled, he dares not show  
Empty hands to Manito  
Better gifts he cannot bear

Than the scalps his slayers wear.'

'All the while the totem sang,  
Lightning blazed and thunder rang;  
And a black cloud, reaching high,  
Pulled the white moon from the sky.

'I, the medicine-man, whose ear  
All that spirits bear can hear,-  
I, whose eyes are wide to see  
All the things that are to be,-

'Well I knew the dreadful signs  
In the whispers of the pines,  
In the river roaring loud,  
In the mutter of the cloud.

'At the breaking of the day,  
From the grave I passed away;  
Flowers bloomed round me, birds sang glad,  
But my heart was hot and mad.

'There is rust on Squando's knife,  
From the warm, red springs of life;  
On the funeral hemlock-trees  
Many a scalp the totem sees.

'Blood for blood! But evermore  
Squando's heart is sad and sore;  
And his poor squaw waits at home  
For the feet that never come!

'Waldron of Cocheco, hear!  
Squando speaks, who laughs at fear;  
Take the captives he has ta'en;  
Let the land have peace again!'

As the words died on his tongue,  
Wide apart his warriors swung;  
Parted, at the sign he gave,  
Right and left, like Egypt's wave.

And, like Israel passing free  
Through the prophet-charmed sea,  
Captive mother, wife, and child  
Through the dusky terror filed.

One alone, a little maid,  
Middleway her steps delayed,  
Glancing, with quick, troubled sight,  
Round about from red to white.

Then his hand the Indian laid  
On the little maiden's head,  
Lightly from her forehead fair  
Smoothing back her yellow hair.

'Gift or favor ask I none;  
What I have is all my own  
Never yet the birds have sung,  
Squando hath a beggar's tongue.'

'Yet for her who waits at home,  
For the dead who cannot come,  
Let the little Gold-hair be  
In the place of Menewee!

'Mishanock, my little star!  
Come to Saco's pines afar;  
Where the sad one waits at home,  
Wequashim, my moonlight, come!'

'What!' quoth Waldron, 'leave a child  
Christian-born to heathens wild?  
As God lives, from Satan's hand  
I will pluck her as a brand!'

'Hear me, white man!' Squando cried;  
'Let the little one decide.  
Wequashim, my moonlight, say,  
Wilt thou go with me, or stay?'

Slowly, sadly, half afraid,  
Half regretfully, the maid

Owned the ties of blood and race,-  
Turned from Squando's pleading face.

Not a word the Indian spoke,  
But his wampum chain he broke,  
And the beaded wonder hung  
On that neck so fair and young.

Silence-shod, as phantoms seem  
In the marches of a dream,  
Single-filed, the grim array  
Through the pine-trees wound away.

Doubting, trembling, sore amazed,  
Through her tears the young child gazed.  
'God preserve her!' Waldron said;  
'Satan hath bewitched the maid!'

Years went and came. At close of day  
Singing came a child from play,  
Tossing from her loose-locked head  
Gold in sunshine, brown in shade.

Pride was in the mother's look,  
But her head she gravely shook,  
And with lips that fondly smiled  
Feigned to chide her truant child.

Unabashed, the maid began  
'Up and down the brook I ran,  
Where, beneath the bank so steep,  
Lie the spotted trout asleep.

'Chip!' went squirrel on the wall,  
After me I heard him call,  
And the cat-bird on the tree  
Tried his best to mimic me.

'Where the hemlocks grew so dark  
That I stopped to look and hark,  
On a log, with feather-hat,  
By the path, an Indian sat.

'Then I cried, and ran away;  
But he called, and bade me stay;  
And his voice was good and mild  
As my mother's to her child.

'And he took my wampum chain,  
Looked and looked it o'er again;  
Gave me berries, and, beside,  
On my neck a plaything tied.'

Straight the mother stooped to see  
What the Indian's gift might be.  
On the braid of wampum hung,  
Lo! a cross of silver swung.

Well she knew its graven sign,  
Squando's bird and totem pine;  
And, a mirage of the brain,  
Flowed her childhood back again.

Flashed the roof the sunshine through,  
Into space the walls outgrew;  
On the Indian's wigwam-mat,  
Blossom-crowned, again she sat.

Cool she felt the west-wind blow,  
In her ear the pines sang low,  
And, like links from out a chain,  
Dropped the years of care and pain.  
From the outward toil and din,  
From the griefs that gnaw within,  
To the freedom of the woods  
Called the birds, and winds, and floods.

Well, O painful minister!  
Watch thy flock, but blame not her,  
If her ear grew sharp to hear  
All their voices whispering near.

Blame her not, as to her soul  
All the desert's glamour stole,

That a tear for childhood's loss  
Dropped upon the Indian's cross.

When, that night, the Book was read,  
And she bowed her widowed head,  
And a prayer for each loved name  
Rose like incense from a flame,

With a hope the creeds forbid  
In her pitying bosom hid,  
To the listening ear of Heaven  
Lo! the Indian's name was given.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Two Angels

God called the nearest angels who dwell with Him above:  
The tenderest one was Pity, the dearest one was Love.

'Arise,' He said, 'my angels! a wail of woe and sin  
Steals through the gates of heaven, and saddens all within.

'My harps take up the mournful strain that from a lost world swells,  
The smoke of torment clouds the light and blights the asphodels.

'Fly downward to that under world, and on its souls of pain,  
Let Love drop smiles like sunshine, and Pity tears like rain!'

Two faces bowed before the Throne, veiled in their golden hair;  
Four white wings lessened swiftly down the dark abyss of air.

The way was strange, the flight was long; at last the angels came  
Where swung the lost and nether world, red-wrapped in rayless flame.

There Pity, shuddering, wept; but Love, with faith too strong for fear,  
Took heart from God's almightiness and smiled a smile of cheer.

And lo! that tear of Pity quenched the flame whereon it fell,  
And, with the sunshine of that smile, hope entered into hell!

Two unveiled faces full of joy looked upward to the Throne,  
Four white wings folded at the feet of Him who sat thereon!

And deeper than the sound of seas, more soft than falling flake,  
Amidst the hush of wing and song the Voice Eternal spake:

'Welcome, my angels! ye have brought a holier joy to heaven;  
Henceforth its sweetest song shall be the song of sin forgiven!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Two Elizabeths

Read at the unveiling of the bust of Elizabeth Fry at the Friends' School, Providence, R. I.

A. D. 1209.

AMIDST Thuringia's wooded hills she dwelt,  
A high-born princess, servant of the poor,  
Sweetening with gracious words the food she dealt  
To starving throngs at Wartburg's blazoned door.

A blinded zealot held her soul in chains,  
Cramped the sweet nature that he could not kill,  
Scarred her fair body with his penance-pains,  
And gauged her conscience by his narrow will.

God gave her gifts of beauty and of grace,  
With fast and vigil she denied them all;  
Unquestioning, with sad, pathetic face,  
She followed meekly at her stern guide's call.

So drooped and died her home-blown rose of bliss  
In the chill rigor of a discipline  
That turned her fond lips from her children's kiss,  
And made her joy of motherhood a sin.

To their sad level by compassion led,  
One with the low and vile herself she made,  
While thankless misery mocked the hand that fed,  
And laughed to scorn her piteous masquerade.

But still, with patience that outwearied hate,  
She gave her all while yet she had to give;  
And then her empty hands, importunate,  
In prayer she lifted that the poor might live.

Sore pressed by grief, and wrongs more hard to bear,  
And dwarfed and stifled by a harsh control,  
She kept life fragrant with good deeds and prayer,  
And fresh and pure the white flower of her soul.

Death found her busy at her task: one word  
Alone she uttered as she paused to die,  
'Silence!'--then listened even as one who heard  
With song and wing the angels drawing nigh!

Now Fra Angelico's roses fill her hands,  
And, on Murillo's canvas, Want and Pain  
Kneel at her feet. Her marble image stands  
Worshipped and crowned in Marburg's holy fane.

Yea, wheresoe'er her Church its cross uprears,  
Wide as the world her story still is told;  
In manhood's reverence, woman's prayers and tears,  
She lives again whose grave is centuries old.

And still, despite the weakness or the blame  
Of blind submission to the blind, she hath  
A tender place in hearts of every name,  
And more than Rome owns Saint Elizabeth!

A. D. 1780.

Slow ages passed: and lo! another came,  
An English matron, in whose simple faith  
Nor priestly rule nor ritual had claim,  
A plain, uncanonized Elizabeth.

No sackcloth robe, nor ashen-sprinkled hair,  
Nor wasting fast, nor scourge, nor vigil long,  
Marred her calm presence. God had made her fair,  
And she could do His goodly work no wrong.

Their yoke is easy and their burden light  
Whose sole confessor is the Christ of God;  
Her quiet trust and faith transcending sight  
Smoothed to her feet the difficult paths she trod.

And there she walked, as duty bade her go,  
Safe and unsullied as a cloistered nun,  
Shamed with her plainness Fashion's gaudy show,  
And overcame the world she did not shun.

In Earlham's bowers, in Plashet's liberal hall,  
In the great city's restless crowd and din,  
Her ear was open to the Master's call,  
And knew the summons of His voice within.

Tender as mother, beautiful as wife,  
Amidst the throngs of prisoned crime she stood  
In modest raiment faultless as her life,  
The type of England's worthiest womanhood.

To melt the hearts that harshness turned to stone  
The sweet persuasion of her lips sufficed,  
And guilt, which only hate and fear had known,  
Saw in her own the pitying love of Christ.

So wheresoe'er the guiding Spirit went  
She followed, finding every prison cell  
It opened for her sacred as a tent  
Pitched by Gennesaret or by Jacob's well.

And Pride and Fashion felt her strong appeal,  
And priest and ruler marvelled as they saw  
How hand in hand went wisdom with her zeal,  
And woman's pity kept the bounds of law.

She rests in God's peace; but her memory stirs  
The air of earth as with an angel's wings,  
And warms and moves the hearts of men like hers,  
The sainted daughter of Hungarian kings.

United now, the Briton and the Hun,  
Each, in her own time, faithful unto death,  
Live sister souls! in name and spirit one,  
Thuringia's saint and our Elizabeth!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Two Loves

Smoothing soft the nestling head  
Of a maiden fancy-led,  
Thus a grave-eyed woman said:

'Richest gifts are those we make,  
Dearer than the love we take  
That we give for love's own sake.

'Well I know the heart's unrest;  
Mine has been the common quest,  
To be loved and therefore blest.

'Favors undeserved were mine;  
At my feet as on a shrine  
Love has laid its gifts divine.

'Sweet the offerings seemed, and yet  
With their sweetness came regret,  
And a sense of unpaid debt.

'Heart of mine unsatisfied,  
Was it vanity or pride  
That a deeper joy denied?

'Hands that ope but to receive  
Empty close; they only live  
Richly who can richly give.

'Still,' she sighed, with moistening eyes,  
'Love is sweet in any guise;  
But its best is sacrifice!

'He who, giving, does not crave  
Lickest is to Him who gave  
Life itself the loved to save.

'Love, that self-forgetful gives,  
Sows surprise of ripened sheaves,  
Late or soon its own receives.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Two Rabbins

THE Rabbi Nathan two-score years and ten  
Walked blameless through the evil world, and then,  
Just as the almond blossomed in his hair,  
Met a temptation all too strong to bear,  
And miserably sinned. So, adding not  
Falsehood to guilt, he left his seat, and taught  
No more among the elders, but went out  
From the great congregation girt about  
With sackcloth, and with ashes on his head,  
Making his gray locks grayer. Long he prayed,  
Smiting his breast; then, as the Book he laid  
Open before him for the Bath-Col's choice,  
Pausing to hear that Daughter of a Voice,  
Behold the royal preacher's words: 'A friend  
Loveth at all times, yea, unto the end;  
And for the evil day thy brother lives.'  
Marvelling, he said: 'It is the Lord who gives  
Counsel in need. At Ecbatana dwells  
Rabbi Ben Isaac, who all men excels  
In righteousness and wisdom, as the trees  
Of Lebanon the small weeds that the bees  
Bow with their weight. I will arise, and lay  
My sins before him.'

And he went his way  
Barefooted, fasting long, with many prayers;  
But even as one who, followed unawares,  
Suddenly in the darkness feels a hand  
Thrill with its touch his own, and his cheek fanned  
By odors subtly sweet, and whispers near  
Of words he loathes, yet cannot choose but hear,  
So, while the Rabbi journeyed, chanting low  
The wail of David's penitential woe,  
Before him still the old temptation came,  
And mocked him with the motion and the shame  
Of such desires that, shuddering, he abhorred  
Himself; and, crying mightily to the Lord  
To free his soul and cast the demon out,  
Smote with his staff the blankness round about.

At length, in the low light of a spent day,  
The towers of Ecbatana far away  
Rose on the desert's rim; and Nathan, faint  
And footsore, pausing where for some dead saint  
The faith of Islam reared a domed tomb,  
Saw some one kneeling in the shadow, whom  
He greeted kindly: 'May the Holy One  
Answer thy prayers, O stranger!' Whereupon  
The shape stood up with a loud cry, and then,  
Clasped in each other's arms, the two gray men  
Wept, praising Him whose gracious providence  
Made their paths one. But straightway, as the sense  
Of his transgression smote him, Nathan tore  
Himself away: 'O friend beloved, no more  
Worthy am I to touch thee, for I came,  
Foul from my sins, to tell thee all my shame.  
Haply thy prayers, since naught availeth mine,  
May purge my soul, and make it white like thine.  
Pity me, O Ben Isaac, I have sinned!'

Awestruck Ben Isaac stood. The desert wind  
Blew his long mantle backward, laying bare  
The mournful secret of his shirt of hair.  
'I too, O friend, if not in act,' he said,  
'In thought have verily sinned. Hast thou not read,  
'Better the eye should see than that desire  
Should wander?' Burning with a hidden fire  
That tears and prayers quench not, I come to thee  
For pity and for help, as thou to me.  
Pray for me, O my friend!' But Nathan cried,  
'Pray thou for me, Ben Isaac!'

Side by side  
In the low sunshine by the turban stone  
They knelt; each made his brother's woe his own,  
Forgetting, in the agony and stress  
Of pitying love, his claim of selfishness;  
Peace, for his friend besought, his own became;  
His prayers were answered in another's name;  
And, when at last they rose up to embrace,  
Each saw God's pardon in his brother's face!

Long after, when his headstone gathered moss,  
Traced on the targum-marge of Onkelos  
In Rabbi Nathan's hand these words were read:  
'/Hope not the cure of sin till Self is dead;  
Forget it in love's service, and the debt  
Thou, canst not pay the angels shall forget;  
Heaven's gate is shut to him who comes alone;  
Save thou a soul, and it shall save thy own!/'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Vanishers

Sweetest of all childlike dreams  
In the simple Indian lore  
Still to me the legend seems  
Of the shapes who flit before.

Flitting, passing, seen and gone,  
Never reached nor found at rest,  
Baffling search, but beckoning on  
To the Sunset of the Blest.

From the clefts of mountain rocks,  
Through the dark of lowland firs,  
Flash the eyes and flow the locks  
Of the mystic Vanishers!

And the fisher in his skiff,  
And the hunter on the moss,  
Hear their call from cape and cliff,  
See their hands the birch-leaves toss.

Wistful, longing, through the green  
Twilight of the clustered pines,  
In their faces rarely seen  
Beauty more than mortal shines.

Fringed with gold their mantles flow  
On the slopes of westering knolls;  
In the wind they whisper low  
Of the Sunset Land of Souls.

Doubt who may, O friend of mine!  
Thou and I have seen them too;  
On before with beck and sign  
Still they glide, and we pursue.

More than clouds of purple trail  
In the gold of setting day;  
More than gleams of wing or sail  
Beckon from the sea-mist gray.

Glimpses of immortal youth,  
Gleams and glories seen and flown,  
Far-heard voices sweet with truth,  
Airs from viewless Eden blown;

Beauty that eludes our grasp,  
Sweetness that transcends our taste,  
Loving hands we may not clasp,  
Shining feet that mock our haste;

Gentle eyes we closed below,  
Tender voices heard once more,  
Smile and call us, as they go  
On and onward, still before.

Guided thus, O friend of mine  
Let us walk our little way,  
Knowing by each beckoning sign  
That we are not quite astray.

Chase we still, with baffled feet,  
Smiling eye and waving hand,  
Sought and seeker soon shall meet,  
Lost and found, in Sunset Land

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Vaudois Teacher

'O Lady fair, these silks of mine  
are beautiful and rare,-  
The richest web of the Indian loom, which beauty's  
queen might wear;  
And my pearls are pure as thy own fair neck, with whose  
radiant light they vie;  
I have brought them with me a weary way,-will my  
gentle lady buy?'

The lady smiled on the worn old man through the  
dark and clustering curls  
Which veiled her brow, as she bent to view his  
silks and glittering pearls;  
And she placed their price in the old man's hand  
and lightly turned away,  
But she paused at the wanderer's earnest call,-  
'My gentle lady, stay!

'O lady fair, I have yet a gem which a purer  
lustre flings,  
Than the diamond flash of the jewelled crown on  
the lofty brow of kings;  
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price, whose virtue  
shall not decay,  
Whose light shall be as a spell to thee and a  
blessing on thy way!'

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel where her  
form of grace was seen,  
Where her eye shone clear, and her dark locks  
waved their clasping pearls between;  
'Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth, thou  
traveller gray and old,  
And name the price of thy precious gem, and my  
page shall count thy gold.'

The cloud went off from the pilgrim's brow, as a  
small and meagre book,  
Unchased with gold or gem of cost, from his

folding robe he took!

'Here, lady fair, is the pearl of price, may it prove  
as such to thee

Nay, keep thy gold-I ask it not, for the word of  
God is free!'

The hoary traveller went his way, but the gift he  
left behind

Hath had its pure and perfect work on that high-  
born maiden's mind,

And she hath turned from the pride of sin to the  
lowliness of truth,

And given her human heart to God in its beautiful  
hour of youth

And she hath left the gray old halls, where an evil  
faith had power,

The courtly knights of her father's train, and the  
maidens of her bower;

And she hath gone to the Vaudois vales by lordly  
feet untrod,

Where the poor and needy of earth are rich in the  
perfect love of God!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Vision Of Echard

The Benedictine Echard  
Sat by the wayside well,  
Where Marsberg sees the bridal  
Of the Sarre and the Moselle.

Fair with its sloping vineyards  
And tawny chestnut bloom,  
The happy vale Ausonius sunk  
For holy Treves made room.

On the shrine Helena builded  
To keep the Christ coat well,  
On minster tower and kloster cross,  
The westering sunshine fell.

There, where the rock-hewn circles  
O'erlooked the Roman's game,  
The veil of sleep fell on him,  
And his thought a dream became.

He felt the heart of silence  
Throb with a soundless word,  
And by the inward ear alone  
A spirit's voice he heard.

And the spoken word seemed written  
On air and wave and sod,  
And the bending walls of sapphire  
Blazed with the thought of God.

'What lack I, O my children?  
All things are in my band;  
The vast earth and the awful stars  
I hold as grains of sand.

'Need I your alms? The silver  
And gold are mine alone;  
The gifts ye bring before me  
Were evermore my own.

'Heed I the noise of viols,  
Your pomp of masque and show?  
Have I not dawns and sunsets  
Have I not winds that blow?

'Do I smell your gums of incense?  
Is my ear with chantings fed?  
Taste I your wine of worship,  
Or eat your holy bread?

'Of rank and name and honors  
Am I vain as ye are vain?  
What can Eternal Fulness  
From your lip-service gain?

'Ye make me not your debtor  
Who serve yourselves alone;  
Ye boast to me of homage  
Whose gain is all your own.

'For you I gave the prophets,  
For you the Psalmist's lay  
For you the law's stone tables,  
And holy book and day.

'Ye change to weary burdens  
The helps that should uplift;  
Ye lose in form the spirit,  
The Giver in the gift.

'Who called ye to self-torment,  
To fast and penance vain?  
Dream ye Eternal Goodness  
Has joy in mortal pain?

'For the death in life of Nitria,  
For your Chartreuse ever dumb,  
What better is the neighbor,  
Or happier the home?

'Who counts his brother's welfare

As sacred as his own,  
And loves, forgives, and pities,  
He serveth me alone.

'I note each gracious purpose,  
Each kindly word and deed;  
Are ye not all my children?  
Shall not the Father heed?

'No prayer for light and guidance  
Is lost upon mine ear  
The child's cry in the darkness  
Shall not the Father hear?

'I loathe your wrangling councils,  
I tread upon your creeds;  
Who made ye mine avengers,  
Or told ye of my needs;

'I bless men and ye curse them,  
I love them and ye hate;  
Ye bite and tear each other,  
I suffer long and wait.

'Ye bow to ghastly symbols,  
To cross and scourge and thorn;  
Ye seek his Syrian manger  
Who in the heart is born.

'For the dead Christ, not the living,  
Ye watch His empty grave,  
Whose life alone within you  
Has power to bless and save.

'O blind ones, outward groping,  
The idle quest forego;  
Who listens to His inward voice  
Alone of Him shall know.

'His love all love exceeding  
The heart must needs recall,  
Its self-surrendering freedom,

Its loss that gaineth all.

'Climb not the holy mountains,  
Their eagles know not me;  
Seek not the Blessed Islands,  
I dwell not in the sea.

'Gone is the mount of Meru,  
The triple gods are gone,  
And, deaf to all the lama's prayers,  
The Buddha slumbers on.

'No more from rocky Horeb  
The smitten waters gush;  
Fallen is Bethel's ladder,  
Quenched is the burning bush.

'The jewels of the Urim  
And Thurnmim all are dim;  
The fire has left the altar,  
The sign the teraphim.

'No more in ark or hill grove  
The Holiest abides;  
Not in the scroll's dead letter  
The eternal secret hides.

'The eye shall fail that searches  
For me the hollow sky;  
The far is even as the near,  
The low is as the high.

'What if the earth is hiding  
Her old faiths, long outworn?  
What is it to the changeless truth  
That yours shall fail in turn?

'What if the o'eturned altar  
Lays bare the ancient lie?  
What if the dreams and legends  
Of the world's childhood die?

'Have ye not still my witness  
Within yourselves always,  
My hand that on the keys of life  
For bliss or bale I lay?

'Still, in perpetual judgment,  
I hold assize within,  
With sure reward of holiness,  
And dread rebuke of sin.

'A light, a guide, a warning,  
A presence ever near,  
Through the deep silence of the flesh  
I reach the inward ear.

'My Gerizim and Ebal  
Are in each human soul,  
The still, small voice of blessing,  
And Sinai's thunder-roll.

'The stern behest of duty,  
The doom-book open thrown,  
The heaven ye seek, the hell ye fear,  
Are with yourselves alone.'

. . . . .

A gold and purple sunset  
Flowed down the broad Moselle;  
On hills of vine and meadow lands  
The peace of twilight fell.

A slow, cool wind of evening  
Blew over leaf and bloom;  
And, faint and far, the Angelus  
Rang from Saint Matthew's tomb.

