

**THE LORD'S  
PRAYER**

**BY**

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## **THE LORD'S PRAYER ON A COIN.**

Upon this quarter-eagle's leveled face,  
The Lord's Prayer, legibly inscribed, I trace.  
"Our Father which"—the pronoun there is funny,  
And shows the scribe to have addressed the money  
"Which art in Heaven"—an error this, no doubt:  
The preposition should be stricken out.  
Needless to quote; I only have designed  
To praise the frankness of the pious mind  
Which thought it natural and right to join,  
With rare significancy, prayer and coin.

## **A LACKING FACTOR.**

"You acted unwisely," I cried, "as you see  
By the outcome." He calmly eyed me:  
"When choosing the course of my action," said he,  
"I had not the outcome to guide me.

"

## **THE ROYAL JESTER.**

Once on a time, so ancient poets sing,  
There reigned in Godknowswhere a certain king.  
So great a monarch ne'er before was seen:  
He was a hero, even to his queen,  
In whose respect he held so high a place  
That none was higher,—nay, not even the ace.  
He was so just his Parliament declared  
Those subjects happy whom his laws had spared;  
So wise that none of the debating throng  
Had ever lived to prove him in the wrong;  
So good that Crime his anger never feared,  
And Beauty boldly plucked him by the beard;  
So brave that if his army got a beating  
None dared to face him when he was retreating.  
This monarch kept a Fool to make his mirth,  
And loved him tenderly despite his worth.  
Prompted by what caprice I cannot say,  
He called the Fool before the throne one day

And to that jester seriously said:  
"I'll abdicate, and you shall reign instead,  
While I, attired in motley, will make sport  
To entertain your Majesty and Court."  
'T was done and the Fool governed. He decreed  
The time of harvest and the time of seed;  
Ordered the rains and made the weather clear,  
And had a famine every second year;  
Altered the calendar to suit his freak,  
Ordaining six whole holidays a week;  
Religious creeds and sacred books prepared;  
Made war when angry and made peace when scared.  
New taxes he inspired; new laws he made;  
Drowned those who broke them, who observed them, flayed,  
In short, he ruled so well that all who'd not  
Been starved, decapitated, hanged or shot  
Made the whole country with his praises ring,  
Declaring he was every inch a king;  
And the High Priest averred 't was very odd  
If one so competent were not a god.  
Meantime, his master, now in motley clad,  
Wore such a visage, woeful, wan and sad,  
That some condoled with him as with a brother  
Who, having lost a wife, had got another.  
Others, mistaking his profession, often  
Approached him to be measured for a coffin.  
For years this highborn jester never broke  
The silence—he was pondering a joke.  
At last, one day, in cap-and-bells arrayed,  
He strode into the Council and displayed  
A long, bright smile, that glittered in the gloom  
Like a gilt epithet within a tomb.  
Posing his bauble like a leader's staff,  
To give the signal when (and why) to laugh,  
He brought it down with peremptory stroke  
And simultaneously cracked his joke!  
I can't repeat it, friends. I ne'er could school  
Myself to quote from any other fool:  
A jest, if it were worse than mine, would start  
My tears; if better, it would break my heart.  
So, if you please, I'll hold you but to state

That royal Jester's melancholy fate.  
The insulted nation, so the story goes,  
Rose as one man—the very dead arose,  
Springing indignant from the riven tomb,  
And babes unborn leapt swearing from the womb!  
All to the Council Chamber clamoring went,  
By rage distracted and on vengeance bent.  
In that vast hall, in due disorder laid,  
The tools of legislation were displayed,  
And the wild populace, its wrath to sate,  
Seized them and heaved them at the Jester's pate.  
Mountains of writing paper; pools and seas  
Of ink, awaiting, to become decrees,  
Royal approval—and the same in stacks  
Lay ready for attachment, backed with wax;  
Pens to make laws, erasers to amend them;  
With mucilage convenient to extend them;  
Scissors for limiting their application,  
And acids to repeal all legislation—  
These, flung as missiles till the air was dense,  
Were most offensive weapons of offense,  
And by their aid the Fool was nigh destroyed.  
They ne'er had been so harmlessly employed.  
Whelmed underneath a load of legal cap,  
His mouth egurgitating ink on tap,  
His eyelids mucilaginously sealed,  
His fertile head by scissors made to yield  
Abundant harvestage of ears, his pelt,  
In every wrinkle and on every welt,  
Quickset with pencil-points from feet to gills  
And thickly studded with a pride of quills,  
The royal Jester in the dreadful strife  
Was made (in short) an editor for life!  
An idle tale, and yet a moral lurks  
In this as plainly as in greater works.  
I shall not give it birth: one moral here  
Would die of loneliness within a year.

### **A CAREER IN LETTERS.**

When Liberverm resigned the chair  
Of This or That in college, where  
For two decades he'd gorged his brain  
With more than it could well contain,  
In order to relieve the stress  
He took to writing for the press.  
Then Pondronummus said, "I'll help  
This mine of talent to devel'p;"  
And straightway bought with coin and credit  
The Thundergust for him to edit.  
The great man seized the pen and ink  
And wrote so hard he couldn't think;  
Ideas grew beneath his fist  
And flew like falcons from his wrist.  
His pen shot sparks all kinds of ways  
Till all the rivers were ablaze,  
And where the coruscations fell  
Men uttered words I dare not spell.  
Eftsoons with corrugated brow,  
Wet towels bound about his pow,  
Locked legs and failing appetite,  
He thought so hard he couldn't write.  
His soaring fancies, chickenwise,  
Came home to roost and wouldn't rise.  
With dimmer light and milder heat  
His goose-quill staggered o'er the sheet,  
Then dragged, then stopped; the finish came  
He couldn't even write his name.  
The Thundergust in three short weeks  
Had risen, roared, and split its cheeks.  
Said Pondronummus, "How unjust!  
The storm I raised has laid my dust!"  
When, Moneybagger, you have aught  
Invested in a vein of thought,  
Be sure you've purchased not, instead,  
That salted claim, a bookworm's head.