Then up rose Master Echard,  
And marvelled: 'Can it be  
That here, in dream and vision,  
The Lord hath talked with me?'

He went his way; behind him  
The shrines of saintly dead,  
The holy coat and nail of cross,  
He left unvisited.

He sought the vale of Eltzbach  
His burdened soul to free,  
Where the foot-hills of the Eifel  
Are glassed in Laachersee.

And, in his Order's kloster,  
He sat, in night-long parle,  
With Tauler of the Friends of God,  
And Nicolas of Basle.

And lo! the twain made answer  
'Yea, brother, even thus  
The Voice above all voices  
Hath spoken unto us.

'The world will have its idols,  
And flesh and sense their sign  
But the blinded eyes shall open,  
And the gross ear be fine.

'What if the vision tarry?  
God's time is always best;  
The true Light shall be witnessed,  
The Christ within confessed.

'In mercy or in judgment  
He shall turn and overturn,  
Till the heart shall be His temple  
Where all of Him shall learn.'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Voices

'WHY urge the long, unequal fight,  
Since Truth has fallen in the street,  
Or lift anew the trampled light,  
Quenched by the heedless million's feet?  
'Give o'er the thankless task; forsake  
The fools who know not ill from good:  
Eat, drink, enjoy thy own, and take  
Thine ease among the multitude.  
'Live out thyself; with others share  
Thy proper life no more; assume  
The unconcern of sun and air,  
For life or death, or blight or bloom.  
'The mountain pine looks calmly on  
The fires that scourge the plains below,  
Nor heeds the eagle in the sun  
The small birds piping in the snow!  
'The world is God's, not thine; let Him  
Work out a change, if change must be:  
The hand that planted best can trim  
And nurse the old unfruitful tree.'  
So spake the Tempter, when the light  
Of sun and stars had left the sky;  
I listened, through the cloud and night,  
And heard, methought, a voice reply:  
'Thy task may well seem over-hard,  
Who scatterest in a thankless soil  
Thy life as seed, with no reward  
Save that which Duty gives to Toil.  
'Not wholly is thy heart resigned  
To Heaven's benign and just decree,  
Which, linking thee with all thy kind,  
Transmits their joys and griefs to thee.  
'Break off that sacred chain, and turn  
Back on thyself thy love and care;  
Be thou thine own mean idol, burn  
Faith, Hope, and Trust, thy children, there.  
'Released from that fraternal law  
Which shares the common bale and bliss,  
No sadder lot could Folly draw,

Or Sin provoke from Fate, than this.  
'The meal unshared is food unblest:  
Thou hoard'st in vain what love should spend;  
Self-ease is pain; thy only rest  
Is labor for a worthy end;  
'A toil that gains with what it yields,  
And scatters to its own increase,  
And hears, while sowing outward fields,  
The harvest-song of inward peace.  
'Free-lipped the liberal streamlets run,  
Free shines for all the healthful ray;.  
The still pool stagnates in the sun,  
The lurid earth-fire haunts decay!  
'What is it that the crowd requite  
Thy love with hate, thy truth with lies?  
And but to faith, and not to sight,  
The walls of Freedom's temple rise?  
'Yet do thy work; it shall succeed  
In thine or in another's day;  
And, if denied the victor's meed,  
Thou shalt not lack the toiler's pay.  
'Faith shares the future's promise; Love's  
Self-offering is a triumph won;  
And each good thought or action moves  
The dark world nearer to the sun.  
'Then faint not, falter not, nor plead  
Thy weakness; truth itself is strong;  
The lion's strength, the eagle's speed,  
Are not alone vouchsafed to wrong.  
'Thy nature, which, through fire and flood,  
To place or gain finds out its way,  
Hath power to seek the highest good,  
And duty's holiest call obey!  
'Strivest thou in darkness? — Foes without  
In league with traitor thoughts within;  
Thy night-watch kept with trembling Doubt  
And pale Remorse the ghost of Sin?  
'Hast thou not, on some week of storm,  
Seen the sweet Sabbath breaking fair,  
And cloud and shadow, sunlit, form  
The curtains of its tent of prayer?  
'So, haply, when thy task shall end,

The wrong shall lose itself in right,  
And all thy week-day darkness blend  
With the long Sabbath of the light!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Vow Of Washington

The sword was sheathed: in April's sun  
Lay green the fields by Freedom won;  
And severed sections, weary of debates,  
Joined hands at last and were United States.

O City sitting by the Sea  
How proud the day that dawned on thee,  
When the new era, long desired, began,  
And, in its need, the hour had found the man!

One thought the cannon salvos spoke,  
The resonant bell-tower's vibrant stroke,  
The voiceful streets, the plaudit-echoing halls,  
And prayer and hymn borne heavenward from St. Paul's!

How felt the land in every part  
The strong throb of a nation's heart,  
As its great leader gave, with reverent awe,  
His pledge to Union, Liberty, and Law.

That pledge the heavens above him heard,  
That vow the sleep of centuries stirred;  
In world-wide wonder listening peoples bent  
Their gaze on Freedom's great experiment.

Could it succeed? Of honor sold  
And hopes deceived all history told.  
Above the wrecks that strewed the mournful past,  
Was the long dream of ages true at last?

Thank God! the people's choice was just,  
The one man equal to his trust,  
Wise beyond lore, and without weakness good,  
Calm in the strength of flawless rectitude.

His rule of justice, order, peace,  
Made possible the world's release;  
Taught prince and serf that power is but a trust,  
And rule, alone, which serves the ruled, is just;

That Freedom generous is, but strong  
In hate of fraud and selfish wrong,  
Pretence that turns her holy truths to lies,  
And lawless license masking in her guise.

Land of his love! with one glad voice  
Let thy great sisterhood rejoice;  
A century's suns o'er thee have risen and set,  
And, God be praised, we are one nation yet.

And still we trust the years to be  
Shall prove his hope was destiny,  
Leaving our flag, with all its added stars,  
Unrent by faction and unstained by wars.

Lo! where with patient toil he nursed  
And trained the new-set plant at first,  
The widening branches of a stately tree  
Stretch from the sunrise to the sunset sea.

And in its broad and sheltering shade,  
Sitting with none to make afraid,  
Were we now silent, through each mighty limb,  
The winds of heaven would sing the praise of him.

Our first and best!--his ashes lie  
Beneath his own Virginian sky.  
Forgive, forget, O true and just and brave,  
The storm that swept above thy sacred grave.

For, ever in the awful strife  
And dark hours of the nation's life,  
Through the fierce tumult pierced his warning word,  
Their father's voice his erring children heard.

The change for which he prayed and sought  
In that sharp agony was wrought;  
No partial interest draws its alien line  
'Twixt North and South, the cypress and the pine!

One people now, all doubt beyond,

His name shall be our Union-bond;  
We lift our hands to Heaven, and here and now.  
Take on our lips the old Centennial vow.

For rule and trust must needs be ours;  
Chooser and chosen both are powers  
Equal in service as in rights; the claim  
Of Duty rests on each and all the same.

Then let the sovereign millions, where  
Our banner floats in sun and air,  
From the warm palm-lands to Alaska's cold,  
Repeat with us the pledge a century old?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Waiting

I wait and watch: before my eyes  
Methinks the night grows thin and gray;  
I wait and watch the eastern skies  
To see the golden spears arise  
Beneath the oriflamme of day!

Like one whose limbs are bound in trance  
I hear the day-sounds swell and grow,  
And see across the twilight glance,  
Troop after troop, in swift advance,  
The shining ones with plumes of snow!

I know the errand of their feet,  
I know what mighty work is theirs;  
I can but lift up hands unmeet,  
The threshing-floors of God to beat,  
And speed them with unworthy prayers.

I will not dream in vain despair  
The steps of progress wait for me  
The puny leverage of a hair  
The planet's impulse well may spare,  
A drop of dew the tided sea.

The loss, if loss there be, is mine,  
And yet not mine if understood;  
For one shall grasp and one resign,  
One drink life's rue, and one its wine,  
And God shall make the balance good.

Oh power to do! Oh baffled will!  
Oh prayer and action! ye are one.  
Who may not strive, may yet fulfil  
The harder task of standing still,  
And good but wished with God is done!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Watchers

BESIDE a stricken field I stood;  
On the torn turf, on grass and wood,  
Hung heavily the dew of blood.  
Still in their fresh mounds lay the slain,  
But all the air was quick with pain  
And gusty sighs and tearful rain.  
Two angels, each with drooping head  
And folded wings and noiseless tread,  
Watched by that valley of the dead.  
The one, with forehead saintly bland  
And lips of blessing, not command,  
Leaned, weeping, on her olive wand.  
The other's brows were scarred and knit,  
His restless eyes were watch-fires lit,  
His hands for battle-gauntlets fit.  
'How long!' — I knew the voice of Peace, —  
'Is there no respite? no release?  
When shall the hopeless quarrel cease?  
'O Lord, how long! One human soul  
Is more than any parchment scroll,  
Or any flag thy winds unroll.  
'What price was Ellsworth's, young and brave?  
How weigh the gift that Lyon gave,  
Or count the cost of Winthrop's grave?  
'O brother! if thine eye can see,  
Tell how and when the end shall be,  
What hope remains for thee and me.'  
Then Freedom sternly said: 'I shun  
No strife nor pang beneath the sun,  
When human rights are staked and won.  
'I knelt with Ziska's hunted flock,  
I watched in Toussaint's cell of rock,  
I walked with Sidney to the block.  
'The moor of Marston felt my tread,  
Through Jersey snows the march I led,  
My voice Magenta's charges sped.  
'But now, through weary day and night,  
I watch a vague and aimless fight  
For leave to strike one blow aright.

'On either side my foe they own:  
One guards through love his ghastly throne,  
And one through fear to reverence grown.  
'Why wait we longer, mocked, betrayed,  
By open foes, or those afraid  
To speed thy coming through my aid?  
'Why watch to see who win or fall?  
I shake the dust against them all,  
I leave them to their senseless brawl.'  
'Nay,' Peace implored: 'yet longer wait;  
The doom is near, the stake is great:  
God knoweth if it be too late.  
'Still wait and watch; the way prepare  
Where I with folded wings of prayer  
May follow, weaponless and bare.'  
'Too late!' the stern, sad voice replied,  
'Too late!' its mournful echo sighed,  
In low lament the answer died.  
A rustling as of wings in flight,  
An upward gleam of lessening white,  
So passed the vision, sound and sight.  
But round me, like a silver bell  
Rung down the listening sky to tell  
Of holy help, a sweet voice fell.  
'Still hope and trust,' it sang; 'the rod  
Must fall, the wine-press must be trod,  
But all is possible with God!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Well Of Loch Maree

Calm on the breast of Loch Maree  
A little isle reposes;  
A shadow woven of the oak  
And willow o'er it closes.

Within, a Druid's mound is seen,  
Set round with stony warders;  
A fountain, gushing through the turf,  
Flows o'er its grassy borders.

And whoso bathes therein his brow,  
With care or madness burning,  
Feels once again his healthful thought  
And sense of peace returning.

O restless heart and fevered brain,  
Unquiet and unstable,  
That holy well of Loch Maree  
Is more than idle fable!

Life's changes vex, its discords stun,  
Its glaring sunshine blindeth,  
And blest is he who on his way  
That fount of healing findeth!

The shadows of a humbled will  
And contrite heart are o'er it;  
Go read its legend, 'TRUST IN GOD,'  
On Faith's white stones before it.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Wife Of Manoah To Her Husband

Against the sunset's glowing wall  
The city towers rise black and tall,  
Where Zorah, on its rocky height,  
Stands like an armed man in the light.

Down Eshtaol's vales of ripened grain  
Falls like a cloud the night amain,  
And up the hillsides climbing slow  
The barley reapers homeward go.

Look, dearest! how our fair child's head  
The sunset light hath hallowed,  
Where at this olive's foot he lies,  
Uplooking to the tranquil skies.

Oh, while beneath the fervent heat  
Thy sickle swept the bearded wheat,  
I've watched, with mingled joy and dread,  
Our child upon his grassy bed.

Joy, which the mother feels alone  
Whose morning hope like mine had flown,  
When to her bosom, over-blessed,  
A dearer life than hers is pressed.

Dread, for the future dark and still,  
Which shapes our dear one to its will;  
Forever in his large calm eyes,  
I read a tale of sacrifice.

The same foreboding awe I felt  
When at the altar's side we knelt,  
And he, who as a pilgrim came,  
Rose, winged and glorious, through the flame.

I slept not, though the wild bees made  
A dreamlike murmuring in the shade,  
And on me the warm-fingered hours  
Pressed with the drowsy smell of flowers.

Before me, in a vision, rose  
The hosts of Israel's scornful foes,--  
Rank over rank, helm, shield, and spear,  
Glittered in noon's hot atmosphere.

I heard their boast, and bitter word,  
Their mockery of the Hebrew's Lord,  
I saw their hands His ark assail,  
Their feet profane His holy veil.

No angel down the blue space spoke,  
No thunder from the still sky broke;  
But in their midst, in power and awe,  
Like God's waked wrath, our child I saw!

A child no more!--harsh-browed and strong,  
He towered a giant in the throng,  
And down his shoulders, broad and bare,  
Swept the black terror of his hair.

He raised his arm--he smote again;  
As round the reaper falls the grain,  
So the dark host around him fell,  
So sank the foes of Israel!

Again I looked. In sunlight shone  
The towers and domes of Askelon;  
Priest, warrior, slave, a mighty crowd  
Within her idol temple bowed.

Yet one knelt not; stark, gaunt, and blind,  
His arms the massive pillars twined,--  
An eyeless captive, strong with hate,  
He stood there like an evil Fate.

The red shrines smoked,--the trumpets pealed  
He stooped,--the giant columns reeled;  
Reeled tower and fane, sank arch and wall,  
And the thick dust-cloud closed o'er all!

Above the shriek, the crash, the groan

Of the fallen pride of Askelon,  
I heard, sheer down the echoing sky,  
A voice as of an angel cry,--

The voice of him, who at our side  
Sat through the golden eventide;  
Of him who, on thy altar's blaze,  
Rose fire-winged, with his song of praise.

'Rejoice o'er Israel's broken chain,  
Gray mother of the mighty slain!  
Rejoice!' it cried, 'he vanquisheth!  
The strong in life is strong in death!

'To him shall Zorah's daughters raise  
Through coming years their hymns of praise,  
And gray old men at evening tell  
Of all be wrought for Israel.

'And they who sing and they who hear  
Alike shall hold thy memory dear,  
And pour their blessings on thy head,  
O mother of the mighty dead!'

It ceased; and though a sound I heard  
As if great wings the still air stirred,  
I only saw the barley sheaves  
And hills half hid by olive leaves.

I bowed my face, in awe and fear,  
On the dear child who slumbered near;  
'With me, as with my only son,  
O God,' I said, 'Thy will be done!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Wind Of March

Up from the sea, the wild north wind is blowing  
Under the sky's gray arch;  
Smiling, I watch the shaken elm-boughs, knowing  
It is the wind of March.

Between the passing and the coming season,  
This stormy interlude  
Gives to our winter-wearied hearts a reason  
For trustful gratitude.

Welcome to waiting ears its harsh forewarning  
Of light and warmth to come,  
The longed-for joy of Nature's Easter morning,  
The earth arisen in bloom.

In the loud tumult winter's strength is breaking;  
I listen to the sound,  
As to a voice of resurrection, waking  
To life the dead, cold ground.

Between these gusts, to the soft lapse I hearken  
Of rivulets on their way;  
I see these tossed and naked tree-tops darken  
With the fresh leaves of May.

This roar of storm, this sky so gray and lowering  
Invite the airs of Spring,  
A warmer sunshine over fields of flowering,  
The bluebird's song and wing.

Closely behind, the Gulf's warm breezes follow  
This northern hurricane,  
And, borne thereon, the bobolink and swallow  
Shall visit us again.

And, in green wood-paths, in the kine-fed pasture  
And by the whispering rills,  
Shall flowers repeat the lesson of the Master,  
Taught on his Syrian hills.

Blow, then, wild wind! thy roar shall end in singing,  
Thy chill in blossoming;  
Come, like Bethesda's troubling angel, bringing  
The healing of the Spring.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Wish Of To-Day

I ask not now for gold to gild  
With mocking shine a weary frame;  
The yearning of the mind is stilled,  
I ask not now for Fame.

A rose-cloud, dimly seen above,  
Melting in heaven's blue depths away;  
Oh, sweet, fond dream of human Love  
For thee I may not pray.

But, bowed in lowliness of mind,  
I make my humble wishes known;  
I only ask a will resigned,  
O Father, to Thine own!

To-day, beneath Thy chastening eye  
I crave alone for peace and rest,  
Submissive in Thy hand to lie,  
And feel that it is best.

A marvel seems the Universe,  
A miracle our Life and Death;  
A mystery which I cannot pierce,  
Around, above, beneath.

In vain I task my aching brain,  
In vain the sage's thought I scan,  
I only feel how weak and vain,  
How poor and blind, is man.

And now my spirit sighs for home,  
And longs for light whereby to see,  
And, like a weary child, would come,  
O Father, unto Thee!

Though oft, like letters traced on sand,  
My weak resolves have passed away,  
In mercy lend Thy helping hand  
Unto my prayer to-day!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Wishing Bridge

AMONG the legends sung or said  
Along our rocky shore,  
The Wishing Bridge of Marblehead  
May well be sung once more.

An hundred years ago (so ran  
The old-time story) all  
Good wishes said above its span  
Would, soon or late, befall.

If pure and earnest, never failed  
The prayers of man or maid  
For him who on the deep sea sailed,  
For her at home who stayed.

Once thither came two girls from school,  
And wished in childish glee  
And one would be a queen and rule,  
And one the world would see.

Time passed; with change of hopes and fears,  
And in the self-same place,  
Two women, gray with middle years,  
Stood, wondering, face to face.

With wakened memories, as they met,  
They queried what had been  
'A poor man's wife am I, and yet,'  
Said one, 'I am a queen.

'My realm a little homestead is,  
Where, lacking crown and throne,  
I rule by loving services  
And patient toil alone.'

The other said: 'The great world lies  
Beyond me as it lay;  
O'er love's and duty's boundaries  
My feet may never stray.

'I see but common sights of home,  
Its common sounds I hear,  
My widowed mother's sick-bed room  
Sufficeth for my sphere.

'I read to her some pleasant page  
Of travel far and wide,  
And in a dreamy pilgrimage  
We wander side by side.

'And when, at last, she falls asleep,  
My book becomes to me  
A magic glass: my watch I keep,  
But all the world I see.

'A farm-wife queen your place you fill,  
While fancy's privilege  
Is mine to walk the earth at will,  
Thanks to the Wishing Bridge.'

'Nay, leave the legend for the truth,'  
The other cried, 'and say  
God gives the wishes of our youth,  
But in His own best way!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Witch Of Wenham

I.

Along Crane River's sunny slopes  
Blew warm the winds of May,  
And over Naumkeag's ancient oaks  
The green outgrew the gray.

The grass was green on Rial-side,  
The early birds at will  
Waked up the violet in its dell,  
The wind-flower on its hill.

'Where go you, in your Sunday coat,  
Son Andrew, tell me, pray.'  
For striped perch in Wenham Lake  
I go to fish to-day.'

'Unharm'd of thee in Wenham Lake  
The mottled perch shall be  
A blue-eyed witch sits on the bank  
And weaves her net for thee.

'She weaves her golden hair; she sings  
Her spell-song low and faint;  
The wickedest witch in Salem jail  
Is to that girl a saint.'

'Nay, mother, hold thy cruel tongue;  
God knows,' the young man cried,  
'He never made a whiter soul  
Than hers by Wenham side.

'She tends her mother sick and blind,  
And every want supplies;  
To her above the blessed Book  
She lends her soft blue eyes.

'Her voice is glad with holy songs,  
Her lips are sweet with prayer;  
Go where you will, in ten miles round

Is none more good and fair.'

'Son Andrew, for the love of God  
And of thy mother, stay!'  
She clasped her hands, she wept aloud,  
But Andrew rode away.

'O reverend sir, my Andrew's soul  
The Wenham witch has caught;  
She holds him with the curled gold  
Whereof her snare is wrought.

'She charms him with her great blue eyes,  
She binds him with her hair;  
Oh, break the spell with holy words,  
Unbind him with a prayer!'

'Take heart,' the painful preacher said,  
'This mischief shall not be;  
The witch shall perish in her sins  
And Andrew shall go free.

'Our poor Ann Putnam testifies  
She saw her weave a spell,  
Bare-armed, loose-haired, at full of moon,  
Around a dried-up well.

'Spring up, O well!' she softly sang  
The Hebrew's old refrain  
(For Satan uses Bible words),  
Till water flowed a-main.

'And many a goodwife heard her speak  
By Wenham water words  
That made the buttercups take wings  
And turn to yellow birds.

'They say that swarming wild bees seek  
The hive at her command;  
And fishes swim to take their food  
From out her dainty hand.

'Meek as she sits in meeting-time,  
The godly minister  
Notes well the spell that doth compel  
The young men's eyes to her.

'The mole upon her dimpled chin  
Is Satan's seal and sign;  
Her lips are red with evil bread  
And stain of unblest wine.

'For Tituba, my Indian, saith  
At Quasycung she took  
The Black Man's godless sacrament  
And signed his dreadful book.

'Last night my sore-afflicted child  
Against the young witch cried.  
To take her Marshal Herrick rides  
Even now to Wenham side.'

The marshal in his saddle sat,  
His daughter at his knee;  
'I go to fetch that arrant witch,  
Thy fair playmate,' quoth he.

'Her spectre walks the parsonage,  
And haunts both hall and stair;  
They know her by the great blue eyes  
And floating gold of hair.'

'They lie, they lie, my father dear!  
No foul old witch is she,  
But sweet and good and crystal-pure  
As Wenham waters be.'

'I tell thee, child, the Lord hath set  
Before us good and ill,  
And woe to all whose carnal loves  
Oppose His righteous will.

'Between Him and the powers of hell  
Choose thou, my child, to-day

No sparing hand, no pitying eye,  
When God commands to slay!

He went his way; the old wives shook  
With fear as he drew nigh;  
The children in the dooryards held  
Their breath as he passed by.

Too well they knew the gaunt gray horse  
The grim witch-hunter rode  
The pale Apocalyptic beast  
By grisly Death bestrode.

II.

Oh, fair the face of Wenham Lake  
Upon the young girl's shone,  
Her tender mouth, her dreaming eyes,  
Her yellow hair outblown.

By happy youth and love attuned  
To natural harmonies,  
The singing birds, the whispering wind,  
She sat beneath the trees.

Sat shaping for her bridal dress  
Her mother's wedding gown,  
When lo! the marshal, writ in hand,  
From Alford hill rode down.

His face was hard with cruel fear,  
He grasped the maiden's hands  
'Come with me unto Salem town,  
For so the law commands!'

'Oh, let me to my mother say  
Farewell before I go!'  
He closer tied her little hands  
Unto his saddle bow.

'Unhand me,' cried she piteously,  
'For thy sweet daughter's sake.'  
'I'll keep my daughter safe,' he said,

'From the witch of Wenham Lake.'

'Oh, leave me for my mother's sake,  
She needs my eyes to see.'

'Those eyes, young witch, the crows shall peck  
From off the gallows-tree.'

He bore her to a farm-house old,  
And up its stairway long,  
And closed on her the garret-door  
With iron bolted strong.

The day died out, the night came down  
Her evening prayer she said,  
While, through the dark, strange faces seemed  
To mock her as she prayed.

The present horror deepened all  
The fears her childhood knew;  
The awe wherewith the air was filled  
With every breath she drew.

And could it be, she trembling asked,  
Some secret thought or sin  
Had shut good angels from her heart  
And let the bad ones in?

Had she in some forgotten dream  
Let go her hold on Heaven,  
And sold herself unwittingly  
To spirits unforgiven?

Oh, weird and still the dark hours passed;  
No human sound she heard,  
But up and down the chimney stack  
The swallows moaned and stirred.

And o'er her, with a dread surmise  
Of evil sight and sound,  
The blind bats on their leathern wings  
Went wheeling round and round.

Low hanging in the midnight sky  
Looked in a half-faced moon.  
Was it a dream, or did she hear  
Her lover's whistled tune?

She forced the oaken scuttle back;  
A whisper reached her ear  
'Slide down the roof to me,' it said,  
'So softly none may hear.'

She slid along the sloping roof  
Till from its eaves she hung,  
And felt the loosened shingles yield  
To which her fingers clung.

Below, her lover stretched his hands  
And touched her feet so small;  
'Drop down to me, dear heart,' he said,  
'My arms shall break the fall.'

He set her on his pillion soft,  
Her arms about him twined;  
And, noiseless as if velvet-shod,  
They left the house behind.

But when they reached the open way,  
Full free the rein he cast;  
Oh, never through the mirk midnight  
Rode man and maid more fast.

Along the wild wood-paths they sped,  
The bridgeless streams they swam;  
At set of moon they passed the Bass,  
At sunrise Agawam.

At high noon on the Merrimac  
The ancient ferryman  
Forgot, at times, his idle oars,  
So fair a freight to scan.

And when from off his grounded boat  
He saw them mount and ride,

'God keep her from the evil eye,  
And harm of witch!' he cried.

The maiden laughed, as youth will laugh  
At all its fears gone by;  
'He does not know,' she whispered low,  
'A little witch am I.'

All day he urged his weary horse,  
And, in the red sundown,  
Drew rein before a friendly door  
In distant Berwick town.

A fellow-feeling for the wronged  
The Quaker people felt;  
And safe beside their kindly hearths  
The hunted maiden dwelt,

Until from off its breast the land  
The haunting horror threw,  
And hatred, born of ghastly dreams,  
To shame and pity grew.

Sad were the year's spring morns, and sad  
Its golden summer day,  
But blithe and glad its withered fields,  
And skies of ashen gray;

For spell and charm had power no more,  
The spectres ceased to roam,  
And scattered households knelt again  
Around the hearths of home.

And when once more by Beaver Dam  
The meadow-lark outsang,  
And once again on all the hills  
The early violets sprang,

And all the windy pasture slopes  
Lay green within the arms  
Of creeks that bore the salted sea  
To pleasant inland farms,

The smith filed off the chains he forged,  
The jail-bolts backward fell;  
And youth and hoary age came forth  
Like souls escaped from hell.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Witch's Daughter

It was the pleasant harvest time,  
When cellar-bins are closely stowed,  
And garrets bend beneath their load,

And the old swallow-haunted barns -  
Brown-gabled, long, and full of seams  
Through which the moted sunlight streams,

And winds blow freshly in, to shake  
The red plumes of the roosted cocks,  
And the loose hay-mow's scented locks -

Are filled with summer's ripened stores,  
Its odorous grass and barley sheaves,  
From their low scaffolds to their eaves.

On Esek Harden's oaken floor,  
With many an autumn threshing worn,  
Lay the heaped ears of unhusked corn.

And thither came young men and maids,  
Beneath a moon that, large and low,  
Lit that sweet eve of long ago.

They took their places; some by chance,  
And others by a merry voice  
Or sweet smile guided to their choice.

How pleasantly the rising moon,  
Between the shadow of the mows,  
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs! -

On sturdy boyhood sun-embrowned,  
On girlhood with its solid curves  
Of healthful strength and painless nerves!

And jests went round, and laughs that made  
The house-dog answer with his howl,  
And kept astir the barn-yard fowl;

And quaint old songs their fathers sung  
In Derby dales and Yorkshire moors,  
Ere Norman William trod their shores;

And tales, whose merry license shook  
The fat sides of the Saxon thane,  
Forgetful of the hovering Dane,—

Rude plays to Celt and Cimbri known,  
The charms and riddles that beguiled  
On Oxus' banks the young world's child,—

That primal picture-speech wherein  
Have youth and maid the story told,  
So new in each, so dateless old,

Recalling pastoral Ruth in her  
Who waited, blushing and demure,  
The red-ear's kiss of forfeiture.

But still the sweetest voice was mute  
That river-valley ever heard  
From lips of maid or throat of bird;

For Mabel Martin sat apart,  
And let the hay-mow's shadow fall  
Upon the loveliest face of all.

She sat apart, as one forbid,  
Who knew that none would condescend  
To own the Witch-wife's child a friend.

The seasons scarce had gone their round,  
Since curious thousands thronged to see  
Her mother at the gallows-tree;

And mocked the prison-palsied limbs  
That faltered on the fatal stairs,  
And wan lip trembling with its prayers!

Few questioned of the sorrowing child,

Or, when they saw the mother die;  
Dreame of the daughter's agony.

They went up to their homes that day,  
As men and Christians justified  
God willed it, and the wretch had died!

Dear God and Father of us all,  
Forgive our faith in cruel lies,—  
Forgive the blindness that denies!

Forgive thy creature when he takes,  
For the all-perfect love Thou art,  
Some grim creation of his heart.

Cast down our idols, overturn  
Our bloody altars; let us see  
Thyself in Thy humanity!

Poor Mabel from her mother's grave  
Crept to her desolate hearth-stone,  
And wrestled with her fate alone;

With love, and anger, and despair,  
The phantoms of disordered sense,  
The awful doubts of Providence!

The school-boys jeered her as they passed,  
And, when she sought the house of prayer,  
Her mother's curse pursued her there.

And still o'er many a neighboring door  
She saw the horseshoe's curved charm,  
To guard against her mother's harm; -

That mother, poor, and sick, and lame,  
Who daily, by the old arm-chair,  
Folded her withered hands in prayer; -

Who turned, in Salem's dreary jail,  
Her worn old Bible o'er and o'er,  
When her dim eyes could read no more!

Sore tried and pained, the poor girl kept  
Her faith, and trusted that her way,  
So dark, would somewhere meet the day.

And still her weary wheel went round  
Day after day, with no relief  
Small leisure have the poor for grief.

So in the shadow Mabel sits;  
Untouched by mirth she sees and hears,  
Her smile is sadder than her tears.

But cruel eyes have found her out,  
And cruel lips repeat her name,  
And taunt her with her mother's shame.

She answered not with railing words,  
But drew her apron o'er her face,  
And, sobbing, glided from the place.

And only pausing at the door,  
Her sad eyes met the troubled gaze  
Of one who, in her better days,

Had been her warm and steady friend,  
Ere yet her mother's doom had made  
Even Esek Harden half afraid.

He felt that mute appeal of tears,  
And, starting, with an angry frown,  
Hushed all the wicked murmurs down.

'Good neighbors mine,' he sternly said,  
'This passes harmless mirth or jest;  
I brook no insult to my guest.

'She is indeed her mother's child;  
But God's sweet pity ministers  
Unto no whiter soul than hers.

'Let Goody Martin rest in peace;

I never knew her harm a fly,  
And witch or not, God knows - not I.

'I know who swore her life away;  
And as God lives, I'd not condemn  
An Indian dog on word of them.'

The broadest lands in all the town,  
The skill to guide, the power to awe,  
Were Harden's; and his word was law.

None dared withstand him to his face,  
But one sly maiden spake aside  
'The little witch is evil-eyed!

'Her mother only killed a cow,  
Or witched a churn or dairy-pan;  
But she, forsooth, must charm a man!'

Poor Mabel, in her lonely home,  
Sat by the window's narrow pane,  
White in the moonlight's silver rain.

The river, on its pebbled rim,  
Made music such as childhood knew;  
The door-yard tree was whispered through

By voices such as childhood's ear  
Had heard in moonlights long ago;  
And through the willow-boughs below.

She saw the rippled waters shine;  
Beyond, in waves of shade and light,  
The hills rolled off into the night.

She saw and heard, but over all  
A sense of some transforming spell,  
The shadow of her sick heart fell.

And still across the wooded space  
The harvest lights of Harden shone,  
And song and jest and laugh went on.

And he, so gentle, true, and strong,  
Of men the bravest and the best,  
Had he, too, scorned her with the rest?

She strove to drown her sense of wrong,  
And, in her old and simple way,  
To teach her bitter heart to pray.

Poor child! the prayer, begun in faith,  
Grew to a low, despairing cry  
Of utter misery: 'Let me die!

'Oh! take me from the scornful eyes,  
And hide me where the cruel speech  
And mocking finger may not reach!

'I dare not breathe my mother's name  
A daughter's right I dare not crave  
To weep above her unblest grave!

'Let me not live until my heart,  
With few to pity, and with none  
To love me, hardens into stone.

'O God! have mercy on Thy child,  
Whose faith in Thee grows weak and small,  
And take me ere I lose it all!

A shadow on the moonlight fell,  
And murmuring wind and wave became  
A voice whose burden was her name.

Had then God heard her? Had He sent  
His angel down? In flesh and blood,  
Before her Esek Harden stood!

He laid his hand upon her arm  
'Dear Mabel, this no more shall be;  
Who scoffs at you must scoff at me.

'You know rough Esek Harden well;

And if he seems no suitor gay,  
And if his hair is touched with gray,

'The maiden grown shall never find  
His heart less warm than when she smiled,  
Upon his knees, a little child!'

Her tears of grief were tears of joy,  
As, folded in his strong embrace,  
She looked in Esek Harden's face.

'O truest friend of all" she said,  
'God bless you for your kindly thought,  
And make me worthy of my lot!'

He led her through his dewy fields,  
To where the swinging lanterns glowed,  
And through the doors the huskers showed.

'Good friends and neighbors!' Esek said,  
'I'm weary of this lonely life;  
In Mabel see my chosen wife!

'She greets you kindly, one and all;  
The past is past, and all offence  
Falls harmless from her innocence.

'Henceforth she stands no more alone;  
You know what Esek Harden is: -  
He brooks no wrong to him or his.'

Now let the merriest tales be told,  
And let the sweetest songs be sung  
That ever made the old heart young!

For now the lost has found a home;  
And a lone hearth shall brighter burn,  
As all the household joys return!

Oh, pleasantly the harvest-moon,  
Between the shadow of the mows,  
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs!

On Mabel's curls of golden hair,  
On Esek's shaggy strength it fell;  
And the wind whispered, 'It is well!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Wood Giant

From Alton Bay to Sandwich Dome,  
From Mad to Saco river,  
For patriarchs of the primal wood  
We sought with vain endeavor.

And then we said: 'The giants old  
Are lost beyond retrieval;  
This pygmy growth the axe has spared  
Is not the wood primeval.

'Look where we will o'er vale and hill,  
How idle are our searches  
For broad-girthed maples, wide-limbed oaks,  
Centennial pines and birches.

'Their tortured limbs the axe and saw  
Have changed to beams and trestles;  
They rest in walls, they float on seas,  
They rot in sunken vessels.

'This shorn and wasted mountain land  
Of underbrush and boulder,--  
Who thinks to see its full-grown tree  
Must live a century older.'

At last to us a woodland path,  
To open sunset leading,  
Revealed the Anakim of pines  
Our wildest wish exceeding.

Alone, the level sun before;  
Below, the lake's green islands;  
Beyond, in misty distance dim,  
The rugged Northern Highlands.

Dark Titan on his Sunset Hill  
Of time and change defiant  
How dwarfed the common woodland seemed,  
Before the old-time giant!

What marvel that, in simpler days  
Of the world's early childhood,  
Men crowned with garlands, gifts, and praise  
Such monarchs of the wild-wood?

That Tyrian maids with flower and song  
Danced through the hill grove's spaces,  
And hoary-bearded Druids found  
In woods their holy places?

With somewhat of that Pagan awe  
With Christian reverence blending,  
We saw our pine-tree's mighty arms  
Above our heads extending.

We heard his needles' mystic rune,  
Now rising, and now dying,  
As erst Dodona's priestess heard  
The oak leaves prophesying.

Was it the half-unconscious moan  
Of one apart and mateless,  
The weariness of unshared power,  
The loneliness of greatness?

O dawns and sunsets, lend to him  
Your beauty and your wonder!  
Blithe sparrow, sing thy summer song  
His solemn shadow under!

Play lightly on his slender keys,  
O wind of summer, waking  
For hills like these the sound of seas  
On far-off beaches breaking,

And let the eagle and the crow  
Find shelter in his branches,  
When winds shake down his winter snow  
In silver avalanches.

The brave are braver for their cheer,

The strongest need assurance,  
The sigh of longing makes not less  
The lesson of endurance.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Word

Voice of the Holy Spirit, making known  
Man to himself, a witness swift and sure,  
Warning, approving, true and wise and pure,  
Counsel and guidance that misleadeth none!  
By thee the mystery of life is read;  
The picture-writing of the world's gray seers,  
The myths and parables of the primal years,  
Whose letter kills, by thee interpreted  
Take healthful meanings fitted to our needs,  
And in the soul's vernacular express  
The common law of simple righteousness.  
Hatred of cant and doubt of human creeds  
May well be felt: the unpardonable sin  
Is to deny the Word of God within!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The World's Convention Of The Friends Of Emancipation, Held In London In 1840

YES, let them gather! Summon forth  
The pledged philanthropy of Earth.  
From every land, whose hills have heard  
The bugle blast of Freedom waking;  
Or shrieking of her symbol-bird  
From out his cloudy eyrie breaking:  
Where Justice hath one worshipper,  
Or truth one altar built to her;  
Where'er a human eye is weeping  
O'er wrongs which Earth's sad children know;  
Where'er a single heart is keeping  
Its prayerful watch with human woe:  
Thence let them come, and greet each other,  
And know in each a friend and brother!  
Yes, let them come! from each green vale  
Where England's old baronial halls  
Still bear upon their storied walls  
The grim crusader's rusted mail,  
Battered by Paynim spear and brand  
On Malta's rock or Syria's sand.!  
And mouldering pennon-staves once set  
Within the soil of Palestine,  
By Jordan and Gennesaret;  
Or, borne with England's battle line,  
O'er Acre's shattered turrets stooping,  
Or, midst the camp their banners drooping,  
With dews from hallowed Hermon wet,  
A holier summons now is given  
Than that gray hermit's voice of old,  
Which unto all the winds of heaven  
The banners of the Cross unrolled!  
Not for the long-deserted shrine;  
Not for the dull unconscious sod,  
Which tells not by one lingering sign  
That there the hope of Israel trod;  
But for that truth, for which alone  
In pilgrim eyes are sanctified

The garden moss, the mountain stone,  
Whereon His holy sandals pressed, —  
The fountain which His lip hath blessed, —  
Whate'er hath touched His garment's hem  
At Bethany or Bethlehem,  
Or Jordan's river-side.  
For Freedom in the name of Him  
Who came to raise Earth's drooping poor,  
To break the chain from every limb,  
The bolt from every prison door!  
For these, o'er all the earth hath passed  
An ever-deepening trumpet blast,  
As if an angel's breath had lent  
Its vigor to the instrument.  
And Wales, from Snowrich's mountain wall,  
Shall startle at that thrilling call,  
As if she heard her bards again;  
And Erin's 'harp on Tara's wall'  
Give out its ancient strain,  
Mirthful and sweet, yet sad withal, —  
The melody which Erin loves,  
When o'er that harp, 'mid bursts of gladness  
And slogan cries and lyke-wake sadness,  
The hand of her O'Connell moves!  
Scotland, from lake and tarn and rill,  
And mountain hold, and heathery hill,  
Shall catch and echo back the note,  
As if she heard upon the air  
Once more her Cameronian's prayer.  
And song of Freedom float.  
And cheering echoes shall reply  
From each remote dependency,  
Where Britain's mighty sway is known,  
In tropic sea or frozen zone;  
Where'er her sunset flag is furling,  
Or morning gun-fire's smoke is curling;  
From Indian Bengal's groves of palm  
And rosy fields and gales of balm,  
Where Eastern pomp and power are rolled  
Through regal Ava's gates of gold;  
And from the lakes and ancient woods  
And dim Canadian solitudes,

Whence, sternly from her rocky throne,  
Queen of the North, Quebec looks down;  
And from those bright and ransomed Isles  
Where all unwonted Freedom smiles,  
And the dark laborer still retains  
The scar of slavery's broken chains!  
From the hoar Alps, which sentinel  
The gateways of the land of Tell,  
Where morning's keen and earliest glance  
On Jura's rocky wall is thrown,  
And from the olive bowers of France  
And vine groves garlanding the Rhone, —  
'Friends of the Blacks,' as true and tried  
As those who stood by Oge's side,  
And heard the Haytien's tale of wrong,  
Shall gather at that summons strong;  
Broglie, Passy, and he whose song  
Breathed over Syria's holy sod,  
And in the paths which Jesus trod,  
And murmured midst the hills which hem  
Crownless and sad Jerusalem,  
Hath echoes whereso'er the tone  
Of Israel's prophecy-lyre is known.  
Still let them come; from Quito's walls,  
And from the Orinoco's tide,  
From Lima's Inca-haunted halls,  
From Santa Fe and Yucatan, —  
Men who by swart Guerrero's side  
Proclaimed the deathless rights of man,  
Broke every bond and fetter off,  
And hailed in every sable serf  
A free and brother Mexican!  
Chiefs who across the Andes' chain  
Have followed Freedom's flowing pennon,  
And seen on Junin's fearful plain,  
Glare o'er the broken ranks of Spain  
The fire-burst of Bolivar's cannon!  
And Hayti, from her mountain land,  
Shall send the sons of those who hurled  
Defiance from her blazing strand,  
The war-gage from her Petition's hand,  
Alone against a hostile world.

Nor all unmindful, thou, the while,  
Land of the dark and mystic Nile!  
Thy Moslem mercy yet may shame  
All tyrants of a Christian name,  
When in the shade of Gizeh's pile,  
Or, where, from Abyssinian hills  
El Gerek's upper fountain fills,  
Or where from Mountains of the Moon  
El Abiad bears his watery boon,  
Where'er thy lotus blossoms swim  
Within their ancient hallowed waters;  
Where'er is heard the Coptic hymn,  
Or song of Nubia's sable daughters;  
The curse of slavery and the crime,  
Thy bequest from remotest time,  
At thy dark Mehemet's decree  
Forevermore shall pass from thee;  
And chains forsake each captive's limb  
Of all those tribes, whose hills around  
Have echoed back the cymbal sound  
And victor horn of Ibrahim.  
And thou whose glory and whose crime  
To earth's remotest bound and clime,  
In mingled tones of awe and scorn,  
The echoes of a world have borne,  
My country! glorious at thy birth,  
A day-star flashing brightly forth,  
The herald-sign of Freedom's dawn!  
Oh, who could dream that saw thee then,  
And watched thy rising from afar,  
That vapors from oppression's fen  
Would cloud the upward tending star?  
Or, that earth's tyrant powers, which heard,  
Awe-struck, the shout which hailed thy dawning,  
Would rise so soon, prince, peer, and king,  
To mock thee with their welcoming,  
Like Hades when her thrones were stirred  
To greet the down-east Star of Morning!  
'Aha! and art thou fallen thus?  
Art thou become as one of us?'  
Land of my fathers! there will stand,  
Amidst that world-assembled band,

Those owning thy maternal claim  
Unweakened by thy crime and shame;  
The sad reprovers of thy wrong;  
The children thou hast spurned so long.  
Still with affection's fondest yearning  
To their unnatural mother turning.  
No traitors they! but tried and leal,  
Whose own is but thy general weal,  
Still blending with the patriot's zeal  
The Christian's love for human kind,  
To caste and climate unconfined.  
A holy gathering! peaceful all:  
No threat of war, no savage call  
For vengeance on an erring brother!  
But in their stead the godlike plan  
To teach the brotherhood of man  
To love and reverence one another,  
As sharers of a common blood,  
The children of a common God!  
Yet, even at its lightest word,  
Shall Slavery's darkest depths be stirred:  
Spain, watching from her Moro's keep  
Her slave-ships traversing the deep,  
And Rio, in her strength and pride,  
Lifting, along her mountain-side,  
Her snowy battlements and towers,  
Her lemon-groves and tropic bowers,  
With bitter hate and sullen fear  
Its freedom-giving voice shall hear;  
And where my country's flag is flowing,  
On breezes from Mount Vernon blowing,  
Above the Nation's council halls,  
Where Freedom's praise is loud and long,  
While close beneath the outward walls  
The driver plies his reeking thong;  
The hammer of the man-thief falls,  
O'er hypocritic cheek and brow  
The crimson flush of shame shall glow  
And all who for their native land  
Are pledging life and heart and hand,  
Worn watchers o'er her changing weal,  
Who for her tarnished honor feel,

Through cottage door and council-hall  
Shall thunder an awakening call.  
The pen along its page shall burn  
With all intolerable scorn;  
An eloquent rebuke shall go  
On all the winds that Southward blow;  
From priestly lips, now sealed and dumb,  
Warning and dread appeal shall come,  
Like those which Israel heard from him,  
The Prophet of the Cherubim;  
Or those which sad Esaias hurled  
Against a sin-accursed world!  
Its wizard leaves the Press shall fling  
Unceasing from its iron wing,  
With characters inscribed thereon,  
As fearful in the despot's hall  
As to the pomp of Babylon  
The fire-sign on the palace wall!  
And, from her dark iniquities,  
Methinks I see my country rise:  
Not challenging the nations round  
To note her tardy justice done;  
Her captives from their chains unbound,  
Her prisons opening to the sun:  
But tearfully her arms extending  
Over the poor and unoffending;  
Her regal emblem now no longer  
A bird of prey with talons reeking,  
Above the dying captive shrieking,  
But, spreading out her ample wing,  
A broad, impartial covering,  
The weaker sheltered by the stronger!  
Oh, then to Faith's anointed eyes  
The promised token shall be given;  
And on a nation's sacrifice,  
Atoning for the sin of years,  
And wet with penitential tears,  
The fire shall fall from Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Worship Of Nature

The harp at Nature's advent strung  
Has never ceased to play;  
The song the stars of morning sung  
Has never died away.

And prayer is made, and praise is given,  
By all things near and far;  
The ocean looketh up to heaven,  
And mirrors every star.