**THE FOLLOWING PAIR.**

O very remarkable mortal,  
 What food is engaging your jaws  
 And staining with amber their portal?  
 "It's 'baccy I chaws."  
 And why do you sway in your walking,  
 To right and left many degrees,  
 And hitch up your trousers when talking?  
 "I follers the seas."  
 Great indolent shark in the rollers,  
 Is "'baccy," too, one of your faults?  
 You, too, display maculate molars.  
 "I dines upon salts."  
 Strange diet!—intestinal pain it  
 Is commonly given to nip.  
 And how can you ever obtain it?  
 "I follers the ship."

### **POLITICAL ECONOMY.**

"I beg you to note," said a Man to a Goose,  
 As he plucked from her bosom the plumage all loose,  
 "That pillows and cushions of feathers and beds  
 As warm as maids' hearts and as soft as their heads,  
 Increase of life's comforts the general sum  
 Which raises the standard of living." "Come, come,"  
 The Goose said, impatiently, "tell me or cease,  
 How that is of any advantage to geese."  
 "What, what!" said the man—"you are very obtuse!  
 Consumption no profit to those who produce?  
 No good to accrue to Supply from a grand  
 Progressive expansion, all round, of Demand?  
 Luxurious habits no benefit bring  
 To those who purvey the luxurious thing?  
 Consider, I pray you, my friend, how the growth  
 Of luxury promises—" "Promises," quoth  
 The sufferer, "what?—to what course is it pledged  
 To pay me for being so often defledged?"  
 "Accustomed"—this notion the plucker expressed  
 As he ripped out a handful of down from her breast  
 "To one kind of luxury, people soon yearn

For others and ever for others in turn;  
And the man who to-night on your feathers will rest,  
His mutton or bacon or beef to digest,  
His hunger to-morrow will wish to assuage  
By dining on goose with a dressing of sage."

### **VANISHED AT COCK-CROW.**

"I've found the secret of your charm," I said,  
Expounding with complacency my guess.  
Alas! the charm, even as I named it, fled,  
For all its secret was unconsciousness.

### **THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.**

I reckon that ye never knew,  
That dandy slugger, Tom Carew,  
He had a touch as light an' free  
As that of any honey-bee;  
But where it lit there wasn't much  
To justify another touch.  
O, what a Sunday-school it was  
To watch him puttin' up his paws  
An' roominate upon their heft  
Particular his holy left!  
Tom was my style—that's all I say;  
Some others may be equal gay.  
What's come of him? Dunno, I'm sure  
He's dead—which make his fate obscure.  
I only started in to clear  
One vital p'int in his career,  
Which is to say—afore he died  
He soiled his erming mighty snide.  
Ye see he took to politics  
And learnt them statesmen-fellers' tricks;  
Pulled wires, wore stovepipe hats, used scent,  
Just like he was the President;  
Went to the Legislator; spoke  
Right out agin the British yoke  
But that was right. He let his hair  
Grow long to qualify for Mayor,

An' once or twice he poked his snoot  
In Congress like a low galoot!  
It had to come—no gent can hope  
To wrastle God agin the rope.  
Tom went from bad to wuss. Being dead,  
I s'pose it oughtn't to be said,  
For sech inikities as flow  
From politics ain't fit to know;  
But, if you think it's actin' white  
To tell it—Thomas throwed a fight!

### **INDUSTRIAL DISCONTENT.**

As time rolled on the whole world came to be  
A desolation and a darksome curse;  
And some one said: "The changes that you see  
In the fair frame of things, from bad to worse,  
Are wrought by strikes. The sun withdrew his glimmer  
Because the moon assisted with her shimmer.  
"Then, when poor Luna, straining very hard,  
Doubled her light to serve a darkling world,  
He called her 'scab,' and meanly would retard  
Her rising: and at last the villain hurled  
A heavy beam which knocked her o'er the Lion  
Into the nebula of great O'Ryan.  
"The planets all had struck some time before,  
Demanding what they said were equal rights:  
Some pointing out that others had far more  
That a fair dividend of satellites.  
So all went out—though those the best provided,  
If they had dared, would rather have abided.  
"The stars struck too—I think it was because  
The comets had more liberty than they,  
And were not bound by any hampering laws,  
While they were fixed; and there are those who say  
The comets' tresses nettled poor Altair,  
An aged orb that hasn't any hair.  
"The earth's the only one that isn't in  
The movement—I suppose because she's watched  
With horror and disgust how her fair skin  
Her pranking parasites have fouled and blotched

With blood and grease in every labor riot,  
When seeing any purse or throat to fly at."

### **TEMPORA MUTANTUR.**

"The world is dull," I cried in my despair:  
"Its myths and fables are no longer fair.  
"Roll back thy centuries, O Father Time.  
To Greece transport me in her golden prime.  
"Give back the beautiful old Gods again  
The sportive Nymphs, the Dryad's jocund train,  
"Pan piping on his reeds, the Naiades,  
The Sirens singing by the sleepy seas.  
"Nay, show me but a Gorgon and I'll dare  
To lift mine eyes to her peculiar hair  
"(The fatal horrors of her snaky pate,  
That stiffen men into a stony state)  
"And die—erecting, as my soul goes hence,  
A statue of myself, without expense."  
Straight as I spoke I heard the voice of Fate:  
"Look up, my lad, the Gorgon sisters wait."  
Raising my eyes, I saw Medusa stand,  
Stheno, Euryale, on either hand.  
I gazed unpetrified and unappalled  
The girls had aged and were entirely bald!

### **CONTENTMENT.**

Sleep fell upon my senses and I dreamed  
Long years had circled since my life had fled.  
The world was different, and all things seemed  
Remote and strange, like noises to the dead.  
And one great Voice there was; and something said:  
"Posterity is speaking—rightly deemed  
Infallible:" and so I gave attention,  
Hoping Posterity my name would mention.  
"Illustrious Spirit," said the Voice, "appear!  
While we confirm eternally thy fame,  
Before our dread tribunal answer, here,  
Why do no statues celebrate thy name,  
No monuments thy services proclaim?"

Why did not thy contemporaries rear  
To thee some schoolhouse or memorial college?  
It looks almighty queer, you must acknowledge."  
Up spake I hotly: "That is where you err!"  
But some one thundered in my ear: "You shan't  
Be interrupting these proceedings, sir;  
The question was addressed to General Grant."  
Some other things were spoken which I can't  
Distinctly now recall, but I infer,  
By certain flushings of my cheeks and forehead,  
Posterity's environment is torrid.  
Then heard I (this was in a dream, remark)  
Another Voice, clear, comfortable, strong,  
As Grant's great shade, replying from the dark,  
Said in a tone that rang the earth along,  
And thrilled the senses of the Judges' throng:  
"I'd rather you would question why, in park  
And street, my monuments were not erected  
Than why they were." Then, waking, I reflected.

### **THE NEW ENOCH.**

Enoch Arden was an able  
Seaman; hear of his mishap  
Not in wild mendacious fable,  
As 't was told by t' other chap;  
For I hold it is a youthful  
Indiscretion to tell lies,  
And the writer that is truthful  
Has the reader that is wise.  
Enoch Arden, able seaman,  
On an isle was cast away,  
And before he was a freeman  
Time had touched him up with gray.  
Long he searched the fair horizon,  
Seated on a mountain top;  
Vessel ne'er he set his eyes on  
That would undertake to stop.  
Seeing that his sight was growing  
Dim and dimmer, day by day,  
Enoch said he must be going.

So he rose and went away  
Went away and so continued  
Till he lost his lonely isle:  
Mr. Arden was so sinewed  
He could row for many a mile.  
Compass he had not, nor sextant,  
To direct him o'er the sea:  
Ere 't was known that he was extant,  
At his widow's home was he.  
When he saw the hills and hollows  
And the streets he could but know,  
He gave utterance as follows  
To the sentiments below:  
"Blast my tarry toplights! (shiver,  
Too, my timbers!) but, I say,  
W'at a larruk to diskiver,  
I have lost me blessid way!  
"W'at, alas, would be my bloomin'  
Fate if Philip now I see,  
Which I lammed?—or my old 'oman,  
Which has frequent basted me?"  
Scenes of childhood swam around him  
At the thought of such a lot:  
In a swoon his Annie found him  
And conveyed him to her cot.  
'T was the very house, the garden,  
Where their honeymoon was passed:  
'T was the place where Mrs. Arden  
Would have mourned him to the last.  
Ah, what grief she'd known without him!  
Now what tears of joy she shed!  
Enoch Arden looked about him:  
"Shanghaied!"—that was all he said

.

**DISAVOWAL.**

Two bodies are lying in Phoenix Park,  
Grim and bloody and stiff and stark,  
And a Land League man with averted eye  
Crosses himself as he hurries by.  
And he says to his conscience under his breath:  
"I have had no hand in this deed of death!"  
A Fenian, making a circuit wide  
And passing them by on the other side,  
Shudders and crosses himself and cries:  
"Who says that I did it, he lies, he lies!"  
Gingerly stepping across the gore,  
Pat Satan comes after the two before,  
Makes, in a solemnly comical way,  
The sign of the cross and is heard to say:  
"O dear, what a terrible sight to see,  
For babes like them and a saint like me!"

### **AN AVERAGE.**

I ne'er could be entirely fond  
Of any maiden who's a blonde,  
And no brunette that e'er I saw  
Had charms my heart's whole  
warmth to draw.  
Yet sure no girl was ever made  
Just half of light and half of shade.  
And so, this happy mean to get,  
I love a blonde and a brunette.

### **WOMAN.**

Study good women and ignore the rest,  
For he best knows the sex who knows the best.

### **INCURABLE.**

From pride, joy, hate, greed, melancholy  
From any kind of vice, or folly,  
Bias, propensity or passion  
That is in prevalence and fashion,  
Save one, the sufferer or lover  
May, by the grace of God, recover:  
Alone that spiritual tetter,  
The zeal to make creation better,  
Glows still immedicably warmer.  
Who knows of a reformed reformer?