Its waves are kneeling on the strand,  
As kneels the human knee,  
Their white locks bowing to the sand,  
The priesthood of the sea!

They pour their glittering treasures forth,  
Their gifts of pearl they bring,  
And all the listening hills of earth  
Take up the song they sing.

The green earth sends its incense up  
From many a mountain shrine;  
From folded leaf and dewy cup  
She pours her sacred wine.

The mists above the morning rills  
Rise white as wings of prayer;  
The altar-curtains of the hills  
Are sunset's purple air.

The winds with hymns of praise are loud,  
Or low with sobs of pain, --  
The thunder-organ of the cloud,  
The dropping tears of rain.

With drooping head and branches crossed  
The twilight forest grieves,  
Or speaks with tongues of Pentecost  
From all its sunlit leaves.

The blue sky is the temple's arch,  
Its transept earth and air,  
The music of its starry march  
The chorus of a prayer.

So Nature keeps the reverent frame  
With which her years began,  
And all her signs and voices shame  
The prayerless heart of man.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Wreck Of Rivermouth

Rivermouth Rocks are fair to see,  
By dawn or sunset shone across,  
When the ebb of the sea has left them free,  
To dry their fringes of gold-green moss  
For there the river comes winding down,  
From salt sea-meadows and uplands brown,  
And waves on the outer rocks afoam  
Shout to its waters, 'Welcome home!'

And fair are the sunny isles in view  
East of the grisly Head of the Boar,  
And Agamenticus lifts its blue  
Disk of a cloud the woodlands o'er;  
And southerly, when the tide is down,  
'Twixt white sea-waves and sand-hills brown,  
The beach-birds dance and the gray gulls wheel  
Over a floor of burnished steel.

Once, in the old Colonial days,  
Two hundred years ago and more,  
A boat sailed down through the winding ways  
Of Hampton River to that low shore,  
Full of a goodly company  
Sailing out on the summer sea,  
Veering to catch the land-breeze light,  
With the Boar to left and the Rocks to right.

In Hampton meadows, where mowers laid  
Their scythes to the swaths of salted grass,  
'Ah, well-a-day! our hay must be made!'  
A young man sighed, who saw them pass.  
Loud laughed his fellows to see him stand  
Whetting his scythe with a listless hand,  
Hearing a voice in a far-off song,  
Watching a white hand beckoning long.

'Fie on the witch!' cried a merry girl,  
As they rounded the point where Goody Cole  
Sat by her door with her wheel atwirl,

A bent and blear-eyed poor old soul.  
'Oho!' she muttered, 'ye 're brave to-day!  
But I hear the little waves laugh and say,  
'The broth will be cold that waits at home;  
For it 's one to go, but another to come!''

'She's cursed,' said the skipper; 'speak her fair:  
I'm scary always to see her shake  
Her wicked head, with its wild gray hair,  
And nose like a hawk, and eyes like a snake.'  
But merrily still, with laugh and shout,  
From Hampton River the boat sailed out,  
Till the huts and the flakes on Star seemed nigh,  
And they lost the scent of the pines of Rye.

They dropped their lines in the lazy tide,  
Drawing up haddock and mottled cod;  
They saw not the Shadow that walked beside,  
They heard not the feet with silence shod.  
But thicker and thicker a hot mist grew,  
Shot by the lightnings through and through;  
And muffled growls, like the growl of a beast,  
Ran along the sky from west to east.

Then the skipper looked from the darkening sea  
Up to the dimmed and wading sun;  
But he spake like a brave man cheerily,  
'Yet there is time for our homeward run.'  
Veering and tacking, they backward wore;  
And just as a breath-from the woods ashore  
Blew out to whisper of danger past,  
The wrath of the storm came down at last!

The skipper hauled at the heavy sail  
'God be our help!' he only cried,  
As the roaring gale, like the stroke of a flail,  
Smote the boat on its starboard side.  
The Shoalsmen looked, but saw alone  
Dark films of rain-cloud slantwise blown,  
Wild rocks lit up by the lightning's glare,  
The strife and torment of sea and air.

Goody Cole looked out from her door  
The Isles of Shoals were drowned and gone,  
Scarcely she saw the Head of the Boar  
Toss the foam from tusks of stone.  
She clasped her hands with a grip of pain,  
The tear on her cheek was not of rain  
'They are lost,' she muttered, 'boat and crew!  
Lord, forgive me! my words were true!'

Suddenly seaward swept the squall;  
The low sun smote through cloudy rack;  
The Shoals stood clear in the light, and all  
The trend of the coast lay hard and black.  
But far and wide as eye could reach,  
No life was seen upon wave or beach;  
The boat that went out at morning never  
Sailed back again into Hampton River.

O mower, lean on thy bended snath,  
Look from the meadows green and low  
The wind of the sea is a waft of death,  
The waves are singing a song of woe!  
By silent river, by moaning sea,  
Long and vain shall thy watching be  
Never again shall the sweet voice call,  
Never the white hand rise and fall!

O Rivermouth Rocks, how sad a sight  
Ye saw in the light of breaking day  
Dead faces looking up cold and white  
From sand and seaweed where they lay.  
The mad old witch-wife wailed and wept,  
And cursed the tide as it backward crept  
'Crawl back, crawl back, blue water-snake  
Leave your dead for the hearts that break!'

Solemn it was in that old day  
In Hampton town and its log-built church,  
Where side by side the coffins lay  
And the mourners stood in aisle and porch.  
In the singing-seats young eyes were dim,  
The voices faltered that raised the hymn,

And Father Dalton, grave and stern,  
Sobbed through his prayer and wept in turn.

But his ancient colleague did not pray;  
Under the weight of his fourscore years  
He stood apart with the iron-gray  
Of his strong brows knitted to hide his tears;  
And a fair-faced woman of doubtful fame,  
Linking her own with his honored name,  
Subtle as sin, at his side withstood  
The felt reproach of her neighborhood.

Apart with them, like them forbid,  
Old Goody Cole looked drearily round,  
As, two by two, with their faces hid,  
The mourners walked to the burying-ground.  
She let the staff from her clasped hands fall  
'Lord, forgive us! we're sinners all!'  
And the voice of the old man answered her  
'Amen!' said Father Bachiler.

So, as I sat upon Appledore  
In the calm of a closing summer day,  
And the broken lines of Hampton shore  
In purple mist of cloudland lay,  
The Rivermouth Rocks their story told;  
And waves aglow with sunset gold,  
Rising and breaking in steady chime,  
Beat the rhythm and kept the time.

And the sunset paled, and warmed once more  
With a softer, tenderer after-glow;  
In the east was moon-rise, with boats off-shore  
And sails in the distance drifting slow.  
The beacon glimmered from Portsmouth bar,  
The White Isle kindled its great red star;  
And life and death in my old-time lay  
Mingled in peace like the night and day!

. . . . .

'Well!' said the Man of Books, 'your story

Is really not ill told in verse.  
As the Celt said of purgatory,  
One might go farther and fare worse.'  
The Reader smiled; and once again  
With steadier voice took up his strain,  
While the fair singer from the neighboring tent  
Drew near, and at his side a graceful listener bent.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# The Yankee Girl

She sings by her wheel at that low cottage door,  
Which the long evening shadow is stretching before;  
With a music as sweet as the music which seems  
Breathed softly and faintly in the ear of our dreams!

How brilliant and mirthful the light of her eye,  
Like a star glancing out from the blue of the sky!  
And lightly and freely her dark tresses play  
O'er a brow and a bosom as lovely as they!

Who comes in his pride to that low cottage door-  
The haughty and rich to the humble and poor?  
'Tis the great Southern planter-the master who waves  
His whip of dominion o'er hundreds of slaves.

'Nay, Ellen, for shame! Let those Yankee fools spin,  
Who would pass for our slaves with a change of their skin;  
Let them toil as they will at the loom or the wheel  
Too stupid for shame and too vulgar to feel!

'But thou art too lovely and precious a gem  
To be bound to their burdens and sullied by them-  
For shame, Ellen, shame!-cast thy bondage aside,  
And away to the South, as my blessing and pride.

'O, come where no winter thy footsteps can wrong,  
But where flowers are blossoming all the year long,  
Where the shade of the palm-tree is over my home,  
And the lemon and orange are white in their bloom!

'O, come to my home, where my servants shall all  
Depart at thy bidding and come at thy call;  
They shall heed thee as mistress with trembling and awe,  
And each wish of thy heart shall be felt as a law.'

O, could ye have seen her-that pride of our girls-  
Arise and cast back the dark wealth of her curls,  
With a scorn in her eye which the gazer could feel,  
And a glance like the sunshine that flashes on steel:

'Go back, haughty Southron! thy treasures of gold  
Are dim with the blood of the hearts thou hast sold!  
Thy home may be lovely, but round it I hear  
The crack of the whip and the footsteps of fear!

'And the sky of thy South may be brighter than ours,  
And greener thy landscapes, and fairer thy flowers;  
But, dearer the blast round our mountains which raves,  
Than the sweet sunny zephyr which breathes over slaves!

'Full low at thy bidding thy negroes may kneel,  
With the iron of bondage on spirit and heel;  
Yet know that the Yankee girl sooner would be  
In  
fetters  
with  
them  
, than in freedom with  
thee!  
,

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Theirs

## I.

Fate summoned, in gray-bearded age, to act  
A history stranger than his written fact,  
Him who portrayed the splendor and the gloom  
Of that great hour when throne and altar fell  
With long death-groan which still is audible.  
He, when around the walls of Paris rung  
The Prussian bugle like the blast of doom,  
And every ill which follows unblest war  
Maddened all France from Finistere to Var,  
The weight of fourscore from his shoulders flung,  
And guided Freedom in the path he saw  
Lead out of chaos into light and law,  
Peace, not imperial, but republican,  
And order pledged to all the Rights of Man.

## II.

Death called him from a need as imminent  
As that from which the Silent William went  
When powers of evil, like the smiting seas  
On Holland's dikes, assailed her liberties.  
Sadly, while yet in doubtful balance hung  
The weal and woe of France, the bells were rung  
For her lost leader. Paralyzed of will,  
Above his bier the hearts of men stood still.  
Then, as if set to his dead lips, the horn  
Of Roland wound once more to rouse and warn,  
The old voice filled the air! His last brave word  
Not vainly France to all her boundaries stirred.  
Strong as in life, he still for Freedom wrought,  
As the dead Cid at red Toloso fought.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Thomas Starr King

The great work laid upon his twoscore years  
Is done, and well done. If we drop our tears,  
Who loved him as few men were ever loved,  
We mourn no blighted hope nor broken plan  
With him whose life stands rounded and approved  
In the full growth and stature of a man.  
Mingle, O bells, along the Western slope,  
With your deep toll a sound of faith and hope!  
Wave cheerily still, O banner, half-way down,  
From thousand-masted bay and steepled town!  
Let the strong organ with its loftiest swell  
Lift the proud sorrow of the land, and tell  
That the brave sower saw his ripened grain.  
O East and West! O morn and sunset twain  
No more forever!--has he lived in vain  
Who, priest of Freedom, made ye one, and told  
Your bridal service from his lips of gold?

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Thy Will Be Done

WE see not, know not; all our way  
Is night, — with Thee alone is day:  
From out the torrent's troubled drift,  
Above the storm our prayers we lift,  
Thy will be done!

The flesh may fail, the heart may faint,  
But who are we to make complaint,  
Or dare to plead, in times like these,  
The weakness of our love of ease?  
Thy will be done!

We take with solemn thankfulness  
Our burden up, nor ask it less,  
And count it joy that even we  
May suffer, serve, or wait for Thee,  
Whose will be done!

Though dim as yet in tint and line,  
We trace Thy picture's wise design,  
And thank Thee that our age supplies  
Its dark relief of sacrifice.  
Thy will be done!

And if, in our unworthiness,  
Thy sacrificial wine we press;  
If from Thy ordeal's heated bars  
Our feet are seamed with crimson scars,  
Thy will be done!

If, for the age to come, this hour  
Of trial hath vicarious power,  
And, blest by Thee, our present pain,  
Be Liberty's eternal gain,  
Thy will be done!

Strike, Thou the Master, we Thy keys,  
The anthem of the destinies!  
The minor of Thy loftier strain,  
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain,  
Thy will be done!

John Greenleaf Whittier

To -----

LINES WRITTEN AFTER A SUMMER DAY'S EXCURSION.

Fair Nature's priestesses! to whom,  
In hieroglyph of bud and bloom,  
Her mysteries are told;  
Who, wise in lore of wood and mead,  
The seasons' pictured scrolls can read,  
In lessons manifold!

Thanks for the courtesy, and gay  
Good-humor, which on Washing Day  
Our ill-timed visit bore;  
Thanks for your graceful oars, which broke  
The morning dreams of Artichoke,  
Along his wooded shore!

Varied as varying Nature's ways,  
Sprites of the river, woodland fays,  
Or mountain nymphs, ye seem;  
Free-limbed Dianas on the green,  
Loch Katrine's Ellen, or Undine,  
Upon your favorite stream.

The forms of which the poets told,  
The fair benignities of old,  
Were doubtless such as you;  
What more than Artichoke the rill  
Of Helicon? Than Pipe-stave hill  
Arcadia's mountain-view?

No sweeter bowers the bee delayed,  
In wild Hymettus' scented shade,  
Than those you dwell among;  
Snow-flowered azaleas, intertwined  
With roses, over banks inclined  
With trembling harebells hung!

A charmed life unknown to death,  
Immortal freshness Nature hath;

Her fabled fount and glen  
Are now and here: Dodona's shrine  
Still murmurs in the wind-swept pine,--  
All is that e'er hath been.

The Beauty which old Greece or Rome  
Sung, painted, wrought, lies close at home;  
We need but eye and ear  
In all our daily walks to trace  
The outlines of incarnate grace,  
The hymns of gods to hear!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## To E. C. S.

Poet and friend of poets, if thy glass  
Detects no flower in winter's tuft of grass,  
Let this slight token of the debt I owe  
Outlive for thee December's frozen day,  
And, like the arbutus budding under snow,  
Take bloom and fragrance from some morn of May  
When he who gives it shall have gone the way  
Where faith shall see and reverent trust shall know.

John Greenleaf Whittier

To -----,

WITH A COPY OF WOOLMAN'S JOURNAL.

Maiden! with the fair brown tresses  
Shading o'er thy dreamy eye,  
Floating on thy thoughtful forehead  
Cloud wreaths of its sky.

Youthful years and maiden beauty,  
Joy with them should still abide,--  
Instinct take the place of Duty,  
Love, not Reason, guide.

Ever in the New rejoicing,  
Kindly beckoning back the Old,  
Turning, with the gift of Midas,  
All things into gold.

And the passing shades of sadness  
Wearing even a welcome guise,  
As, when some bright lake lies open  
To the sunny skies,

Every wing of bird above it,  
Every light cloud floating on,  
Glitters like that flashing mirror  
In the self-same sun.

But upon thy youthful forehead  
Something like a shadow lies;  
And a serious soul is looking  
From thy earnest eyes.

With an early introversion,  
Through the forms of outward things,  
Seeking for the subtle essence,  
And the bidden springs.

Deeper than the gilded surface

Hath thy wakeful vision seen,  
Farther than the narrow present  
Have thy journeyings been.

Thou hast midst Life's empty noises  
Heard the solemn steps of Time,  
And the low mysterious voices  
Of another clime.

All the mystery of Being  
Hath upon thy spirit pressed,--  
Thoughts which, like the Deluge wanderer,  
Find no place of rest:

That which mystic Plato pondered,  
That which Zeno heard with awe,  
And the star-rapt Zoroaster  
In his night-watch saw.

From the doubt and darkness springing  
Of the dim, uncertain Past,  
Moving to the dark still shadows  
O'er the Future cast,

Early hath Life's mighty question  
Thrilled within thy heart of youth,  
With a deep and strong beseeching  
What and where is Truth?

Hollow creed and ceremonial,  
Whence the ancient life hath fled,  
Idle faith unknown to action,  
Dull and cold and dead.

Oracles, whose wire-worked meanings  
Only wake a quiet scorn,--  
Not from these thy seeking spirit  
Hath its answer drawn.

But, like some tired child at even,  
On thy mother Nature's breast,  
Thou, methinks, art vainly seeking

Truth, and peace, and rest.

O'er that mother's rugged features  
Thou art throwing Fancy's veil,  
Light and soft as woven moonbeams,  
Beautiful and frail

O'er the rough chart of Existence,  
Rocks of sin and wastes of woe,  
Soft airs breathe, and green leaves tremble,  
And cool fountains flow.

And to thee an answer cometh  
From the earth and from the sky,  
And to thee the hills and waters  
And the stars reply.

But a soul-sufficing answer  
Hath no outward origin;  
More than Nature's many voices  
May be heard within.

Even as the great Augustine  
Questioned earth and sea and sky,  
And the dusty tomes of learning  
And old poesy.

But his earnest spirit needed  
More than outward Nature taught;  
More than blest the poet's vision  
Or the sage's thought.

Only in the gathered silence  
Of a calm and waiting frame,  
Light and wisdom as from Heaven  
To the seeker came.

Not to ease and aimless quiet  
Doth that inward answer tend,  
But to works of love and duty  
As our being's end;

Not to idle dreams and trances,  
Length of face, and solemn tone,  
But to Faith, in daily striving  
And performance shown.

Earnest toil and strong endeavor  
Of a spirit which within  
Wrestles with familiar evil  
And besetting sin;

And without, with tireless vigor,  
Steady heart, and weapon strong,  
In the power of truth assailing  
Every form of wrong.

Guided thus, how passing lovely  
Is the track of Woolman's feet!  
And his brief and simple record  
How serenely sweet!

O'er life's humblest duties throwing  
Light the earthling never knew,  
Freshening all its dark waste places  
As with Hermon's dew.

All which glows in Pascal's pages,  
All which sainted Guion sought,  
Or the blue-eyed German Rahel  
Half-unconscious taught

Beauty, such as Goethe pictured,  
Such as Shelley dreamed of, shed  
Living warmth and starry brightness  
Round that poor man's head.

Not a vain and cold ideal,  
Not a poet's dream alone,  
But a presence warm and real,  
Seen and felt and known.

When the red right-hand of slaughter  
Moulders with the steel it swung,

When the name of seer and poet  
Dies on Memory's tongue,

All bright thoughts and pure shall gather  
Round that meek and suffering one,--  
Glorious, like the seer-seen angel  
Standing in the sun!

Take the good man's book and ponder  
What its pages say to thee;  
Blessed as the hand of healing  
May its lesson be.

If it only serves to strengthen  
Yearnings for a higher good,  
For the fount of living waters  
And diviner food;

If the pride of human reason  
Feels its meek and still rebuke,  
Quailing like the eye of Peter  
From the Just One's look!

If with readier ear thou heedest  
What the Inward Teacher saith,  
Listening with a willing spirit  
And a childlike faith,--

Thou mayst live to bless the giver,  
Who, himself but frail and weak,  
Would at least the highest welfare  
Of another seek;

And his gift, though poor and lowly  
It may seem to other eyes,  
Yet may prove an angel holy  
In a pilgrim's guise.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To A Cape Ann Schooner

Luck to the craft that bears this name of mine,  
Good fortune follow with her golden spoon  
The glazed hat and tarry pantaloons;  
And wheresoe'er her keel shall cut the brine,  
Cod, hake and haddock quarrel for her line.  
Shipped with her crew, whatever wind may blow,  
Or tides delay, my wish with her shall go,  
Fishing by proxy. Would that it might show  
At need her course, in lack of sun and star,  
Where icebergs threaten, and the sharp reefs are;  
Lift the blind fog on Anticosti's lee  
And Avalon's rock; make populous the sea  
Round Grand Manan with eager finny swarms,  
Break the long calms, and charm away the storms.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To A Friend

ON HER RETURN FROM EUROPE.

How smiled the land of France  
Under thy blue eye's glance,  
Light-hearted rover  
Old walls of chateaux gray,  
Towers of an early day,  
Which the Three Colors play  
Flauntingly over.

Now midst the brilliant train  
Thronging the banks of Seine  
Now midst the splendor  
Of the wild Alpine range,  
Waking with change on change  
Thoughts in thy young heart strange,  
Lovely, and tender.

Vales, soft Elysian,  
Like those in the vision  
Of Mirza, when, dreaming,  
He saw the long hollow dell,  
Touched by the prophet's spell,  
Into an ocean swell  
With its isles teeming.

Cliffs wrapped in snows of years,  
Splintering with icy spears  
Autumn's blue heaven  
Loose rock and frozen slide,  
Hung on the mountain-side,  
Waiting their hour to glide  
Downward, storm-driven!

Rhine-stream, by castle old,  
Baron's and robber's hold,  
Peacefully flowing;  
Sweeping through vineyards green,  
Or where the cliffs are seen

O'er the broad wave between  
Grim shadows throwing.

Or, where St. Peter's dome  
Swells o'er eternal Rome,  
Vast, dim, and solemn;  
Hymns ever chanting low,  
Censers swung to and fro,  
Sable stoles sweeping slow  
Cornice and column!

Oh, as from each and all  
Will there not voices call  
Evermore back again?  
In the mind's gallery  
Wilt thou not always see  
Dim phantoms beckon thee  
O'er that old track again?

New forms thy presence haunt,  
New voices softly chant,  
New faces greet thee!  
Pilgrims from many a shrine  
Hallowed by poet's line,  
At memory's magic sign,  
Rising to meet thee.

And when such visions come  
Unto thy olden home,  
Will they not waken  
Deep thoughts of Him whose hand  
Led thee o'er sea and land  
Back to the household band  
Whence thou wast taken?

While, at the sunset time,  
Swells the cathedral's chime,  
Yet, in thy dreaming,  
While to thy spirit's eye  
Yet the vast mountains lie  
Piled in the Switzer's sky,  
Icy and gleaming:

Prompter of silent prayer,  
Be the wild picture there  
In the mind's chamber,  
And, through each coming day  
Him who, as staff and stay,  
Watched o'er thy wandering way,  
Freshly remember.