### **THE PUN.**

Hail, peerless Pun! thou last and best,  
Most rare and excellent bequest  
Of dying idiot to the wit  
He died of, rat-like, in a pit!  
Thyself disguised, in many a way  
Thou let'st thy sudden splendor play,  
Adorning all where'er it turns,  
As the revealing bull's-eye burns,  
Of the dim thief, and plays its trick  
Upon the lock he means to pick.  
Yet sometimes, too, thou dost appear  
As boldly as a brigadier  
Tricked out with marks and signs, all o'er,  
Of rank, brigade, division, corps,  
To show by every means he can  
An officer is not a man;  
Or naked, with a lordly swagger,  
Proud as a cur without a wagger,  
Who says: "See simple worth prevail  
All dog, sir—not a bit of tail!"  
'T is then men give thee loudest welcome,  
As if thou wert a soul from Hell come.  
O obvious Pun! thou hast the grace  
Of skeleton clock without a case  
With all its boweling displayed,  
And all its organs on parade.  
Dear Pun, you're common ground of bliss,

Where Punch and I can meet and kiss;  
Than thee my wit can stoop no low'r  
No higher his does ever soar.

### **A PARTISAN'S PROTEST.**

O statesmen, what would you be at,  
With torches, flags and bands?  
You make me first throw up my hat,  
And then my hands.

### **TO NANINE.**

Dear, if I never saw your face again;  
If all the music of your voice were mute  
As that of a forlorn and broken lute;  
If only in my dreams I might attain  
The benediction of your touch, how vain  
Were Faith to justify the old pursuit  
Of happiness, or Reason to confute  
The pessimist philosophy of pain.  
Yet Love not altogether is unwise,  
For still the wind would murmur in the corn,  
And still the sun would splendor all the mere;  
And I—I could not, dearest, choose but hear  
Your voice upon the breeze and see your eyes  
Shine in the glory of the summer morn.

### **VICE VERSA.**

Down in the state of Maine, the story goes,  
A woman, to secure a lapsing pension,  
Married a soldier—though the good Lord knows  
That very common act scarce calls for mention.  
What makes it worthy to be writ and read  
The man she married had been nine hours dead!  
Now, marrying a corpse is not an act  
Familiar to our daily observation,  
And so I crave her pardon if the fact  
Suggests this interesting speculation:

Should some mischance restore the man to life  
Would she be then a widow, or a wife?  
Let casuists contest the point; I'm not  
Disposed to grapple with so great a matter.  
'T would tie my thinker in a double knot  
And drive me staring mad as any hatter  
Though I submit that hatters are, in fact,  
Sane, and all other human beings cracked.  
Small thought have I of Destiny or Chance;  
Luck seems to me the same thing as Intention;  
In metaphysics I could ne'er advance,  
And think it of the Devil's own invention.  
Enough of joy to know though when I wed  
I must be married, yet I may be dead.

### **A BLACK-LIST.**

"Resolved that we will post," the tradesmen say,  
"All names of debtors who do never pay."  
"Whose shall be first?" inquires the ready scribe  
"Who are the chiefs of the marauding tribe?"  
Lo! high Parnassus, lifting from the plain,  
Upon his hoary peak, a noble fane!  
Within that temple all the names are scrolled  
Of village bards upon a slab of gold;  
To that bad eminence, my friend, aspire,  
And copy thou the Roll of Fame, entire.  
Yet not to total shame those names devote,  
But add in mercy this explaining note:  
"These cheat because the law makes theft a crime,  
And they obey all laws but laws of rhyme."

### **A BEQUEST TO MUSIC.**

"Let music flourish!" So he said and died.  
Hark! ere he's gone the minstrelsy begins:  
The symphonies ascend, a swelling tide,  
Melodious thunders fill the welkin wide  
The grand old lawyers, chinning on their chins

## **AUTHORITY.**

"Authority, authority!" they shout  
Whose minds, not large enough to hold a doubt,  
Some chance opinion ever entertain,  
By dogma billeted upon their brain.  
"Ha!" they exclaim with choreatic glee,  
"Here's Dabster if you won't give in to me  
Dabster, sir, Dabster, to whom all men look  
With reverence!" The fellow wrote a book.  
It matters not that many another wight  
Has thought more deeply, could more wisely write  
On t' other side—that you yourself possess  
Knowledge where Dabster did but faintly guess.  
God help you if ambitious to persuade  
The fools who take opinion ready-made  
And "recognize authorities." Be sure  
No tittle of their folly they'll abjure  
For all that you can say. But write it down,  
Publish and die and get a great renown  
Faith! how they'll snap it up, misread, misquote,  
Swear that they had a hand in all you wrote,  
And ride your fame like monkeys on a goat!