So, when the call shall be  
Soon or late unto thee,  
As to all given,  
Still may that picture live,  
All its fair forms survive,  
And to thy spirit give  
Gladness in Heaven!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## To A Southern Statesman

IS this thy voice whose treble notes of fear  
Wail in the wind? And dost thou shake to hear,  
Actæon-like, the bay of thine own hounds,  
Spurning the leash, and leaping o'er their bounds?  
Sore-baffled statesman! when thy eager hand,  
With game afoot, unslipped the hungry pack,  
To hunt down Freedom in her chosen land,  
Hadst thou no fear, that, erelong, doubling back,  
These dogs of thine might snuff on Slavery's track?  
Where's now the boast, which even thy guarded tongue,  
Cold, calm, and proud, in the teeth o' the Senate flung,  
O'er the fulfilment of thy baleful plan,  
Like Satan's triumph at the fall of man?  
How stood'st thou then, thy feet on Freedom planting,  
And pointing to the lurid heaven afar,  
Whence all could see, through the south windows slanting,  
Crimson as blood, the beams of that Lone Star!  
The Fates are just; they give us but our own;  
Nemesis ripens what our hands have sown.  
There is an Eastern story, not unknown,  
Doubtless, to thee, of one whose magic skill  
Called demons up his water-jars to fill;  
Defty and silently, they did his will,  
But, when the task was done, kept pouring still.  
In vain with spell and charm the wizard wrought,  
Faster and faster were the buckets brought,  
Higher and higher rose the flood around,  
Till the fiends clapped their hands above their master drowned!  
So, Carolinian, it may prove with thee,  
For God still overrules man's schemes, and takes  
Craftiness in its self-set snare, and makes  
The wrath of man to praise Him. It may be,  
That the roused spirits of Democracy  
May leave to freer States the same wide door  
Through which thy slave-cursed Texas entered in,  
From out the blood and fire, the wrong and sin,  
Of the stormed city and the ghastly plain,  
Beat by hot hail, and wet with bloody rain,  
The myriad-handed pioneer may pour,

And the wild West with the roused North combine  
And heave the engineer of evil with his mine.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Avis Keene

ON RECEIVING A BASKET OF SEA-MOSSES.

Thanks for thy gift  
Of ocean flowers,  
Born where the golden drift  
Of the slant sunshine falls  
Down the green, tremulous walls  
Of water, to the cool, still coral bowers,  
Where, under rainbows of perpetual showers,  
God's gardens of the deep  
His patient angels keep;  
Gladdening the dim, strange solitude  
With fairest forms and hues, and thus  
Forever teaching us  
The lesson which the many-colored skies,  
The flowers, and leaves, and painted butterflies,  
The deer's branched antlers, the gay bird that flings  
The tropic sunshine from its golden wings,  
The brightness of the human countenance,  
Its play of smiles, the magic of a glance,  
Forevermore repeat,  
In varied tones and sweet,  
That beauty, in and of itself, is good.

O kind and generous friend, o'er whom  
The sunset hues of Time are cast,  
Painting, upon the overpast  
And scattered clouds of noonday sorrow  
The promise of a fairer morrow,  
An earnest of the better life to come;  
The binding of the spirit broken,  
The warning to the erring spoken,  
The comfort of the sad,  
The eye to see, the hand to cull  
Of common things the beautiful,  
The absent heart made glad  
By simple gift or graceful token  
Of love it needs as daily food,  
All own one Source, and all are good

Hence, tracking sunny cove and reach,  
Where spent waves glimmer up the beach,  
And toss their gifts of weed and shell  
From foamy curve and combing swell,  
No unbecoming task was thine  
To weave these flowers so soft and fair  
In unison with His design  
Who loveth beauty everywhere;  
And makes in every zone and clime,  
In ocean and in upper air,  
All things beautiful in their time.

For not alone in tones of awe and power  
He speaks to Inan;  
The cloudy horror of the thunder-shower  
His rainbows span;  
And where the caravan  
Winds o'er the desert, leaving, as in air  
The crane-flock leaves, no trace of passage there,  
He gives the weary eye  
The palm-leaf shadow for the hot noon hours,  
And on its branches dry  
Calls out the acacia's flowers;  
And where the dark shaft pierces down  
Beneath the mountain roots,  
Seen by the miner's lamp alone,  
The star-like crystal shoots;  
So, where, the winds and waves below,  
The coral-branched gardens grow,  
His climbing weeds and mosses show,  
Like foliage, on each stony bough,  
Of varied hues more strangely gay  
Than forest leaves in autumn's day;--  
Thus evermore,  
On sky, and wave, and shore,  
An all-pervading beauty seems to say  
God's love and power are one; and they,  
Who, like the thunder of a sultry day,  
Smite to restore,  
And they, who, like the gentle wind, uplift  
The petals of the dew-wet flowers, and drift  
Their perfume on the air,

Alike may serve Him, each, with their own gift,  
Making their lives a prayer!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## To Charles Sumner

If I have seemed more prompt to censure wrong  
Than praise the right; if seldom to thine ear  
My voice hath mingled with the exultant cheer  
Borne upon all our Northern winds along;  
If I have failed to join the fickle throng  
In wide-eyed wonder, that thou standest strong  
In victory, surprised in thee to find  
Brougham's scathing power with Canning's grace combined;  
That he, for whom the ninefold Muses sang,  
From their twined arms a giant athlete sprang,  
Barbing the arrows of his native tongue  
With the spent shafts Latona's archer flung,  
To smite the Python of our land and time,  
Fell as the monster born of Crissa's slime,  
Like the blind bard who in Castalian springs  
Tempered the steel that clove the crest of kings,  
And on the shrine of England's freedom laid  
The gifts of Cumve and of Delphi's' shade,--  
Small need hast thou of words of praise from me.  
Thou knowest my heart, dear friend, and well canst guess  
That, even though silent, I have not the less  
Rejoiced to see thy actual life agree  
With the large future which I shaped for thee,  
When, years ago, beside the summer sea,  
White in the moon, we saw the long waves fall  
Baffled and broken from the rocky wall,  
That, to the menace of the brawling flood,  
Opposed alone its massive quietude,  
Calm as a fate; with not a leaf nor vine  
Nor birch-spray trembling in the still moonshine,  
Crowning it like God's peace. I sometimes think  
That night-scene by the sea prophetic,  
(For Nature speaks in symbols and in signs,  
And through her pictures human fate divines),  
That rock, wherefrom we saw the billows sink  
In murmuring rout, uprising clear and tall  
In the white light of heaven, the type of one  
Who, momentarily by Error's host assailed,  
Stands strong as Truth, in greaves of granite mailed;

And, tranquil-fronted, listening over all  
The tumult, hears the angels say, Well done!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Delaware

THRICE welcome to thy sisters of the East,  
To the strong tillers of a rugged home,  
With spray-wet locks to Northern winds released,  
And hardy feet o'erswept by ocean's foam;  
And to the young nymphs of the golden West,  
Whose harvest mantles, fringed with prairie bloom,  
Trail in the sunset, — O redeemed and blest,  
To the warm welcome of thy sisters come!  
Broad Pennsylvania, down her sail-white bay  
Shall give thee joy, and Jersey from her plains,  
And the great lakes, where echo, free alway,  
Moaned never shoreward with the clank of chains,  
Shall weave new sun-bows in their tossing spray,  
And all their waves keep grateful holiday.  
And, smiling on thee through her mountain rains,  
Vermont shall bless thee; and the granite peaks,  
And vast Katahdin o'er his woods, shall wear  
Their snow-crowns brighter in the cold, keen air;  
And Massachusetts, with her rugged cheeks  
O'errun with grateful tears, shall turn to thee,  
When, at thy bidding, the electric wire  
Shall tremble northward with its words of fire;  
Glory and praise to God! another State is free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Englishmen

You flung your taunt across the wave;  
We bore it as became us,  
Well knowing that the fettered slave  
Left friendly lips no option save  
To pity or to blame us.  
You scoffed our plea. 'Mere lack of will,  
Not lack of power,' you told us:  
We showed our free-state records; still  
You mocked, confounding good and ill,  
Slave-haters and slaveholders.  
We struck at Slavery; to the verge  
Of power and means we checked it;  
Lo! — presto, change! its claims you urge,  
Send greetings to it o'er the surge,  
And comfort and protect it.  
But yesterday you scarce could shake,  
In slave-abhorring rigor,  
Our Northern palms for conscience' sake:  
To-day you clasp the hands that ache  
With 'walloping the nigger!'  
O Englishmen! — in hope and creed,  
In blood and tongue our brothers!  
We too are heirs of Runnymede;  
And Shakespeare's fame and Cromwell's deed  
Are not alone our mother's.  
'Thicker than water,' in one rill  
Through centuries of story  
Our Saxon blood has flowed, and still  
We share with you its good and ill,  
The shadow and the glory.  
Joint heirs and kinfolk, leagues of wave  
Nor length of years can part us:  
Your right is ours to shrine and grave,  
The common freehold of the brave,  
The gift of saints and martyrs.  
Our very sins and follies teach  
Our kindred frail and human:  
We carp at faults with bitter speech,  
The while, for one unshared by each,

We have a score in common.  
We bowed the heart, if not the knee,  
To England's Queen, God bless her!  
We praised you when your slaves went free:  
We seek to unchain ours. Will ye  
Join hands with the oppressor?  
And is it Christian England cheers  
The bruiser, not the bruised?  
And must she run, despite the tears  
And prayers of eighteen hundred years,  
Amuck in Slavery's crusade?  
Oh, black disgrace! Oh, shame and loss  
Too deep for tongue to phrase on!  
Tear from your flag its holy cross,  
And in your van of battle toss  
The pirate's skull-bone blazon!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Faneuil Hall

MEN! if manhood still ye claim,  
If the Northern pulse can thrill,  
Roused by wrong or stung by shame,  
Freely, strongly still;  
Let the sounds of traffic die:  
Shut the mill-gate, leave the stall,  
Fling the axe and hammer by;  
Throng to Faneuil Hall!  
Wrongs which freemen never brooked,  
Dangers grim and fierce as they,  
Which, like couching lions, looked  
On your fathers' way;  
These your instant zeal demand,  
Shaking with their earthquake-call  
Every rood of Pilgrim land,  
Ho, to Faneuil Hall!  
From your capes and sandy bars,  
From your mountain-ridges cold,  
Through whose pines the westering stars  
Stoop their crowns of gold;  
Come, and with your footsteps wake  
Echoes from that holy wall;  
Once again, for Freedom's sake,  
Rock your fathers' hall!  
Up, and tread beneath your feet  
Every cord by party spun:  
Let your hearts together beat  
As the heart of one.  
Banks and tarrifs, stocks and trade,  
Let them rise or let them fall:  
Freedom asks your common aid, —  
Up, to Faneuil Hall!  
Up, and let each voice that speaks  
Ring from thence to Southern plains,  
Sharply as the blow which breaks  
Prison-bolts and chains!  
Speak as well becomes the free:  
Dreaded more than steel or ball,  
Shall your calmest utterance be,

Heard from Faneuil Hall!  
Have they wronged us? Let us then  
Render back nor threats nor prayers;  
Have they chained our free-born men?  
Let us unchain theirs!  
Up, your banner leads the van,  
Blazoned, 'Liberty for all!'  
Finish what your sires began!  
Up, to Faneuil Hall!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Fredrika Bremer

Seeress of the misty Norland,  
Daughter of the Vikings bold,  
Welcome to the sunny Vineland,  
Which thy fathers sought of old!

Soft as flow of Siija's waters,  
When the moon of summer shines,  
Strong as Winter from his mountains  
Roaring through the sleeted pines.

Heart and ear, we long have listened  
To thy saga, rune, and song;  
As a household joy and presence  
We have known and loved thee long.

By the mansion's marble mantel,  
Round the log-walled cabin's hearth,  
Thy sweet thoughts and northern fancies  
Meet and mingle with our mirth.

And o'er weary spirits keeping  
Sorrow's night-watch, long and chill,  
Shine they like thy sun of summer  
Over midnight vale and hill.

We alone to thee are strangers,  
Thou our friend and teacher art;  
Come, and know us as we know thee;  
Let us meet thee heart to heart!

To our homes and household altars  
We, in turn, thy steps would lead,  
As thy loving hand has led us  
O'er the threshold of the Swede.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To G. G.

AN AUTOGRAPH.

Graceful in name and in thyself, our river  
None fairer saw in John Ward's pilgrim flock,  
Proof that upon their century-rooted stock  
The English roses bloom as fresh as ever.

Take the warm welcome of new friends with thee,  
And listening to thy home's familiar chime  
Dream that thou hearest, with it keeping time,  
The bells on Merrimac sound across the sea.

Think of our thrushes, when the lark sings clear,  
Of our sweet Mayflowers when the daisies bloom;  
And bear to our and thy ancestral home  
The kindly greeting of its children here.

Say that our love survives the severing strain;  
That the New England, with the Old, holds fast  
The proud, fond memories of a common past;  
Unbroken still the ties of blood remain!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To George B. Cheever

So spake Esaias: so, in words of flame,  
Tekoa's prophet-herdsman smote with blame  
The traffickers in men, and put to shame,  
All earth and heaven before,  
The sacerdotal robbers of the poor.

All the dread Scripture lives for thee again,  
To smite like lightning on the hands profane  
Lifted to bless the slave-whip and the chain.  
Once more the old Hebrew tongue  
Bends with the shafts of God a bow new-strung!

Take up the mantle which the prophets wore;  
Warn with their warnings, show the Christ once more  
Bound, scourged, and crucified in His blameless poor;  
And shake above our land  
The unquenched bolts that blazed in Hosea's hand!

Not vainly shalt thou cast upon our years  
The solemn burdens of the Orient seers,  
And smite with truth a guilty nation's ears.  
Mightier was Luther's word  
Than Seckingen's mailed arm or Hutton's sword!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## To J. P.

John Pierpont, the eloquent preacher and poet of Boston.

Not as a poor requital of the joy  
With which my childhood heard that lay of thine,  
Which, like an echo of the song divine  
At Bethlehem breathed above the Holy Boy,  
Bore to my ear the Airs of Palestine,--  
Not to the poet, but the man I bring  
In friendship's fearless trust my offering  
How much it lacks I feel, and thou wilt see,  
Yet well I know that thou Last deemed with me  
Life all too earnest, and its time too short  
For dreamy ease and Fancy's graceful sport;  
And girded for thy constant strife with wrong,  
Like Nehemiah fighting while he wrought  
The broken walls of Zion, even thy song  
Hath a rude martial tone, a blow in every thought!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To James T. Fields

ON A BLANK LEAF OF 'POEMS PRINTED, NOT PUBLISHED.'

Well thought! who would not rather hear  
The songs to Love and Friendship sung  
Than those which move the stranger's tongue,  
And feed his unselected ear?

Our social joys are more than fame;  
Life withers in the public look.  
Why mount the pillory of a book,  
Or barter comfort for a name?

Who in a house of glass would dwell,  
With curious eyes at every pane?  
To ring him in and out again,  
Who wants the public crier's bell?

To see the angel in one's way,  
Who wants to play the ass's part,--  
Bear on his back the wizard Art,  
And in his service speak or bray?

And who his manly locks would shave,  
And quench the eyes of common sense,  
To share the noisy recompense  
That mocked the shorn and blinded slave?

The heart has needs beyond the head,  
And, starving in the plenitude  
Of strange gifts, craves its common food,--  
Our human nature's daily bread.

We are but men: no gods are we,  
To sit in mid-heaven, cold and bleak,  
Each separate, on his painful peak,  
Thin-cloaked in self-complacency.

Better his lot whose axe is swung  
In Wartburg woods, or that poor girl's

Who by the him her spindle whirls  
And sings the songs that Luther sung,

Than his who, old, and cold, and vain,  
At Weimar sat, a demigod,  
And bowed with Jove's imperial nod  
His votaries in and out again!

Ply, Vanity, thy winged feet!  
Ambition, hew thy rocky stair!  
Who envies him who feeds on air  
The icy splendor of his seat?

I see your Alps, above me, cut  
The dark, cold sky; and dim and lone  
I see ye sitting,--stone on stone,--  
With human senses dulled and shut.

I could not reach you, if I would,  
Nor sit among your cloudy shapes;  
And (spare the fable of the grapes  
And fox) I would not if I could.

Keep to your lofty pedestals!  
The safer plain below I choose  
Who never wins can rarely lose,  
Who never climbs as rarely falls.

Let such as love the eagle's scream  
Divide with him his home of ice  
For me shall gentler notes suffice,--  
The valley-song of bird and stream;

The pastoral bleat, the drone of bees,  
The flail-beat chiming far away,  
The cattle-low, at shut of day,  
The voice of God in leaf and breeze;

Then lend thy hand, my wiser friend,  
And help me to the vales below,  
(In truth, I have not far to go,)  
Where sweet with flowers the fields extend.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To John C. Fremont

THY error, Frémont, simply was to act  
A brave man's part, without the statesman's tact,  
And, taking counsel but of common sense,  
To strike at cause as well as consequence.  
Oh, never yet since Roland wound his horn  
At Roncesvalles, has a blast been blown  
Far-heard, wide-echoed, startling as thine own,  
Heard from the van of freedom's hope forlorn!  
It had been safer, doubtless, for the time,  
To flatter treason, and avoid offence  
To that Dark Power whose underlying crime  
Heaves upward its perpetual turbulence.  
But if thine be the fate of all who break  
The ground for truth's seed, or forerun their years  
Till lost in distance, or with stout hearts make  
A lane for freedom through the level spears,  
Still take thou courage! God has spoken through thee,  
Irrevocable, the mighty words, Be free!  
The land shakes with them, and the slave's dull ear  
Turns from the rice-swamp stealthily to hear.  
Who would recall them now must first arrest  
The winds that blow down from the free Northwest,  
Ruffling the Gulf; or like a scroll roll back  
The Mississippi to its upper springs.  
Such words fulfil their prophecy, and lack  
But the full time to harden into things.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Lydia Maria Child

ON READING HER POEM IN 'THE STANDARD.'

The sweet spring day is glad with music,  
But through it sounds a sadder strain;  
The worthiest of our narrowing circle  
Sings Loring's dirges o'er again.

O woman greatly loved! I join thee  
In tender memories of our friend;  
With thee across the awful spaces  
The greeting of a soul I send!

What cheer hath he? How is it with him?  
Where lingers he this weary while?  
Over what pleasant fields of Heaven  
Dawns the sweet sunrise of his smile?

Does he not know our feet are treading  
The earth hard down on Slavery's grave?  
That, in our crowning exultations,  
We miss the charm his presence gave?

Why on this spring air comes no whisper  
From him to tell us all is well?  
Why to our flower-time comes no token  
Of lily and of asphodel?

I feel the unutterable longing,  
Thy hunger of the heart is mine;  
I reach and grope for hands in darkness,  
My ear grows sharp for voice or sign.

Still on the lips of all we question  
The finger of God's silence lies;  
Will the lost hands in ours be folded?  
Will the shut eyelids ever rise?

O friend! no proof beyond this yearning,

This outreach of our hearts, we need;  
God will not mock the hope He giveth,  
No love He prompts shall vainly plead.

Then let us stretch our hands in darkness,  
And call our loved ones o'er and o'er;  
Some day their arms shall close about us,  
And the old voices speak once more.

No dreary splendors wait our coming  
Where rapt ghost sits from ghost apart;  
Homeward we go to Heaven's thanksgiving,  
The harvest-gathering of the heart.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Massachusetts

WHAT though around thee blazes  
No fiery rallying sign?  
From all thy own high places,  
Give heaven the light of thine!  
What though unthrilled, unmoving,  
The statesman stand apart,  
And comes no warm approving  
From Mammon's crowded mart?  
Still, let the land be shaken  
By a summons of thine own!  
By all save truth forsaken,  
Stand fast with that alone!  
Shrink not from strife unequal!  
With the best is always hope;  
And ever in the sequel  
God holds the right side up!  
But when, with thine uniting,  
Come voices long and loud,  
And far-off hills are writing  
Thy fire-words on the cloud;  
When from Penobscot's fountains  
A deep response is heard,  
And across the Western mountains  
Rolls back thy rallying word;  
Shall thy line of battle falter,  
With its allies just in view?  
Oh, by hearth and holy altar,  
My fatherland, be true!  
Fling abroad thy scrolls of freedom!  
Speed them onward far and fast!  
Over hill and valley speed them,  
Like the sibyl's on the blast!  
Lo! The Empire State is shaking  
The shackles from her hand;  
With the rugged North is waking  
The level sunset land!  
On they come, the free battalions!  
East and West and North they come,  
And the heart-beat of the millions

Is the beat of Freedom's drum.  
'To the tyrant's plot no favor!  
No heed to place-fed knaves!  
Bar and bolt the door forever  
Against the land of slaves!'  
Hear it, mother Earth, and hear it,  
The heavens above us spread!  
The land is roused, — its spirit  
Was sleeping, but not dead!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To My Friend On the Death Of His Sister

Thine is a grief, the depth of which another  
May never know;  
Yet, o'er the waters, O my stricken brother!  
To thee I go.

I lean my heart unto thee, sadly folding  
Thy hand in mine;  
With even the weakness of my soul upholding  
The strength of thine.

I never knew, like thee, the dear departed;  
I stood not by  
When, in calm trust, the pure and tranquil-hearted  
Lay down to die.

And on thy ears my words of weak condoling  
Must vainly fall  
The funeral bell which in thy heart is tolling,  
Sounds over all!

I will not mock thee with the poor world's common  
And heartless phrase,  
Nor wrong the memory of a sainted woman  
With idle praise.

With silence only as their benediction,  
God's angels come  
Where, in the shadow of a great affliction,  
The soul sits dumb!

Yet, would I say what thy own heart approveth  
Our Father's will,  
Calling to Him the dear one whom He loveth,  
Is mercy still.

Not upon thee or thine the solemn angel  
Hath evil wrought  
Her funeral anthem is a glad evangel,--  
The good die not!

God calls our loved ones, but we lose not wholly  
What He hath given;  
They live on earth, in thought and deed, as truly  
As in His heaven.

And she is with thee; in thy path of trial  
She walketh yet;  
Still with the baptism of thy self-denial  
Her locks are wet.

Up, then, my brother! Lo, the fields of harvest  
Lie white in view  
She lives and loves thee, and the God thou servest  
To both is true.

Thrust in thy sickle! England's toilworn peasants  
Thy call abide;  
And she thou mourn'st, a pure and holy presence,  
Shall glean beside!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To My Old Schoolmaster

AN EPISTLE NOT AFTER THE MANNER OF HORACE

Old friend, kind friend! lightly down  
Drop time's snow-flakes on thy crown!  
Never be thy shadow less,  
Never fail thy cheerfulness;  
Care, that kills the cat, may, plough  
Wrinkles in the miser's brow,  
Deepen envy's spiteful frown,  
Draw the mouths of bigots down,  
Plague ambition's dream, and sit  
Heavy on the hypocrite,  
Haunt the rich man's door, and ride  
In the gilded coach of pride;--  
Let the fiend pass!--what can he  
Find to do with such as thee?  
Seldom comes that evil guest  
Where the conscience lies at rest,  
And brown health and quiet wit  
Smiling on the threshold sit.

I, the urchin unto whom,  
In that smoked and dingy room,  
Where the district gave thee rule  
O'er its ragged winter school,  
Thou didst teach the mysteries  
Of those weary A B C's,--  
Where, to fill the every pause  
Of thy wise and learned saws,  
Through the cracked and crazy wall  
Came the cradle-rock and squall,  
And the goodman's voice, at strife  
With his shrill and tipsy wife,  
Luring us by stories old,  
With a comic unction told,  
More than by the eloquence  
Of terse birchen arguments  
(Doubtful gain, I fear), to look  
With complacence on a book!--

Where the genial pedagogue  
Half forgot his rogues to flog,  
Citing tale or apologue,  
Wise and merry in its drift  
As was Phaedrus' twofold gift,  
Had the little rebels known it,  
Risum et prudentiam monet!  
I,--the man of middle years,  
In whose sable locks appears  
Many a warning fleck of gray,--  
Looking back to that far day,  
And thy primal lessons, feel  
Grateful smiles my lips unseal,  
As, remembering thee, I blend  
Olden teacher, present friend,  
Wise with antiquarian search,  
In the scrolls of State and Church  
Named on history's title-page,  
Parish-clerk and justice sage;  
For the ferule's wholesome awe  
Wielding now the sword of law.

Threshing Time's neglected sheaves,  
Gathering up the scattered leaves  
Which the wrinkled sibyl cast  
Careless from her as she passed,--  
Twofold citizen art thou,  
Freeman of the past and now.  
He who bore thy name of old  
Midway in the heavens did hold  
Over Gibeon moon and sun;  
Thou hast bidden them backward run;  
Of to-day the present ray  
Flinging over yesterday!

Let the busy ones deride  
What I deem of right thy pride  
Let the fools their treadmills grind,  
Look not forward nor behind,  
Shuffle in and wriggle out,  
Veer with every breeze about,  
Turning like a windmill sail,

Or a dog that seeks his tail;  
Let them laugh to see thee fast  
Tabernacled in the Past,  
Working out with eye and lip,  
Riddles of old penmanship,  
Patient as Belzoni there  
Sorting out, with loving care,  
Mummies of dead questions stripped  
From their sevenfold manuscript.

Dabbling, in their noisy way,  
In the puddles of to-day,  
Little know they of that vast  
Solemn ocean of the past,  
On whose margin, wreck-bespread,  
Thou art walking with the dead,  
Questioning the stranded years,  
Waking smiles, by turns, and tears,  
As thou callest up again  
Shapes the dust has long o'erlain,--  
Fair-haired woman, bearded man,  
Cavalier and Puritan;  
In an age whose eager view  
Seeks but present things, and new,  
Mad for party, sect and gold,  
Teaching reverence for the old.

On that shore, with fowler's tact,  
Coolly bagging fact on fact,  
Naught amiss to thee can float,  
Tale, or song, or anecdote;  
Village gossip, centuries old,  
Scandals by our grandams told,  
What the pilgrim's table spread,  
Where he lived, and whom he wed,  
Long-drawn bill of wine and beer  
For his ordination cheer,  
Or the flip that wellnigh made  
Glad his funeral cavalcade;  
Weary prose, and poet's lines,  
Flavored by their age, like wines,  
Eulogistic of some quaint,

Doubtful, puritanic saint;  
Lays that quickened husking jigs,  
Jests that shook grave periwigs,  
When the parson had his jokes  
And his glass, like other folks;  
Sermons that, for mortal hours,  
Taxed our fathers' vital powers,  
As the long nineteenthlies poured  
Downward from the sounding-board,  
And, for fire of Pentecost,  
Touched their beards December's frost.

Time is hastening on, and we  
What our fathers are shall be,--  
Shadow-shapes of memory!  
Joined to that vast multitude  
Where the great are but the good,  
And the mind of strength shall prove  
Weaker than the heart of love;  
Pride of graybeard wisdom less  
Than the infant's guilelessness,  
And his song of sorrow more  
Than the crown the Psalmist wore  
Who shall then, with pious zeal,  
At our moss-grown thresholds kneel,  
From a stained and stony page  
Reading to a careless age,  
With a patient eye like thine,  
Prosing tale and limping line,  
Names and words the hoary rime  
Of the Past has made sublime?  
Who shall work for us as well  
The antiquarian's miracle?  
Who to seeming life recall  
Teacher grave and pupil small?  
Who shall give to thee and me  
Freeholds in futurity?

Well, whatever lot be mine,  
Long and happy days be thine,  
Ere thy full and honored age  
Dates of time its latest page!

Squire for master, State for school,  
Wisely lenient, live and rule;  
Over grown-up knave and rogue  
Play the watchful pedagogue;  
Or, while pleasure smiles on duty,  
At the call of youth and beauty,  
Speak for them the spell of law  
Which shall bar and bolt withdraw,  
And the flaming sword remove  
From the Paradise of Love.  
Still, with undimmed eyesight, pore  
Ancient tome and record o'er;  
Still thy week-day lyrics croon,  
Pitch in church the Sunday tune,  
Showing something, in thy part,  
Of the old Puritanic art,  
Singer after Sternhold's heart  
In thy pew, for many a year,  
Homilies from Oldbug hear,  
Who to wit like that of South,  
And the Syrian's golden mouth,  
Doth the homely pathos add  
Which the pilgrim preachers had;  
Breaking, like a child at play,  
Gilded idols of the day,  
Cant of knave and pomp of fool  
Tossing with his ridicule,  
Yet, in earnest or in jest,  
Ever keeping truth abreast.  
And, when thou art called, at last,  
To thy townsmen of the past,  
Not as stranger shalt thou come;  
Thou shalt find thyself at home  
With the little and the big,  
Woollen cap and periwig,  
Madam in her high-laced ruff,  
Goody in her home-made stuff,--  
Wise and simple, rich and poor,  
Thou hast known them all before!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To My Sister,

WITH A COPY OF 'THE SUPERNATURALISM OF NEW ENGLAND.'

Dear Sister! while the wise and sage  
Turn coldly from my playful page,  
And count it strange that ripened age  
Should stoop to boyhood's folly;  
I know that thou wilt judge aright  
Of all which makes the heart more light,  
Or lends one star-gleam to the night  
Of clouded Melancholy.

Away with weary cares and themes!  
Swing wide the moonlit gate of dreams!  
Leave free once more the land which teems  
With wonders and romances  
Where thou, with clear discerning eyes,  
Shalt rightly read the truth which lies  
Beneath the quaintly masking guise  
Of wild and wizard fancies.

Lo! once again our feet we set  
On still green wood-paths, twilight wet,  
By lonely brooks, whose waters fret  
The roots of spectral beeches;  
Again the hearth-fire glimmers o'er  
Home's whitewashed wall and painted floor,  
And young eyes widening to the lore  
Of faery-folks and witches.

Dear heart! the legend is not vain  
Which lights that holy hearth again,  
And calling back from care and pain,  
And death's funereal sadness,  
Draws round its old familiar blaze  
The clustering groups of happier days,  
And lends to sober manhood's gaze  
A glimpse of childish gladness.

And, knowing how my life hath been

A weary work of tongue and pen,  
A long, harsh strife with strong-willed men,  
Thou wilt not chide my turning  
To con, at times, an idle rhyme,  
To pluck a flower from childhood's clime,  
Or listen, at Life's noonday chime,  
For the sweet bells of Morning!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Oliver Wendell Holmes

This, the last of Mr. Whittier's poems, was written but a few weeks before his death.

Among the thousands who with hail and cheer  
Will welcome thy new year,  
How few of all have passed, as thou and I,  
So many milestones by!

We have grown old together; we have seen,  
Our youth and age between,  
Two generations leave us, and to-day  
We with the third hold way,

Loving and loved. If thought must backward run  
To those who, one by one,  
In the great silence and the dark beyond  
Vanished with farewells fond,

Unseen, not lost; our grateful memories still  
Their vacant places fill,  
And with the full-voiced greeting of new friends  
A tenderer whisper blends.

Linked close in a pathetic brotherhood  
Of mingled ill and good,  
Of joy and grief, of grandeur and of shame,  
For pity more than blame,--

The gift is thine the weary world to make  
More cheerful for thy sake,  
Soothing the ears its Miserere pains,  
With the old Hellenic strains,

Lighting the sullen face of discontent  
With smiles for blessings sent.  
Enough of selfish wailing has been had,  
Thank God! for notes more glad.

Life is indeed no holiday; therein

Are want, and woe, and sin,  
Death and its nameless fears, and over all  
Our pitying tears must fall.

Sorrow is real; but the counterfeit  
Which folly brings to it,  
We need thy wit and wisdom to resist,  
O rarest Optimist!

Thy hand, old friend! the service of our days,  
In differing moods and ways,  
May prove to those who follow in our train  
Not valueless nor vain.

Far off, and faint as echoes of a dream,  
The songs of boyhood seem,  
Yet on our autumn boughs, unflown with spring,  
The evening thrushes sing.

The hour draws near, howe'er delayed and late,  
When at the Eternal Gate  
We leave the words and works we call our own,  
And lift void hands alone

For love to fill. Our nakedness of soul  
Brings to that Gate no toll;  
Giftless we come to Him, who all things gives,  
And live because He lives.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Pennsylvania

O STATE prayer-founded! never hung  
Such choice upon a people's tongue,  
Such power to bless or ban,  
As that which makes thy whisper Fate,  
For which on thee the centuries wait,  
And destinies of man!  
Across thy Alleghanian chain,  
With groanings from a land in pain,  
The west-wind finds its way:  
Wild-wailing from Missouri's flood  
The crying of thy children's blood  
Is in thy ears to-day!  
And unto thee in Freedom's hour  
Of sorest need God gives the power  
To ruin or to save;  
To wound or heal, to blight or bless  
With fertile field or wilderness,  
A free home or a grave!  
Then let thy virtue match the crime,  
Rise to a level with the time;  
And, if a son of thine  
Betray or tempt thee, Brutus-like  
For Fatherland and Freedom strike  
As Justice gives the sign.  
Wake, sleeper, from thy dream of ease,  
The great occasion's forelock seize;  
And let the north-wind strong,  
And golden leaves of autumn, be  
Thy coronal of Victory  
And thy triumphal song.

John Greenleaf Whittier

## To Pius IX

THE cannon's brazen lips are cold;  
No red shell blazes down the air;  
And street and tower, and temple old,  
Are silent as despair.  
The Lombard stands no more at bay,  
Rome's fresh young life has bled in vain;  
The ravens scattered by the day  
Come back with night again.  
Now, while the fratricides of France  
Are treading on the neck of Rome,  
Hider at Gaeta, seize thy chance!  
Coward and cruel, come!  
Creep now from Naples' bloody skirt;  
Thy mummer's part was acted well,  
While Rome, with steel and fire begirt,  
Before thy crusade fell!  
Her death-groans answered to thy prayer;  
Thy chant, the drum and bugle-call;  
Thy lights, the burning villa's glare;  
Thy beads, the shell and ball!  
Let Austria clear thy way, with hands  
Foul from Ancona's cruel sack,  
And Naples, with his dastard bands  
Of murderers, lead thee back!  
Rome's lips are dumb; the orphan's wail,  
The mother's shriek, thou mayst not hear  
Above the faithless Frenchman's hail,  
The unsexed shaveling's cheer!  
Go, bind on Rome her cast-off weight,  
The double curse of crook and crown,  
Though woman's scorn and manhood's hate  
From wall and roof flash down!  
Nor heed those blood-stains on the wall,  
Not Tiber's flood can wash away,  
Where, in thy stately Quirinal,  
Thy mangled victims lay!  
Let the world murmur; let its cry  
Of horror and disgust be heard;  
Truth stands alone; thy coward lie

Is backed by lance and sword!  
The cannon of St. Angelo,  
And chanting priest and clanging bell,  
And beat of drum and bugle blow,  
Shall greet thy coming well!  
Let lips of iron and tongues of slaves  
Fit welcome give thee; for her part,  
Rome, frowning o'er her new-made graves,  
Shall curse thee from her heart!  
No wreaths of sad Campagna's flowers  
Shall childhood in thy pathway fling;  
No garlands from their ravaged bowers  
Shall Terni's maidens bring;  
But, hateful as that tyrant old,  
The mocking witness of his crime,  
In thee shall loathing eyes behold  
The Nero of our time!  
Stand where Rome's blood was freest shed,  
Mock Heaven with impious thanks, and call  
Its curses on the patriot dead,  
Its blessings on the Gaul!  
Or sit upon thy throne of lies,  
A poor, mean idol, blood-besmeared,  
Whom even its worshippers despise,  
Unhonored, unrevered!  
Yet, Scandal of the World! from thee  
One needful truth mankind shall learn:  
That kings and priests to Liberty  
And God are false in turn.  
Earth wearies of them; and the long  
Meek sufferance of the Heavens doth fail;  
Woe for weak tyrants, when the strong  
Wake, struggle, and prevail!  
Not vainly Roman hearts have bled  
To feed the, Crosier and the Crown,  
If, roused thereby, the world shall tread  
The twin-born vampires down!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Ronge

Strike home, strong-hearted man! Down to the root  
Of old oppression sink the Saxon steel.  
Thy work is to hew down. In God's name then  
Put nerve into thy task. Let other men  
Plant, as they may, that better tree whose fruit  
The wounded bosom of the Church shall heal.  
Be thou the image-breaker. Let thy blows  
Fall heavy as the Suabian's iron hand,  
On crown or crosier, which shall interpose  
Between thee and the weal of Fatherland.  
Leave creeds to closet idlers. First of all,  
Shake thou all German dream-land with the fall  
Of that accursed tree, whose evil trunk  
Was spared of old by Erfurt's stalwart monk.  
Fight not with ghosts and shadows. Let us hear  
The snap of chain-links. Let our gladdened ear  
Catch the pale prisoner's welcome, as the light  
Follows thy axe-stroke, through his cell of night.  
Be faithful to both worlds; nor think to feed  
Earth's starving millions with the husks of creed.  
Servant of Him whose mission high and holy  
Was to the wronged, the sorrowing, and the lowly,  
Thrust not his Eden promise from our sphere,  
Distant and dim beyond the blue sky's span;  
Like him of Patmos, see it, now and here,  
The New Jerusalem comes down to man  
Be warned by Luther's error. Nor like him,  
When the roused Teuton dashes from his limb  
The rusted chain of ages, help to bind  
His hands for whom thou claim'st the freedom of  
the mind

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To Samuel E. Sewall And Harriet W. Sewall Of Melrose

OLOR ISCANUS queries: 'Why should we  
Vex at the land's ridiculous miserie?'  
So on his Usk banks, in the blood-red dawn  
Of England's civil strife, did careless Vaughan  
Bemock his times. O friends of many years!  
Though faith and trust are stronger than our fears,  
And the signs promise peace with liberty,  
Not thus we trifle with our country's tears  
And sweat of agony. The future's gain  
Is certain as God's truth; but, meanwhile, pain  
Is bitter and tears are salt: our voices take  
A sober tone; our very household songs  
Are heavy with a nation's griefs and wrongs;  
And innocent mirth is chastened for the sake  
Of the brave hearts that nevermore shall beat,  
The eyes that smile no more, the unreturning feet!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To The Memory Of Charles B. Storrs

Thou hast fallen in thine armor,  
Thou martyr of the Lord  
With thy last breath crying 'Onward!'  
And thy hand upon the sword.  
The haughty heart derideth,  
And the sinful lip reviles,  
But the blessing of the perishing  
Around thy pillow smiles!

When to our cup of trembling  
The added drop is given,  
And the long-suspended thunder  
Falls terribly from Heaven,--  
When a new and fearful freedom  
Is proffered of the Lord  
To the slow-consuming Famine,  
The Pestilence and Sword!

When the refuges of Falsehood  
Shall be swept away in wrath,  
And the temple shall be shaken,  
With its idol, to the earth,  
Shall not thy words of warning  
Be all remembered then?  
And thy now unheeded message  
Burn in the hearts of men?

Oppression's hand may scatter  
Its nettles on thy tomb,  
And even Christian bosoms  
Deny thy memory room;  
For lying lips shall torture  
Thy mercy into crime,  
And the slanderer shall flourish  
As the bay-tree for a time.

But where the south-wind lingers  
On Carolina's pines,  
Or falls the careless sunbeam

Down Georgia's golden mines;  
Where now beneath his burthen  
The toiling slave is driven;  
Where now a tyrant's mockery  
Is offered unto Heaven;

Where Mammon hath its altars  
Wet o'er with human blood,  
And pride and lust debases  
The workmanship of God,--  
There shall thy praise be spoken,  
Redeemed from Falsehood's ban,  
When the fetters shall be broken,  
And the slave shall be a man!

Joy to thy spirit, brother!  
A thousand hearts are warm,  
A thousand kindred bosoms  
Are baring to the storm.  
What though red-handed Violence  
With secret Fraud combine?  
The wall of fire is round us,  
Our Present Help was thine.

Lo, the waking up of nations,  
From Slavery's fatal sleep;  
The murmur of a Universe,  
Deep calling unto Deep!  
Joy to thy spirit, brother!  
On every wind of heaven  
The onward cheer and summons  
Of Freedom's voice is given!

Glory to God forever!  
Beyond the despot's will  
The soul of Freedom liveth  
Imperishable still.  
The words which thou hast uttered  
Are of that soul a part,  
And the good seed thou hast scattered  
Is springing from the heart.

In the evil days before us,  
And the trials yet to come,  
In the shadow of the prison,  
Or the cruel martyrdom,--  
We will think of thee, O brother!  
And thy sainted name shall be  
In the blessing of the captive,  
And the anthem of the free.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To The Memory Of Thomas Shipley

GONE to thy Heavenly Father's rest!  
The flowers of Eden round thee blowing,  
And on thine ear the murmurs blest  
Of Siloa's waters softly flowing!  
Beneath that Tree of Life which gives  
To all the earth its healing leaves  
In the white robe of angels clad,  
And wandering by that sacred river,  
Whose streams of holiness make glad  
The city of our God forever!  
Gentlest of spirits! not for thee  
Our tears are shed, our sighs are given;  
Why mourn to know thou art a free  
Partaker of the joys of heaven?  
Finished thy work, and kept thy faith  
In Christian firmness unto death;  
And beautiful as sky and earth,  
When autumn's sun is downward going,  
The blessed memory of thy worth  
Around thy place of slumber glowing!  
But woe for us! who linger still  
With feebler strength and hearts less lowly,  
And minds less steadfast to the will  
Of Him whose every work is holy.  
For not like thine, is crucified  
The spirit of our human pride:  
And at the bondman's tale of woe,  
And for the outcast and forsaken,  
Not warm like thine, but cold and slow,  
Our weaker sympathies awaken.  
Darkly upon our struggling way  
The storm of human hate is sweeping;  
Hunted and branded, and a prey,  
Our watch amidst the darkness keeping,  
Oh, for that hidden strength which can  
Nerve unto death the inner man!  
Oh, for thy spirit, tried and true,  
And constant in the hour of trial,  
Prepared to suffer, or to do,

In meekness and in self-denial.  
Oh, for that spirit, meek and mild,  
Derided, spurned, yet uncomplaining;  
By man deserted and reviled,  
Yet faithful to its trust remaining.  
Still prompt and resolute to save  
From scourge and chain the hunted slave;  
Unwavering in the Truth's defence,  
Even where the fires of Hate were burning,  
The unquailing eye of innocence  
Alone upon the oppressor turning!  
O loved of thousands! to thy grave,  
Sorrowing of heart, thy brethren bore thee.  
The poor man and the rescued slave  
Wept as the broken earth closed o'er thee;  
And grateful tears, like summer rain,  
Quickened its dying grass again!  
And there, as to some pilgrim-shrine,  
Shall come the outcast and the lowly,  
Of gentle deeds and words of thine  
Recalling memories sweet and holy!  
Oh, for the death the righteous die!  
An end, like autumn's day declining,  
On human hearts, as on the sky,  
With holier, tenderer beauty shining;  
As to the parting soul were given  
The radiance of an opening heaven!  
As if that pure and blessed light,  
From off the Eternal altar flowing,  
Were bathing, in its upward flight,  
The spirit to its worship going!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To The Reformers Of England

GOD bless ye, brothers! in the fight  
Ye 're waging now, ye cannot fail,  
For better is your sense of right  
Than king-craft's triple mail.  
Than tyrant's law, or bigot's ban,  
More mighty is your simplest word;  
The free heart of an honest man  
Than crosier or the sword.  
Go, let your blinded Church rehearse  
The lesson it has learned so well;  
It moves not with its prayer or curse  
The gates of heaven or hell.  
Let the State scaffold rise again;  
Did Freedom die when Russell died?  
Forget ye how the blood of Vane  
From earth's green bosom cried?  
The great hearts of your olden time  
Are beating with you, full and strong;  
All holy memories and sublime  
And glorious round ye throng.  
The bluff, bold men of Runnymede  
Are with ye still in times like these;  
The shades of England's mighty dead,  
Your cloud of witnesses!  
The truths ye urge are borne abroad  
By every wind and every tide;  
The voice of Nature and of God  
Speaks out upon your side.  
The weapons which your hands have found  
Are those which Heaven itself has wrought,  
Light, Truth, and Love; your battle-ground  
The free, broad field of Thought.  
No partial, selfish purpose breaks  
The simple beauty of your plan,  
Nor lie from throne or altar shakes  
Your steady faith in man.  
The languid pulse of England starts  
And bounds beneath your words of power,  
The beating of her million hearts

Is with you at this hour!  
O ye who, with undoubting eyes,  
Through present cloud and gathering storm,  
Behold the span of Freedom's skies,  
And sunshine soft and warm;  
Press bravely onward! not in vain  
Your generous trust in human-kind;  
The good which bloodshed could not gain  
Your peaceful zeal shall find.  
Press on! the triumph shall be won  
Of common rights and equal laws,  
The glorious dream of Harrington,  
And Sidney's good old cause.  
Blessing the cotter and the crown,  
Sweetening worn Labor's bitter cup;  
And, plucking not the highest down,  
Lifting the lowest up.  
Press on! and we who may not share  
The toil or glory of your fight  
May ask, at least, in earnest prayer,  
God's blessing on the right!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To The Thirty-Ninth Congress

O PEOPLE-CHOSEN! are ye not  
Likewise the chosen of the Lord,  
To do His will and speak His word?  
From the loud thunder-storm of war  
Not man alone hath called ye forth,  
But He, the God of all the earth!  
The torch of vengeance in your hands  
He quenches; unto Him belongs  
The solemn recompense of wrongs.  
Enough of blood the land has seen,  
And not by cell or gallows-stair  
Shall ye the way of God prepare.  
Say to the pardon-seekers: Keep  
Your manhood, bend no suppliant knees,  
Nor palter with unworthy pleas.  
Above your voices sounds the wail  
Of starving men; we shut in vain  
Our eyes to Pillow's ghastly stain.  
What words can drown that bitter cry?  
What tears wash out the stain of death?  
What oaths confirm your broken faith?  
From you alone the guaranty  
Of union, freedom, peace, we claim;  
We urge no conqueror's terms of shame.  
Alas! no victor's pride is ours;  
We bend above our triumphs won  
Like David o'er his rebel son.  
Be men, not beggars. Cancel all  
By one brave, generous action; trust  
Your better instincts, and be just!  
Make all men peers before the law,  
Take hands from off the negro's throat,  
Give black and white an equal vote.  
Keep all your forfeit lives and lands,  
But give the common law's redress  
To labor's utter nakedness.  
Revive the old heroic will;  
Be in the right as brave and strong  
As ye have proved yourselves in wrong.