## **THE PSORIAD.**

The King of Scotland, years and years ago,  
Convened his courtiers in a gallant row  
And thus addressed them:  
"Gentle sirs, from you  
Abundant counsel I have had, and true:  
What laws to make to serve the public weal;  
What laws of Nature's making to repeal;  
What old religion is the only true one,  
And what the greater merit of some new one;  
What friends of yours my favor have forgot;  
Which of your enemies against me plot.  
In harvests ample to augment my treasures,

Behold the fruits of your sagacious measures!  
The punctual planets, to their periods just,  
Attest your wisdom and approve my trust.  
Lo! the reward your shining virtues bring:  
The grateful placemen bless their useful king!  
But while you quaff the nectar of my favor  
I mean somewhat to modify its flavor  
By just infusing a peculiar dash  
Of tonic bitter in the calabash.  
And should you, too abstemious, disdain it,  
Egad! I'll hold your noses till you drain it!  
"You know, you dogs, your master long has felt  
A keen distemper in the royal pelt  
A testy, superficial irritation,  
Brought home, I fancy, from some foreign nation.  
For this a thousand simples you've prescribed  
Unguents external, draughts to be imbibed.  
You've plundered Scotland of its plants, the seas  
You've ravished, and despoiled the Hebrides,  
To brew me remedies which, in probation,  
Were sovereign only in their application.  
In vain, and eke in pain, have I applied  
Your flattering unctions to my soul and hide:  
Physic and hope have been my daily food  
I've swallowed treacle by the holy rood!  
"Your wisdom, which sufficed to guide the year  
And tame the seasons in their mad career,  
When set to higher purposes has failed me  
And added anguish to the ills that ailed me.  
Nor that alone, but each ambitious leech  
His rivals' skill has labored to impeach  
By hints equivocal in secret speech.  
For years, to conquer our respective broils,  
We've plied each other with pacific oils.  
In vain: your turbulence is unallayed,  
My flame unquenched; your rioting unstayed;  
My life so wretched from your strife to save it  
That death were welcome did I dare to brave it.  
With zeal inspired by your intemperate pranks,  
My subjects muster in contending ranks.  
Those fling their banners to the startled breeze

To champion some royal ointment; these  
The standard of some royal purge display  
And 'neath that ensign wage a wasteful fray!  
Brave tongues are thundering from sea to sea,  
Torrents of sweat roll reeking o'er the lea!  
My people perish in their martial fear,  
And rival bagpipes cleave the royal ear!  
"Now, caitiffs, tremble, for this very hour  
Your injured sovereign shall assert his power!  
Behold this lotion, carefully compound  
Of all the poisons you for me have found  
Of biting washes such as tan the skin,  
And drastic drinks to vex the parts within.  
What aggravates an ailment will produce  
I mean to rub you with this dreadful juice!  
Divided counsels you no more shall hatch  
At last you shall unanimously scratch.  
Kneel, villains, kneel, and doff your shirts—God bless us!  
They'll seem, when you resume them, robes of Nessus!"  
The sovereign ceased, and, sealing what he spoke,  
From Arthur's Seat<sup>[1]</sup> confirming thunders broke.  
The conscious culprits, to their fate resigned,  
Sank to their knees, all piously inclined.  
This act, from high Ben Lomond where she floats,  
The thrifty goddess, Caledonia, notes.  
Glibly as nimble sixpence, down she tilts  
Headlong, and ravishes away their kilts,  
Tears off each plaid and all their shirts discloses,  
Removes each shirt and their broad backs exposes.  
The king advanced—then cursing fled amain  
Dashing the phial to the stony plain  
(Where't straight became a fountain brimming o'er,  
Whence Father Tweed derives his liquid store)  
For lo! already on each back sans stitch  
The red sign manual of the Rosy Witch!

## **ONEIROMANCY.**

I fell asleep and dreamed that I  
Was flung, like Vulcan, from the sky;  
Like him was lamed—another part:  
His leg was crippled and my heart.  
I woke in time to see my love  
Conceal a letter in her glove.

## **PEACE.**

When lion and lamb have together lain down  
Spectators cry out, all in chorus;  
"The lamb doesn't shrink nor the lion frown  
A miracle's working before us!"  
But 't is patent why Hot-head his wrath holds in,  
And Faint-heart her terror and loathing;  
For the one's but an ass in a lion's skin,  
The other a wolf in sheep's clothing.

## **THANKSGIVING.**

The Superintendent of an Almshouse. A Pauper.

### **SUPERINTENDENT:**

So you're unthankful—you'll not eat the bird?  
You sit about the place all day and gird.  
I understand you'll not attend the ball  
That's to be given to-night in Pauper Hall.

### **PAUPER:**

Why, that is true, precisely as you've heard:  
I have no teeth and I will eat no bird.

### **SUPERINTENDENT:**

Ah! see how good is Providence. Because  
Of teeth He has denuded both your jaws

The fowl's made tender; you can overcome it  
By suction; or at least—well, you can gum it,  
Attesting thus the dictum of the preachers  
That Providence is good to all His creatures  
Turkeys excepted. Come, ungrateful friend,  
If our Thanksgiving dinner you'll attend  
You shall say grace—ask God to bless at least  
The soft and liquid portions of the feast.

### **PAUPER.**

Without those teeth my speech is rather thick  
He'll hardly understand Gum Arabic.  
No, I'll not dine to-day. As to the ball,  
'Tis known to you that I've no legs at all.  
I had the gout—hereditary; so,  
As it could not be cornered in my toe  
They cut my legs off in the fond belief  
That shortening me would make my anguish brief.  
Lacking my legs I could not prosecute  
With any good advantage a pursuit;  
And so, because my father chose to court  
Heaven's favor with his ortolans and Port  
(Thanksgiving every day!) the Lord supplied  
Saws for my legs, an almshouse for my pride  
And, once a year, a bird for my inside.  
No, I'll not dance—my light fantastic toe  
Took to its heels some twenty years ago.  
Some small repairs would be required for putting  
My feelings on a saltatory footing.  
(Sings)

O the legless man's an unhappy chap  
Tum-hi, tum-hi, tum-he o'haddy.  
The favors o' fortune fall not in his lap  
Tum-hi, tum-heedle-do hum.  
The plums of office avoid his plate  
No matter how much he may stump the State  
Tum-hi, ho-heeee.  
The grass grows never beneath his feet,  
But he cannot hope to make both ends meet

Tum-hi.  
With a gleeless eye and a somber heart,  
He plays the role of his mortal part:  
Wholly himself he can never be.  
O, a soleless corporation is he!  
Tum.