Defeat shall then be victory,  
Your loss the wealth of full amends,  
And hate be love, and foes be friends.  
Then buried be the dreadful past,  
Its common slain be mourned, and let  
All memories soften to regret.  
Then shall the Union's mother-heart  
Her lost and wandering ones recall,  
Forgiving and restoring all, —  
And Freedom break her marble trance  
Above the Capitolian dome,  
Stretch hands, and bid ye welcome home!

John Greenleaf Whittier

## To William H. Seward

STATESMAN, I thank thee! and, if yet dissent  
Mingles, reluctant, with my large content,  
I cannot censure what was nobly meant.  
But, while constrained to hold even Union less  
Than Liberty and Truth and Righteousness,  
I thank thee in the sweet and holy name  
Of peace, for wise calm words that put to shame  
Passion and party. Courage may be shown  
Not in defiance of the wrong alone;  
He may be bravest who, unweaponed, bears  
The olive branch, and, strong in justice, spares  
The rash wrong-doer, giving widest scope  
To Christian charity and generous hope.  
If, without damage to the sacred cause  
Of Freedom and the safeguard of its laws —  
If, without yielding that for which alone  
We prize the Union, thou canst save it now  
From a baptism of blood, upon thy brow  
A wreath whose flowers no earthly soil have known,  
Woven of the beatitudes, shall rest,  
And the peacemaker be forever blest!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# To William Lloyd Garrison

CHAMPION of those who groan beneath  
Oppression's iron hand:  
In view of penury, hate, and death,  
I see thee fearless stand.  
Still bearing up thy lofty brow,  
In the steadfast strength of truth,  
In manhood sealing well the vow  
And promise of thy youth.  
Go on, for thou hast chosen well;  
On in the strength of God!  
Long as one human heart shall swell  
Beneath the tyrant's rod.  
Speak in a slumbering nation's ear,  
As thou hast ever spoken,  
Until the dead in sin shall hear,  
The fetter's link be broken!  
I love thee with a brother's love,  
I feel my pulses thrill,  
To mark thy Spirit soar above  
The cloud of human ill.  
My heart hath leaped to answer thine,  
And echo back thy words,  
As leaps the warrior's at the shine  
And flash of kindred swords!  
They tell me thou art rash and vain,  
A searcher after fame;  
That thou art striving but to gain  
A long-enduring name;  
That thou hast nerved the Afric's hand  
And steeled the Afric's heart,  
To shake aloft his vengeful brand,  
And rend his chain apart.  
Have I not known thee well, and read  
Thy mighty purpose long?  
And watched the trials which have made  
Thy human spirit strong?  
And shall the slanderer's demon breath  
Avail with one like me,  
To dim the sunshine of my faith

And earnest trust in thee?  
Go on, the dagger's point may glare  
Amid thy pathway's gloom;  
The fate which sternly threatens there  
Is glorious martyrdom!  
Then onward with a martyr's zeal;  
And wait thy sure reward  
When man to man no more shall kneel,  
And God alone be Lord!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Toussaint L’ouverture

'T WAS night. The tranquil moonlight smile  
With which Heaven dreams of Earth, shed down  
Its beauty on the Indian isle, —  
On broad green field and white-walled town;  
And inland waste of rock and wood,  
In searching sunshine, wild and rude,  
Rose, mellowed through the silver gleam,  
Soft as the landscape of a dream.  
All motionless and dewy wet,  
Tree, vine, and flower in shadow met:  
The myrtle with its snowy bloom,  
Crossing the nightshade's solemn gloom, —  
The white cecropia's silver rind  
Relieved by deeper green behind,  
The orange with its fruit of gold,  
The lithe paullinia's verdant fold,  
The passion-flower, with symbol holy,  
Twining its tendrils long and lowly,  
The rhexias dark, and cassia tall,  
And proudly rising over all,  
The kingly palm's imperial stem,,  
Crowned with its leafy diadem,  
Star-like, beneath whose sombre shade,  
The fiery-winged cucullo played!  
How lovely was thine aspect, then,  
Fair island of the Western Sea!  
Lavish of beauty, even whe  
Thy brutes were happier than thy men,  
For they, at least, were free!  
Regardless of thy glorious clime,  
Unmindful of thy soil of flowers,  
The toiling negro sighed, that Time  
No faster sped his hours.  
For, by the dewy moonlight still,  
He fed the weary-turning mill,  
Or bent him in the chill morass,  
To pluck the long and tangled grass,  
And hear above his scar-worn back  
The heavy slave-whip's frequent crack:

While in his heart one evil thought  
In solitary madness wrought,  
One baleful fire surviving still  
The quenching of the immortal mind,  
One sterner passion of his kind,  
Which even fetters could not kill,  
The savage hope, to deal, ere long,  
A vengeance bitterer than his wrong!  
Hark to that cry! long, loud, and shrill,  
From field and forest, rock and hill,  
Thrilling and horrible it rang,  
Around, beneath, above;  
The wild beast from his cavern sprang,  
The wild bird from her grove!  
Nor fear, nor joy, nor agony  
Were mingled in that midnight cry;  
But like the lion's growl of wrath,  
When falls that hunter in his path  
Whose barbed arrow, deeply set,  
Is rankling in his bosom yet,  
It told of hate, full, deep, and strong,  
Of vengeance kindling out of wrong;  
It was as if the crimes of years —  
The unrequited toil, the tears,  
The shame and hate, which liken well  
Earth's garden to the nether hell—  
Had found in nature's self a tongue,  
On which the gathered horror hung;  
As if from cliff, and stream, and glen  
Burst on the startled ears of men  
That voice which rises unto God,  
Solemn and stern, —the cry of blood!  
It ceased, and all was still once more,  
Save ocean chafing on his shore,  
The sighing of the wind between  
The broad banana's leaves of green,  
Or bough by restless plumage shook,  
Or murmuring voice of mountain brook.  
Brief was the silence. Once again  
Pealed to the skies that frantic yell,  
Glowed on the heavens a fiery stain,  
And flashes rose and fell;

And painted on the blood-red sky,  
Dark, naked arms were tossed on high;  
And, round the white man's lordly hall,  
Trode, fierce and free, the brute he made;  
And those who crept along the wall,  
And answered to his lightest call  
With more than spaniel dread,  
The creatures of his lawless beck,  
Were trampling on his very neck!  
And on the night-air, wild and clear,  
Rose woman's shriek of more than fear;  
For bloodied arms were round her thrown,  
And dark cheeks pressed against her own!  
Then, injured Afric! for the shame  
Of thy own daughters, vengeance came  
Full on the scornful hearts of those,  
Who mocked thee in thy nameless woes,  
And to thy hapless children gave  
One choice,—pollution or the grave!  
Where then was he whose fiery zeal  
Had taught the trampled heart to feel,  
Until despair itself grew strong,  
And vengeance fed its torch from wrong?  
Now, when the thunderbolt is speeding;  
Now, when oppression's heart is bleeding;  
Now, when the latent curse of Time  
Is raining down in fire and blood,  
That curse which, through long years of crime,  
Has gathered, drop by drop, its flood, —  
Why strikes he not, the foremost one,  
Where murder's sternest deeds are done?  
He stood the aged palms beneath,  
That shadowed o'er his humble door,  
Listening, with half-suspended breath,  
To the wild sounds of fear and death,  
Toussaint L'Ouverture!  
What marvel that his heart beat high!  
The blow for freedom had been given,  
And blood had answered to the cry  
Which Earth sent up to Heaven!  
What marvel that a fierce delight  
Smiled grimly o'er his brow of night,

As groan and shout and bursting flame  
Told where the midnight tempest came,  
With blood and fire along its van,  
And death behind! he was a Man!  
Yes, dark-souled chieftain! if the light  
Of mild Religion's heavenly ray  
Unveiled not to thy mental sight  
The lowlier and the purer way,  
In which the Holy Sufferer trod,  
Meekly amidst the sons of crime;  
That calm reliance upon God  
For justice in His own good time;  
That gentleness to which belongs  
Forgiveness for its many wrongs,  
Even as the primal martyr, kneeling  
For mercy on the evil-dealing;  
Let not the favored white man name  
Thy stern appeal, with words of blame.  
Has he not, with the light of heaven  
Broadly around him, made the same?  
Yea, on his thousand war-fields striven,  
And gloried in his ghastly shame?  
Kneeling amidst his brother's blood,  
To offer mockery unto God,  
As if the High and Holy One  
Could smile on deeds of murder done!  
As if a human sacrifice  
Were purer in His holy eyes,  
Though offered up by Christian hands,  
Than the foul rites of Pagan lands!

. . . . .

Sternly, amidst his household band,  
His carbine grasped within his hand,  
The white man stood, prepared and still,  
Waiting the shock of maddened men,  
Unchained, and fierce as tigers, when  
The horn winds through their caverned hill.  
And one was weeping in his sight,  
The sweetest flower of all the isle,  
The bride who seemed but yesternight  
Love's fair embodied smile.  
And, clinging to her trembling knee,

Looked up the form of infancy,  
With tearful glance in either face  
The secret of its fear to trace.  
'Ha! stand or die!' The white man's eye  
His steady musket gleamed along,  
As a tall Negro hastened nigh,  
With fearless step and strong.  
'What, ho, Toussaint!' A moment more,  
His shadow crossed the lighted floor.  
'Away!' he shouted; 'fly with me,  
The white man's bark is on the sea;  
Her sails must catch the seaward wind,  
For sudden vengeance sweeps behind.  
Our brethren from their graves have spoken,  
The yoke is spurned, the chain is broken;  
On all the hills our fires are glowing,  
Through all the vales red blood is flowing!  
No more the mocking White shall rest  
His foot upon the Negro's breast;  
No more, at morn or eve, shall drip  
The warm blood from the driver's whip:  
Yet, though Tonssaint has vengeance sworn  
For all the wrongs his race have borne,  
Though for each drop of Negro blood  
The white man's veins shall pour a flood;  
Not all alone the sense of ill  
Around his heart is lingering still,  
Nor deeper can the white man feel  
The generous warmth of grateful zeal.  
Friends of the Negro! fly with me,  
The path is open to the sea:  
Away, for life!' He spoke, and pressed  
The young child to his manly breast,  
As, headlong, through the cracking cane,  
Down swept the dark insurgent train,  
Drunken and grim, with shout and yell  
Howled through the dark, like sounds from hell.  
Far out, in peace, the white man's sail  
Swayed free before the sunrise gale.  
Cloud-like that island hung afar,  
Along the bright horizon's verge,  
O'er which the curse of servile war

Rolled its red torrent, surge on surge;  
And he, the Negro champion, where  
In the fierce tumult struggled he?  
Go trace him by the fiery glare  
Of dwellings in the midnight air,  
The yells of triumph and despair,  
The streams that crimson to the sea!  
Sleep calmly in thy dungeon-tomb,  
Beneath Besançon's alien sky,  
Dark Haytien! for the time shall come,  
Yea, even now is nigh,  
When, everywhere, thy name shall be  
Redeemed from color's infamy;  
And men shall learn to speak of thee  
As one of earth's great spirits, born  
In servitude, and nursed in scorn,  
Casting aside the weary weight  
And fetters of its low estate,  
In that strong majesty of soul  
Which knows no color, tongue, or clime,  
Which still hath spurned the base control  
Of tyrants through all time!  
Far other hands than mine may wreath  
The laurel round thy brow of death,  
And speak thy praise, as one whose word  
A thousand fiery spirits stirred,  
Who crushed his foeman as a worm,<sup>1</sup>  
Whose step on human hearts fell firm:  
Be mine the better task to find  
A tribute for thy lofty mind,  
Amidst whose gloomy vengeance shone  
Some milder virtues all thine own,  
Some gleams of feeling pure and warm,  
Like sunshine on a sky of storm,  
Proofs that the Negro's heart retains  
Some nobleness amid its chains, —  
That kindness to the wronged is never  
Without its excellent reward,  
Holy to human-kind and ever  
Acceptable to God.



# Trinitas

At morn I prayed, 'I fain would see  
How Three are One, and One is Three;  
Read the dark riddle unto me.'

I wandered forth, the sun and air  
I saw bestowed with equal care  
On good and evil, foul and fair.

No partial favor dropped the rain;  
Alike the righteous and profane  
Rejoiced above their heading grain.

And my heart murmured, 'Is it meet  
That blindfold Nature thus should treat  
With equal hand the tares and wheat?'

A presence melted through my mood,--  
A warmth, a light, a sense of good,  
Like sunshine through a winter wood.

I saw that presence, mailed complete  
In her white innocence, pause to greet  
A fallen sister of the street.

Upon her bosom snowy pure  
The lost one clung, as if secure  
From inward guilt or outward lure.

'Beware!' I said; 'in this I see  
No gain to her, but loss to thee  
Who touches pitch defiled must be.'

I passed the haunts of shame and sin,  
And a voice whispered, 'Who therein  
Shall these lost souls to Heaven's peace win?'

'Who there shall hope and health dispense,  
And lift the ladder up from thence  
Whose rounds are prayers of penitence?'

I said, 'No higher life they know;  
These earth-worms love to have it so.  
Who stoops to raise them sinks as low.'

That night with painful care I read  
What Hippo's saint and Calvin said;  
The living seeking to the dead!

In vain I turned, in weary quest,  
Old pages, where (God give them rest!)  
The poor creed-mongers dreamed and guessed.

And still I prayed, 'Lord, let me see  
How Three are One, and One is Three;  
Read the dark riddle unto me!'

Then something whispered, 'Dost thou pray  
For what thou hast? This very day  
The Holy Three have crossed thy way.

'Did not the gifts of sun and air  
To good and ill alike declare  
The all-compassionate Father's care?

'In the white soul that stooped to raise  
The lost one from her evil ways,  
Thou saw'st the Christ, whom angels praise!

'A bodiless Divinity,  
The still small Voice that spake to thee  
Was the Holy Spirit's mystery!

'O blind of sight, of faith how small!  
Father, and Son, and Holy Call  
This day thou hast denied them all!

'Revealed in love and sacrifice,  
The Holiest passed before thine eyes,  
One and the same, in threefold guise.

'The equal Father in rain and sun,

His Christ in the good to evil done,  
His Voice in thy soul;--and the Three are One!

I shut my grave Aquinas fast;  
The monkish gloss of ages past,  
The schoolman's creed aside I cast.

And my heart answered, 'Lord, I see  
How Three are One, and One is Three;  
Thy riddle hath been read to me!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Trust

The same old baffling questions! O my friend,  
I cannot answer them. In vain I send  
My soul into the dark, where never burn  
The lamps of science, nor the natural light  
Of Reason's sun and stars! I cannot learn  
Their great and solemn meanings, nor discern  
The awful secrets of the eyes which turn  
Evermore on us through the day and night  
With silent challenge and a dumb demand,  
Proffering the riddles of the dread unknown,  
Like the calm Sphinxes, with their eyes of stone,  
Questioning the centuries from their veils of sand!  
I have no answer for myself or thee,  
Save that I learned beside my mother's knee;  
'All is of God that is, and is to be;  
And God is good.' Let this suffice us still,  
Resting in childlike trust upon His will  
Who moves to His great ends unthwarted by the ill.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Utterance

But what avail inadequate words to reach  
The innermost of Truth? Who shall essay,  
Blinded and weak, to point and lead the way,  
Or solve the mystery in familiar speech?  
Yet, if it be that something not thy own,  
Some shadow of the Thought to which our schemes,  
Creeds, cult, and ritual are at best but dreams,  
Is even to thy unworthiness made known,  
Thou mayst not hide what yet thou shouldst not dare  
To utter lightly, lest on lips of thine  
The real seem false, the beauty undivine.  
So, weighing duty in the scale of prayer,  
Give what seems given thee. It may prove a seed  
Of goodness dropped in fallow-grounds of need.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Valuation

THE old Squire said, as he stood by his gate,  
And his neighbor, the Deacon, went by,  
'In spite of my bank stock and real estate,  
You are better off, Deacon, than I.

'We're both growing old, and the end's drawing near,  
You have less of this world to resign,  
But in Heaven's appraisal your assets, I fear,  
Will reckon up greater than mine.

'They say I am rich, but I'm feeling so poor,  
I wish I could swap with you even  
The pounds I have lived for and laid up in store  
For the shillings and pence you have given.'

'Well, Squire,' said the Deacon, with shrewd  
common sense,  
While his eye had a twinkle of fun,  
'Let your pounds take the way of my shillings  
and pence,  
And the thing can be easily done!'

John Greenleaf Whittier



# Voice Of New England

UP the hillside, down the glen,  
Rouse the sleeping citizen;  
Summon out the might of men!  
Like a lion growling low,  
Like a night-storm rising slow,  
Like the tread of unseen foe;  
It is coming, it is nigh!  
Stand your homes and altars by;  
On your own free thresholds die.  
Clang the bells in all your spires;  
On the gray hills of your sires  
Fling to heaven your signal-fires.  
From Wachuset, lone and bleak,  
Unto Berkshire's tallest peak,  
Let the flame-tougued heralds speak.  
Oh, for God and duty stand,  
Heart to heart and hand to hand,  
Round the old graves of the land.  
Whoso shrinks or falters now,  
Whoso to the yoke would bow,  
Brand the craven on his brow!  
Freedom's soil hath only place  
For a free and fearless race,  
None for traitors false and base.  
Perish party, perish clan;  
Strike together while ye can,  
Like the arm of one strong man.  
Like that angel's voice sublime,  
Heard above a world of crime,  
Crying of the end of time;  
With one heart and with one mouth,  
Let the North unto the South  
Speak the word befitting both:  
'What though Issachar be strong!  
Ye may load his back with wrong  
Overmuch and over long:  
'Patience with her cup o'errun,  
With her weary thread outspun,  
Murmurs that her work is done.

'Make our Union-bond a chain,  
Weak as tow in Freedom's strain  
Link by link shall snap in twain.  
'Vainly shall your sand-wrought rope  
Bind the starry cluster up,  
Shattered over heaven's blue cope!  
'Give us bright though broken rays,  
Rather than eternal haze,  
Clouding o'er the full-orbed blaze.  
'Take your land of sun and bloom;  
Only leave to Freedom room  
For her plough, and forge, and loom;  
'Take your slavery-blackened vales;  
Leave us but our own free gales,  
Blowing on our thousand sails.  
'Boldly, or with treacherous art,  
Strike the blood-wrought chain apart;  
Break the Union's mighty heart;  
'Work the ruin, if ye will;  
Pluck upon your heads an ill  
Which shall grow and deepen still.  
'With your bondman's right arm bare,  
With his heart of black despair,  
Stand alone, if stand ye dare!  
'Onward with your fell design;  
Dig the gulf and draw the line:  
Fire beneath your feet the mine:  
'Deeply, when the wide abyss  
Yawns between your land and this,  
Shall ye feel your helplessness.  
'By the hearth, and in the bed,  
Shaken by a look or tread,  
Ye shall own a guilty dread.  
'And the curse of unpaid toil,  
Downward through your generous soil  
Like a fire shall burn and spoil.  
'Our bleak hills shall bud and blow,  
Vines our rocks shall overgrow,  
Plenty in our valleys flow; —  
'And when vengeance clouds your skies,  
Hither shall ye turn your eyes,  
As the lost on Paradise!

'We but ask our rocky strand,  
Freedom's true and brother band,  
Freedom's strong and honest hand;  
'Valleys by the slave untrod,  
And the Pilgrim's mountain sod,  
Blessed of our fathers' God!'

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Voyage Of The Jettie

A shallow stream, from fountains  
Deep in the Sandwich mountains,  
Ran lake ward Bearcamp River;  
And, between its flood-torn shores,  
Sped by sail or urged by oars  
No keel had vexed it ever.

Alone the dead trees yielding  
To the dull axe Time is wielding,  
The shy mink and the otter,  
And golden leaves and red,  
By countless autumns shed,  
Had floated down its water.

From the gray rocks of Cape Ann,  
Came a skilled seafaring man,  
With his dory, to the right place;  
Over hill and plain he brought her,  
Where the boatless Beareamp water  
Comes winding down from White-Face.

Quoth the skipper: "Ere she floats forth;  
I'm sure my pretty boat's worth,  
At least, a name as pretty."  
On her painted side he wrote it,  
And the flag that o'er her floated  
Bore aloft the name of Jettie.

On a radiant morn of summer,  
Elder guest and latest comer  
Saw her wed the Bearcamp water;  
Heard the name the skipper gave her,  
And the answer to the favor  
From the Bay State's graceful daughter.

Then, a singer, richly gifted,  
Her charmed voice uplifted;  
And the wood-thrush and song-sparrow  
Listened, dumb with envious pain,

To the clear and sweet refrain  
Whose notes they could not borrow.

Then the skipper plied his oar,  
And from off the shelving shore,  
Glided out the strange explorer;  
Floating on, she knew not whither,—  
The tawny sands beneath her,  
The great hills watching o'er her.

On, where the stream flows quiet  
As the meadows' margins by it,  
Or widens out to borrow a  
New life from that wild water,  
The mountain giant's daughter,  
The pine-besung Chocorua.

Or, mid the tangling cumber  
And pack of mountain lumber  
That spring floods downward force,  
Over sunken snag, and bar  
Where the grating shallows are,  
The good boat held her course.

Under the pine-dark highlands,  
Around the vine-hung islands,  
She ploughed her crooked furrow  
And her rippling and her lurches  
Scared the river eels and perches,  
And the musk-rat in his burrow.

Every sober clam below her,  
Every sage and grave pearl-grower,  
Shut his rusty valves the tighter;  
Crow called to crow complaining,  
And old tortoises sat craning  
Their leathern necks to sight her.

So, to where the still lake glasses  
The misty mountain masses  
Rising dim and distant northward,  
And, with faint-drawn shadow pictures,

Low shores, and dead pine spectres,  
Blends the skyward and the earthward,

On she glided, overladen,  
With merry man and maiden  
Sending back their song and laughter,—  
While, perchance, a phantom crew,  
In a ghostly birch canoe,  
Paddled dumb and swiftly after!

And the bear on Ossipee  
Climbed the topmost crag to see  
The strange thing drifting under;  
And, through the haze of August,  
Passaconaway and Paugus  
Looked down in sleepy wonder.

All the pines that o'er her hung  
In mimic sea-tones sung  
The song familiar to her;  
And the maples leaned to screen her,  
And the meadow-grass seemed greener,  
And the breeze more soft to woo her.

The lone stream mystery-haunted,  
To her the freedom granted  
To scan its every feature,  
Till new and old were blended,  
And round them both extended  
The loving arms of Nature.

Of these hills the little vessel  
Henceforth is part and parcel;  
And on Bearcamp shall her log  
Be kept, as if by George's  
Or Grand Menan, the surges  
Tossed her skipper through the fog.

And I, who, half in sadness,  
Recall the morning gladness  
Of life, at evening time,  
By chance, onlooking idly,

Apart from all so widely,  
Have set her voyage to rhyme.

Dies now the gay persistence  
Of song and laugh, in distance;  
Alone with me remaining  
The stream, the quiet meadow,  
The hills in shine and shadow,  
The sombre pines complaining.