### **SUPERINTENDENT:**

The chapel bell is calling, thankless friend,  
Balls you may not, but church you shall, attend.  
Some recognition cannot be denied  
To the great mercy that has turned aside  
The sword of death from us and let it fall  
Upon the people's necks in Montreal;  
That spared our city, steeple, roof and dome,  
And drowned the Texans out of house and home;  
Blessed all our continent with peace, to flood  
The Balkan with a cataclysm of blood.  
Compared with blessings of so high degree,  
Your private woes look mighty small—to me.

### **L'AUDACE.**

Daughter of God! Audacity divine  
Of clowns the terror and of brains the sign  
Not thou the inspirer of the rushing fool,  
Not thine of idiots the vocal drool:  
Thy bastard sister of the brow of brass,  
Presumption, actuates the charging ass.  
Sky-born Audacity! of thee who sings  
Should strike with freer hand than mine the strings;  
The notes should mount on pinions true and strong,  
For thou, the subject shouldst sustain the song,  
Till angels lean from Heaven, a breathless throng!  
Alas! with reeling heads and wavering tails,  
They (notes, not angels) drop and the hymn fails;  
The minstrel's tender fingers and his thumbs  
Are torn to rags upon the lyre he strums.  
Have done! the lofty thesis makes demand  
For stronger voices and a harder hand:

Night-howling apes to make the notes aspire,  
And Poet Riley's fist to slug the rebel wire!

## THE GOD'S VIEW-POINT.

Cheeta Raibama Chunder Sen,  
The wisest and the best of men,  
Betook him to the place where sat  
With folded feet upon a mat  
Of precious stones beneath a palm,  
In sweet and everlasting calm,  
That ancient and immortal gent,  
The God of Rational Content.  
As tranquil and unmoved as Fate,  
The deity reposed in state,  
With palm to palm and sole to sole,  
And beaded breast and beetling jowl,  
And belly spread upon his thighs,  
And costly diamonds for eyes.  
As Chunder Sen approached and knelt  
To show the reverence he felt;  
Then beat his head upon the sod  
To prove his fealty to the god;  
And then by gestures signified  
The other sentiments inside;  
The god's right eye (as Chunder Sen,  
The wisest and the best of men,  
Half-fancied) grew by just a thought  
More narrow than it truly ought.  
Yet still that prince of devotees,  
Persistent upon bended knees  
And elbows bored into the earth,  
Declared the god's exceeding worth,  
And begged his favor. Then at last,  
Within that cavernous and vast  
Thoracic space was heard a sound  
Like that of water underground  
A gurgling note that found a vent  
At mouth of that Immortal Gent  
In such a chuckle as no ear  
Had e'er been privileged to hear!  
Cheeta Raibama Chunder Sen,  
The wisest, greatest, best of men,  
Heard with a natural surprise

That mighty midriff improvise.  
And greater yet the marvel was  
When from between those massive jaws  
Fell words to make the views more plain  
The god was pleased to entertain:  
"Cheeta Raibama Chunder Sen,"  
So ran the rede in speech of men  
"Foremost of mortals in assent  
To creed of Rational Content,  
Why come you here to impetrate  
A blessing on your scurvy pate?  
Can you not rationally be  
Content without disturbing me?  
Can you not take a hint—a wink  
Of what of all this rot I think?  
Is laughter lost upon you quite,  
To check you in your pious rite?  
What! know you not we gods protest  
That all religion is a jest?  
You take me seriously?—you  
About me make a great ado  
(When I but wish to be alone)  
With attitudes supine and prone,  
With genuflexions and with prayers,  
And putting on of solemn airs,  
To draw my mind from the survey  
Of Rational Content away!  
Learn once for all, if learn you can,  
This truth, significant to man:  
A pious person is by odds  
The one most hateful to the gods."  
Then stretching forth his great right hand,  
Which shadowed all that sunny land,  
That deity bestowed a touch  
Which Chunder Sen not overmuch  
Enjoyed—a touch divine that made  
The sufferer hear stars! They played  
And sang as on Creation's morn  
When spheric harmony was born.  
Cheeta Raibama Chunder Sen,  
The most astonished man of men,

Fell straight asleep, and when he woke  
The deity nor moved nor spoke,  
But sat beneath that ancient palm  
In sweet and everlasting calm.

### **THE AESTHETES.**

The lily cranks, the lily cranks,  
The lippy, loony lasses!  
They multiply in rising ranks  
To execute their solemn pranks,  
They moon along in masses.  
Blow, sweet lily, in the shade! O,  
Sunflower decorate the dado!  
The maiden ass, the maiden ass,  
The tall and tailless jenny!  
In limp attire as green as grass,  
She stands, a monumental brass,  
The one of one too many.  
Blow, sweet lily, in the shade! O,  
Sunflower decorate the dado!

### **JULY FOURTH.**

God said: "Let there be noise." The dawning fire  
Of Independence gilded every spire.

### **WITH MINE OWN PETARD.**

Time was the local poets sang their songs  
Beneath their breath in terror of the thongs  
I snapped about their shins. Though mild the stroke  
Bards, like the conies, are "a feeble folk,"  
Fearing all noises but the one they make  
Themselves—at which all other mortals quake.  
Now from their cracked and disobedient throats,  
Like rats from sewers scampering, their notes  
Pour forth to move, where'er the season serves,  
If not our legs to dance, at least our nerves;  
As once a ram's-horn solo maddened all

The sober-minded stones in Jerich's wall.  
A year's exemption from the critic's curse  
Mends the bard's courage but impairs his verse.  
Thus poolside frogs, when croaking in the night,  
Are frayed to silence by a meteor's flight,  
Or by the sudden plashing of a stone  
From some adjacent cottage garden thrown,  
But straight renew the song with double din  
Whene'er the light goes out or man goes in.  
Shall I with arms unbraced (my casque unlatched,  
My falchion pawned, my buckler, too, attached)  
Resume the cuishes and the broad cuirass,  
Accomplishing my body all in brass,  
And arm in battle royal to oppose  
A village poet singing through the nose,  
Or strolling troubadour his lyre who strums  
With clumsy hand whose fingers all are thumbs?  
No, let them rhyme; I fought them once before  
And stilled their songs—but, Satan! how they swore!  
Cuffed them upon the mouth whene'er their throats  
They cleared for action with their sweetest notes;  
Twisted their ears (they'd oft tormented mine)  
And damned them roundly all along the line;  
Clubbed the whole crew from the Parnassian slopes,  
A wreck of broken heads and broken hopes!  
What gained I so? I feathered every curse  
Launched at the village bards with lilting verse.  
The town approved and christened me (to show its  
High admiration) Chief of Local Poets!

### **CONSTANCY.**

Dull were the days and sober,  
The mountains were brown and bare,  
For the season was sad October  
And a dirge was in the air.  
The mated starlings flew over  
To the isles of the southern sea.  
She wept for her warrior lover—  
Wept and exclaimed: "Ah, me!  
"Long years have I mourned my darling

In his battle-bed at rest;  
And it's O, to be a starling,  
With a mate to share my nest!"  
The angels pitied her sorrow,  
Restoring her warrior's life;  
And he came to her arms on the morrow  
To claim her and take her to wife.  
An aged lover—a portly,  
Bald lover, a trifle too stiff,  
With manners that would have been courtly,  
And would have been graceful, if  
If the angels had only restored him  
Without the additional years  
That had passed since the enemy bored him  
To death with their long, sharp spears.  
As it was, he bored her, and she rambled  
Away with her father's young groom,  
And the old lover smiled as he ambled  
Contentedly back to the tomb.

### **SIRES AND SONS.**

Wild wanton Luxury lays waste the land  
With difficulty tilled by Thrift's hard hand!  
Then dies the State!—and, in its carcass found,  
The millionaires, all maggot-like, abound.  
Alas! was it for this that Warren died,  
And Arnold sold himself to t' other side,  
Stark piled at Bennington his British dead,  
And Gates at Camden, Lee at Monmouth, fled?  
For this that Perry did the foeman fleece,  
And Hull surrender to preserve the peace?  
Degenerate countrymen, renounce, I pray,  
The slothful ease, the luxury, the gay  
And gallant trappings of this idle life,  
And be more fit for one another's wife.

## A CHALLENGE.

A bull imprisoned in a stall  
Broke boldly the confining wall,  
And found himself, when out of bounds,  
Within a washerwoman's grounds.  
Where, hanging on a line to dry,  
A crimson skirt inflamed his eye.  
With bellowings that woke the dead,  
He bent his formidable head,  
With pointed horns and gnarly forehead;  
Then, planting firm his shoulders horrid,  
Began, with rage made half insane,  
To paw the arid earth amain,  
Flinging the dust upon his flanks  
In desolating clouds and banks,  
The while his eyes' uneasy white  
Betrayed his doubt what foe the bright  
Red tent concealed, perchance, from sight.  
The garment, which, all undismayed,  
Had never paled a single shade,  
Now found a tongue—a dangling sock,  
Left carelessly inside the smock:  
"I must insist, my gracious liege,  
That you'll be pleased to raise the siege:  
My colors I will never strike.  
I know your sex—you're all alike.  
Some small experience I've had  
You're not the first I've driven mad."

## TWO SHOWS.

The showman (blessing in a thousand shapes!)  
Parades a "School of Educated Apes!"  
Small education's needed, I opine,  
Or native wit, to make a monkey shine;  
The brute exhibited has naught to do  
But ape the larger apes who come to view  
The hoodlum with his horrible grimace,  
Long upper lip and furtive, shuffling pace,  
Significant reminders of the time

When hunters, not policemen, made him climb;  
The lady loafer with her draggling "trail,"  
That free translation of an ancient tail;  
The sand-lot quadrumane in hairy suit,  
Whose heels are thumbs perverted by the boot;  
The painted actress throwing down the gage  
To elder artists of the sylvan stage,  
Proving that in the time of Noah's flood  
Two ape-skins held her whole profession's blood;  
The critic waiting, like a hungry pup,  
To write the school—perhaps to eat it—up,  
As chance or luck occasion may reveal  
To earn a dollar or maraud a meal.  
To view the school of apes these creatures go,  
Unconscious that themselves are half the show.  
These, if the simian his course but trim  
To copy them as they have copied him,  
Will call him "educated." Of a verity  
There's much to learn by study of posterity.