And, musing here, I dream  
Of voyagers on a stream  
From whence is no returning,  
Under sealed orders going,  
Looking forward little knowing,  
Looking back with idle yearning.

And I pray that every venture  
The port of peace may enter,  
That, safe from snag and fall  
And siren-haunted islet,  
And rock, the Unseen Pilot  
May guide us one and all.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# We May Not Climb The Heavenly Steeps

We may not climb the heavenly steeps  
To bring the Lord Christ down;  
In vain we search the lowest deeps  
For Him who fills Heaven's throne.

But to the contrite spirit yet  
A present help is He;  
And faith has yet its Olivet,  
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch Him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

Through Him the first fond prayers are said,  
Our lips of childhood frame;  
The last low whispers of our dead  
Are burdened with His Name.

O Lord and Saviour of us all,  
Whate'er our name or sign,  
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,  
And form our lives by Thine.

We faintly hear, we dimly see,  
In differing phrase we pray;  
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee  
The Life, the Truth, the Way.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# What Of The Day

A SOUND of tumult troubles all the air,  
Like the low thunders of a sultry sky  
Far-rolling ere the downright lightnings glare;  
The hills blaze red with warnings; foes draw nigh,  
Treading the dark with challenge and reply.  
Behold the burden of the prophet's vision;  
The gathering hosts, — the Valley of Decision,  
Dusk with the wings of eagles wheeling o'er.  
Day of the Lord, of darkness and not light!  
It breaks in thunder and the whirlwind's roar!  
Even so, Father! Let Thy will be done;  
Turn and o'erturn, end what Thou hast begun  
In judgment or in mercy: as for me,  
If but the least and frailest, let me be  
Evermore numbered with the truly free  
Who find Thy service perfect liberty!  
I fain would thank Thee that my mortal life  
Has reached the hour (albeit through care and pain)  
When Good and Evil, as for final strife,  
Close dim and vast on Armageddon's plain;  
And Michael and his angels once again  
Drive howling back the Spirits of the Night.  
Oh for the faith to read the signs aright  
And, from the angle of Thy perfect sight,  
See Truth's white banner floating on before;  
And the Good Cause, despite of venal friends,  
And base expedients, move to noble ends;  
See Peace with Freedom make to Time amends,  
And, through its cloud of dust, the threshing-floor,  
Flailed by the thunder, heaped with chaffless grain!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# What The Birds Said

The birds against the April wind  
Flew northward, singing as they flew;  
They sang, "The land we leave behind  
Has swords for corn-blades, blood for dew."

"O wild-birds, flying from the South,  
What saw and heard ye, gazing down?"  
"We saw the mortar's upturned mouth,  
The sickened camp, the blazing town!

"Beneath the bivouac's starry lamps,  
We saw your march-worn children die;  
In shrouds of moss, in cypress swamps,  
We saw your dead uncoffined lie.

"We heard the starving prisoner's sighs  
And saw, from line and trench, your sons  
Follow our flight with home-sick eyes  
Beyond the battery's smoking guns."

"And heard and saw ye only wrong  
And pain," I cried, "O wing-worn flocks?"  
"We heard," they sang, "the freedman's song,  
The crash of Slavery's broken locks!

"We saw from new, uprising States  
The treason-nursing mischief spurned,  
As, crowding Freedom's ample gates,  
The long-estranged and lost returned.

"O'er dusky faces, seamed and old,  
And hands horn-hard with unpaid toil,  
With hope in every rustling fold,  
We saw your star-dropt flag uncoil.

"And struggling up through sounds accursed,  
A grateful murmur clomb the air;  
A whisper scarcely heard at first,  
It filled the listening heavens with prayer.

"And sweet and far, as from a star,  
Replied a voice which shall not cease,  
Till, drowning all the noise of war,  
It sings the blessed song of peace!"

So to me, in a doubtful day  
Of chill and slowly greening spring,  
Low stooping from the cloudy gray,  
The wild-birds sang or seemed to sing.

They vanished in the misty air,  
The song went with them in their flight;  
But lo! they left the sunset fair,  
And in the evening there was light.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# What The Traveller Said At Sunset

The shadows grow and deepen round me,  
I feel the deffall in the air;  
The muezzin of the darkening thicket,  
I hear the night-thrush call to prayer.

The evening wind is sad with farewells,  
And loving hands unclasp from mine;  
Alone I go to meet the darkness  
Across an awful boundary-line.

As from the lighted hearths behind me  
I pass with slow, reluctant feet,  
What waits me in the land of strangeness?  
What face shall smile, what voice shall greet?

What space shall awe, what brightness blind me?  
What thunder-roll of music stun?  
What vast processions sweep before me  
Of shapes unknown beneath the sun?

I shrink from unaccustomed glory,  
I dread the myriad-voiced strain;  
Give me the unforgotten faces,  
And let my lost ones speak again.

He will not chide my mortal yearning  
Who is our Brother and our Friend;  
In whose full life, divine and human,  
The heavenly and the earthly blend.

Mine be the joy of soul-communion,  
The sense of spiritual strength renewed,  
The reverence for the pure and holy,  
The dear delight of doing good.

No fitting ear is mine to listen  
An endless anthem's rise and fall;  
No curious eye is mine to measure  
The pearl gate and the jasper wall.

For love must needs be more than knowledge:  
What matter if I never know  
Why Aldebaran's star is ruddy,  
Or warmer Sirius white as snow!

Forgive my human words, O Father!  
I go Thy larger truth to prove;  
Thy mercy shall transcend my longing  
I seek but love, and Thou art Love!

I go to find my lost and mourned for  
Safe in Thy sheltering goodness still,  
And all that hope and faith foreshadow  
Made perfect in Thy holy will!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# What The Voice Said

MADDENED by Earth's wrong and evil,  
'Lord!' I cried in sudden ire,  
'From Thy right hand, clothed with thunder,  
Shake the bolted fire!

'Love is lost, and Faith is dying;  
With the brute the man is sold;  
And the dropping blood of labor  
Hardens into gold.

'Here the dying wail of Famine,  
There the battle's groan of pain;  
And, in silence, smooth-faced Mammon  
Reaping men like grain.

'Where is God, that we should fear Him?'  
Thus the earth-born Titans say  
'God! if Thou art living, hear us!'  
Thus the weak ones pray.'

'Thou, the patient Heaven upbraiding,'  
Spake a solemn Voice within;  
'Weary of our Lord's forbearance,  
Art thou free from sin?

'Fearless brow to Him uplifting,  
Canst thou for His thunders call,  
Knowing that to guilt's attraction  
Evermore they fall?

'Know'st thou not all germs of evil  
In thy heart await their time?  
Not thyself, but God's restraining,  
Stays their growth of crime.

'Couldst thou boast, O child of weakness!  
O'er the sons of wrong and strife,  
Were their strong temptations planted  
In thy path of life?

'Thou hast seen two streamlets gushing  
From one fountain, clear and free,  
But by widely varying channels  
Searching for the sea.

'Glideth one through greenest valleys,  
Kissing them with lips still sweet;  
One, mad roaring down the mountains,  
Stagnates at their feet.

'Is it choice whereby the Parsee  
Kneels before his mother's fire?  
In his black tent did the Tartar  
Choose his wandering sire?

'He alone, whose hand is bounding  
Human power and human will,  
Looking through each soul's surrounding,  
Knows its good or ill.

'For thyself, while wrong and sorrow  
Make to thee their strong appeal,  
Coward wert thou not to utter  
What the heart must feel.

'Earnest words must needs be spoken  
When the warm heart bleeds or burns  
With its scorn of wrong, or pity  
For the wronged, by turns.

'But, by all thy nature's weakness,  
Hidden faults and follies known,  
Be thou, in rebuking evil,  
Conscious of thine own.

'Not the less shall stern-eyed Duty  
To thy lips her trumpet set,  
But with harsher blasts shall mingle  
Wailings of regret.'

Cease not, Voice of holy speaking,

Teacher sent of God, be near,  
Whispering through the day's cool silence,  
Let my spirit hear!

So, when thoughts of evil-doers  
Waken scorn, or hatred move,  
Shall a mournful fellow-feeling  
Temper all with love.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# William Forster

The years are many since his hand  
Was laid upon my head,  
Too weak and young to understand  
The serious words he said.

Yet often now the good man's look  
Before me seems to swim,  
As if some inward feeling took  
The outward guise of him.

As if, in passion's heated war,  
Or near temptation's charm,  
Through him the low-voiced monitor  
Forewarned me of the harm.

Stranger and pilgrim! from that day  
Of meeting, first and last,  
Wherever Duty's pathway lay,  
His reverent steps have passed.

The poor to feed, the lost to seek,  
To proffer life to death,  
Hope to the erring,--to the weak  
The strength of his own faith.

To plead the captive's right; remove  
The sting of hate from Law;  
And soften in the fire of love  
The hardened steel of War.

He walked the dark world, in the mild,  
Still guidance of the Light;  
In tearful tenderness a child,  
A strong man in the right.

From what great perils, on his way,  
He found, in prayer, release;  
Through what abysmal shadows lay  
His pathway unto peace,

God knoweth : we could only see  
The tranquil strength he gained;  
The bondage lost in liberty,  
The fear in love unfeigned.

And I,--my youthful fancies grown  
The habit of the man,  
Whose field of life by angels sown  
The wilding vines o'erran,--

Low bowed in silent gratitude,  
My manhood's heart enjoys  
That reverence for the pure and good  
Which blessed the dreaming boy's.

Still shines the light of holy lives  
Like star-beams over doubt;  
Each sainted memory, Christlike, drives  
Some dark possession out.

O friend! O brother I not in vain  
Thy life so calm and true,  
The silver dropping of the rain,  
The fall of summer dew!

How many burdened hearts have prayed  
Their lives like thine might be  
But more shall pray henceforth for aid  
To lay them down like thee.

With weary hand, yet steadfast will,  
In old age as in youth,  
Thy Master found thee sowing still  
The good seed of His truth.

As on thy task-field closed the day  
In golden-skied decline,  
His angel met thee on the way,  
And lent his arm to thine.

Thy latest care for man,--thy last

Of earthly thought a prayer,--  
Oh, who thy mantle, backward cast,  
Is worthy now to wear?

Methinks the mound which marks thy bed  
Might bless our land and save,  
As rose, of old, to life the dead  
Who touched the prophet's grave

John Greenleaf Whittier

# William Francis Bartlett

Oh, well may Essex sit forlorn  
Beside her sea-blown shore;  
Her well beloved, her noblest born,  
Is hers in life no more!

No lapse of years can render less  
Her memory's sacred claim;  
No fountain of forgetfulness  
Can wet the lips of Fame.

A grief alike to wound and heal,  
A thought to soothe and pain,  
The sad, sweet pride that mothers feel  
To her must still remain.

Good men and true she has not lacked,  
And brave men yet shall be;  
The perfect flower, the crowning fact,  
Of all her years was he!

As Galahad pure, as Merlin sage,  
What worthier knight was found  
To grace in Arthur's golden age  
The fabled Table Round?

A voice, the battle's trumpet-note,  
To welcome and restore;  
A hand, that all unwilling smote,  
To heal and build once more;

A soul of fire, a tender heart  
Too warm for hate, he knew  
The generous victor's graceful part  
To sheathe the sword he drew.

When Earth, as if on evil dreams,  
Looks back upon her wars,  
And the white light of Christ outstreams  
From the red disk of Mars,

His fame who led the stormy van  
Of battle well may cease,  
But never that which crowns the man  
Whose victory was Peace.

Mourn, Essex, on thy sea-blown shore  
Thy beautiful and brave,  
Whose failing hand the olive bore,  
Whose dying lips forgave!

Let age lament the youthful chief,  
And tender eyes be dim;  
The tears are more of joy than grief  
That fall for one like him!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Wilson

The lowliest born of all the land,  
He wrung from Fate's reluctant hand  
The gifts which happier boyhood claims;  
And, tasting on a thankless soil  
The bitter bread of unpaid toil,  
He fed his soul with noble aims.

And Nature, kindly provident,  
To him the future's promise lent;  
The powers that shape man's destinies,  
Patience and faith and toil, he knew,  
The close horizon round him grew,  
Broad with great possibilities.

By the low hearth-fire's fitful blaze  
He read of old heroic days,  
The sage's thought, the patriot's speech;  
Unhelped, alone, himself he taught,  
His school the craft at which he wrought,  
His lore the book within his reach.

He felt his country's need; he knew  
The work her children had to do;  
And when, at last, he heard the call  
In her behalf to serve and dare,  
Beside his senatorial chair  
He stood the unquestioned peer of all.

Beyond the accident of birth  
He proved his simple manhood's worth;  
Ancestral pride and classic grace  
Confessed the large-brained artisan,  
So clear of sight, so wise in plan  
And counsel, equal to his place.

With glance intuitive he saw  
Through all disguise of form and law,  
And read men like an open book;  
Fearless and firm, he never quailed

Nor turned aside for threats, nor failed  
To do the thing he undertook.

How wise, how brave, he was, how well  
He bore himself, let history tell  
While waves our flag o'er land and sea,  
No black thread in its warp or weft;  
He found dissevered States, he left  
A grateful Nation, strong and free!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Winter Roses

My garden roses long ago  
Have perished from the leaf-strewn walks;  
Their pale, fair sisters smile no more  
Upon the sweet-brier stalks.

Gone with the flower-time of my life,  
Spring's violets, summer's blooming pride,  
And Nature's winter and my own  
Stand, flowerless, side by side.

So might I yesterday have sung;  
To-day, in bleak December's noon,  
Come sweetest fragrance, shapes, and hues,  
The rosy wealth of June!

Bless the young bands that culled the gift,  
And bless the hearts that prompted it;  
If undeserved it comes, at least  
It seems not all unfit.

Of old my Quaker ancestors  
Had gifts of forty stripes save one;  
To-day as many roses crown  
The gray head of their son.

And with them, to my fancy's eye,  
The fresh-faced givers smiling come,  
And nine and thirty happy girls  
Make glad a lonely room.

They bring the atmosphere of youth;  
The light and warmth of long ago  
Are in my heart, and on my cheek  
The airs of morning blow.

O buds of girlhood, yet unblown,  
And fairer than the gift ye chose,  
For you may years like leaves unfold  
The heart of Sharon's rose

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Within The Gate

L. M. C.

We sat together, last May-day, and talked  
Of the dear friends who walked  
Beside us, sharers of the hopes and fears  
Of five and forty years,

Since first we met in Freedom's hope forlorn,  
And heard her battle-horn  
Sound through the valleys of the sleeping North,  
Calling her children forth,

And youth pressed forward with hope-lighted eyes,  
And age, with forecast wise  
Of the long strife before the triumph won,  
Girded his armor on.

Sadly, ass name by name we called the roll,  
We heard the dead-bells toll  
For the unanswering many, and we knew  
The living were the few.

And we, who waited our own call before  
The inevitable door,  
Listened and looked, as all have done, to win  
Some token from within.

No sign we saw, we heard no voices call;  
The impenetrable wall  
Cast down its shadow, like an awful doubt,  
On all who sat without.

Of many a hint of life beyond the veil,  
And many a ghostly tale  
Wherewith the ages spanned the gulf between  
The seen and the unseen,

Seeking from omen, trance, and dream to gain  
Solace to doubtful pain,  
And touch, with groping hands, the garment hem

Of truth sufficing them,

We talked; and, turning from the sore unrest  
Of an all-baffling quest,  
We thought of holy lives that from us passed  
Hopeful unto the last,

As if they saw beyond the river of death,  
Like Him of Nazareth,  
The many mansions of the Eternal days  
Lift up their gates of praise.

And, hushed to silence by a reverent awe,  
Methought, O friend, I saw  
In thy true life of word, and work, and thought  
The proof of all we sought.

Did we not witness in the life of thee  
Immortal prophecy?  
And feel, when with thee, that thy footsteps trod  
An everlasting road?

Not for brief days thy generous sympathies,  
Thy scorn of selfish ease;  
Not for the poor prize of an earthly goal  
Thy strong uplift of soul.

Than thine was never turned a fonder heart  
To nature and to art  
In fair-formed Hellas in her golden prime,  
Thy Philothea's time.

Yet, loving beauty, thou couldst pass it by,  
And for the poor deny  
Thyself, and see thy fresh, sweet flower of fame  
Wither in blight and blame.

Sharing His love who holds in His embrace  
The lowliest of our race,  
Sure the Divine economy must be  
Conservative of thee!

For truth must live with truth, self-sacrifice  
Seek out its great allies;  
Good must find good by gravitation sure,  
And love with love endure.

And so, since thou hast passed within the gate  
Whereby awhile I wait,  
I give blind grief and blinder sense the lie  
Thou hast not lived to die!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Wordsworth

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF HIS MEMOIRS.

Dear friends, who read the world aright,  
And in its common forms discern  
A beauty and a harmony  
The many never learn!

Kindred in soul of him who found  
In simple flower and leaf and stone  
The impulse of the sweetest lays  
Our Saxon tongue has known,--

Accept this record of a life  
As sweet and pure, as calm and good,  
As a long day of blandest June  
In green field and in wood.

How welcome to our ears, long pained  
By strife of sect and party noise,  
The brook-like murmur of his song  
Of nature's simple joys!

The violet' by its mossy stone,  
The primrose by the river's brim,  
And chance-sown daffodil, have found  
Immortal life through him.

The sunrise on his breezy lake,  
The rosy tints his sunset brought,  
World-seen, are gladdening all the vales  
And mountain-peaks of thought.

Art builds on sand; the works of pride  
And human passion change and fall;  
But that which shares the life of God  
With Him surviveth all.

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Worship

The Pagan's myths through marble lips are spoken,  
And ghosts of old Beliefs still flit and moan  
Round fane and altar overthrown and broken,  
O'er tree-grown barrow and gray ring of stone.

Blind Faith had martyrs in those old high places,  
The Syrian hill grove and the Druid's wood,  
With mother's offering, to the Fiend's embraces,  
Bone of their bone, and blood of their own blood.

Red altars, kindling through that night of error,  
Smoked with warm blood beneath the cruel eye  
Of lawless Power and sanguinary Terror,  
Throned on the circle of a pitiless sky;

Beneath whose baleful shadow, overcasting  
All heaven above, and blighting earth below,  
The scourge grew red, the lip grew pale with fasting,  
And man's oblation was his fear and woe!

Then through great temples swelled the dismal moaning  
Of dirge-like music and sepulchral prayer;  
Pale wizard priests, o'er occult symbols droning,  
Swung their white censers in the burdened air

As if the pomp of rituals, and the savor  
Of gums and spices could the Unseen One please;  
As if His ear could bend, with childish favor,  
To the poor flattery of the organ keys!

Feet red from war-fields trod the church aisles holy,  
With trembling reverence: and the oppressor there,  
Kneeling before his priest, abased and lowly,  
Crushed human hearts beneath his knee of prayer.

Not such the service the benignant Father  
Requireth at His earthly children's hands  
Not the poor offering of vain rites, but rather  
The simple duty man from man demands.

For Earth He asks it: the full joy of heaven  
Knoweth no change of waning or increase;  
The great heart of the Infinite beats even,  
Untroubled flows the river of His peace.

He asks no taper lights, on high surrounding  
The priestly altar and the saintly grave,  
No dolorous chant nor organ music sounding,  
Nor incense clouding tip the twilight nave.

For he whom Jesus loved hath truly spoken  
The holier worship which he deigns to bless  
Restores the lost, and binds the spirit broken,  
And feeds the widow and the fatherless!

Types of our human weakness and our sorrow!  
Who lives unhaunted by his loved ones dead?  
Who, with vain longing, seeketh not to borrow  
From stranger eyes the home lights which have fled?

O brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother;  
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;  
To worship rightly is to love each other,  
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example  
Of Him whose holy work was 'doing good;'  
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,  
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor  
Of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease;  
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,  
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace!

John Greenleaf Whittier

# Yorktown

YORKTOWN.

FROM Yorktown's ruins, ranked and still,  
Two lines stretch far o'er vale and hill:  
Who curbs his steed at head of one?  
Hark! the low murmur: Washington!  
Who bends his keen, approving glance,  
Where down the gorgeous line of France  
Shine knightly star and plume of snow?  
Thou too art victor, Rochambeau!  
The earth which bears this calm array  
Shook with the war-charge yesterday,  
Ploughed deep with hurrying hoof and wheel,  
Shot-sown and bladed thick with steel;  
October's clear and noonday sun  
Paled in the breath-smoke of the gun,  
And down night's double blackness fell,  
Like a dropped star, the blazing shell.  
Now all is hushed: the gleaming lines  
Stand moveless as the neighboring pines;  
While through them, sullen, grim, and slow,  
The conquered hosts of England go:  
O'Hara's brow belies his dress,  
Gay Tarleton's troop rides bannerless:  
Shout, from thy fired and wasted homes,  
Thy scourge, Virginia, captive comes!  
Nor thou alone: with one glad voice  
Let all thy sister States rejoice;  
Let Freedom, in whatever clime  
She waits with sleepless eye her time,  
Shouting from cave and mountain wood  
Make glad her desert solitude,  
While they who hunt her quail with fear;  
The New World's chain lies broken here!  
But who are they, who, cowering, wait  
Within the shattered fortress gate?  
Dark tillers of Virginia's soil,  
Classed with the battle's common spoil,  
With household stuffs, and fowl, and swine,  
With Indian weed and planters' wine,

With stolen beeves, and foraged corn, —  
Are they not men, Virginian born?  
Oh, veil your faces, young and brave!  
Sleep, Scammel, in thy soldier grave!  
Sons of the Northland, ye who set  
Stout hearts against the bayonet,  
And pressed with steady footfall near  
The moated battery's blazing tier,  
Turn your scarred faces from the sight,  
Let shame do homage to the right!  
Lo! fourscore years have passed; and where  
The Gallic bugles stirred the air,  
And, through breached batteries, side by side,  
To victory stormed the hosts allied,  
And brave foes grounded, pale with pain,  
The arms they might not lift again,  
As abject as in that old day  
The slave still toils his life away.  
Oh, fields still green and fresh in story,  
Old days of pride, old names of glory,  
Old marvels of the tongue and pen,  
Old thoughts which stirred the hearts of men,  
Ye spared the wrong; and over all  
Behold the avenging shadow fall!  
Your world-wide honor stained with shame, —  
Your freedom's self a hollow name!  
Where's now the flag of that old war?  
Where flows its stripe? Where burns its star?  
Bear witness, Palo Alto's day,  
Dark Vale of Palms, red Monterey,  
Where Mexic Freedom, young and weak,  
Fleashes the Northern eagle's beak;  
Symbol of terror and despair,  
Of chains and slaves, go seek it there!  
Laugh, Prussia, midst thy iron ranks!  
Laugh, Russia, from thy Neva's banks!  
Brave sport to see the fledgling born  
Of freedom by its parent torn!  
Safe now is Speilberg's dungeon cell,  
Safe drear Siberia's frozen hell:  
With Slavery's flag o'er both unrolled,  
What of the New World fears the Old?

John Greenleaf Whittier