### **A POET'S HOPE.**

'Twas a weary-looking mortal, and he wandered near the portal  
Of the melancholy City of the Discontented Dead.  
He was pale and worn exceeding and his manner was unheeding,  
As if it could not matter what he did nor what he said.  
"Sacred stranger"—I addressed him with a reverence befitting  
The austere, unintermitting, dread solemnity he wore;  
'Tis the custom, too, prevailing in that vicinage when hailing  
One who possibly may be a person lately "gone before"  
"Sacred stranger, much I ponder on your evident dejection,  
But my carefulest reflection leaves the riddle still unread.  
How do you yourself explain your dismal tendency to wander  
By the melancholy City of the Discontented Dead?"  
Then that solemn person, pausing in the march that he was making,  
Roused himself as if awaking, fixed his dull and stony eye  
On my countenance and, slowly, like a priest devout and holy,  
Chanted in a mournful monotone the following reply:  
"O my brother, do not fear it; I'm no disembodied spirit  
I am Lampton, the Slang Poet, with a price upon my head.  
I am watching by this portal for some late lamented mortal

To arise in his disquietude and leave his earthy bed.  
"Then I hope to take possession and pull in the earth above me  
And, renouncing my profession, ne'er be heard of any more.  
For there's not a soul to love me and no living thing respects me,  
Which so painfully affects me that I fain would 'go before."  
Then I felt a deep compassion for the gentleman's dejection,  
For privation of affection would refrigerate a frog.  
So I said: "If nothing human, and if neither man nor woman  
Can appreciate the fashion of your merit—buy a dog."

### **THE WOMAN AND THE DEVIL.**

When Man and Woman had been made,  
All but the disposition,  
The Devil to the workshop strayed,  
And somehow gained admission.  
The Master rested from his work,  
For this was on a Sunday,  
The man was snoring like a Turk,  
Content to wait till Monday.  
"Too bad!" the Woman cried; "Oh, why,  
Does slumber not benumb me?  
A disposition! Oh, I die  
To know if 'twill become me!"  
The Adversary said: "No doubt  
'Twill be extremely fine, ma'am,  
Though sure 'tis long to be without  
I beg to lend you mine, ma'am."  
The Devil's disposition when  
She'd got, of course she wore it,  
For she'd no disposition then,  
Nor now has, to restore it.

### **TWO ROGUES.**

Dim, grim, and silent as a ghost,  
The sentry occupied his post,  
To all the stirrings of the night  
Alert of ear and sharp of sight.  
A sudden something—sight or sound,  
About, above, or underground,

He knew not what, nor where—ensued,  
Thrilling the sleeping solitude.  
The soldier cried: "Halt! Who goes there?"  
The answer came: "Death—in the air."  
"Advance, Death—give the countersign,  
Or perish if you cross that line!"  
To change his tone Death thought it wise  
Reminded him they 'd been allies  
Against the Russ, the Frank, the Turk,  
In many a bloody bit of work.  
"In short," said he, "in every weather  
We've soldiered, you and I, together."  
The sentry would not let him pass.  
"Go back," he growled, "you tiresome ass  
Go back and rest till the next war,  
Nor kill by methods all abhor:  
Miasma, famine, filth and vice,  
With plagues of locusts, plagues of lice,  
Foul food, foul water, and foul gases,  
Rank exhalations from morasses.  
If you employ such low allies  
This business you will vulgarize.  
Renouncing then the field of fame  
To wallow in a waste of shame,  
I'll prostitute my strength and lurk  
About the country doing work  
These hands to labor I'll devote,  
Nor cut, by Heaven, another throat!"

### **BEECHER.**

So, Beecher's dead. His was a great soul, too  
Great as a giant organ is, whose reeds  
Hold in them all the souls of all the creeds  
That man has ever taught and never knew.  
When on this mighty instrument He laid  
His hand Who fashioned it, our common moan  
Was suppliant in its thundering. The tone  
Grew more vivacious when the Devil played.  
No more those luring harmonies we hear,  
And lo! already men forget the sound.

They turn, retracing all the dubious ground  
O'er which it led them, pigwise, by the ear.

### **NOT GUILTY.**

"I saw your charms in another's arms,"  
Said a Grecian swain with his blood a-boil;  
"And he kissed you fair as he held you there,  
A willing bird in a serpent's coil!"  
The maid looked up from the cinctured cup  
Wherein she was crushing the berries red,  
Pain and surprise in her honest eyes  
"It was only one o' those gods," she said.

### **PRESENTIMENT.**

With saintly grace and reverent tread,  
She walked among the graves with me;  
Her every foot-fall seemed to be  
A benediction on the dead.  
The guardian spirit of the place  
She seemed, and I some ghost forlorn  
Surprised in the untimely morn  
She made with her resplendent face.  
Moved by some waywardness of will,  
Three paces from the path apart  
She stepped and stood—my prescient heart  
Was stricken with a passing chill.  
The folk-lore of the years ago  
Remembering, I smiled and thought:  
"Who shudders suddenly at naught,  
His grave is being trod upon."  
But now I know that it was more  
Than idle fancy. O, my sweet,  
I did not think such little feet  
Could make a buried heart so sore!

## A STUDY IN GRAY.

I step from the door with a shiver  
    (This fog is uncommonly cold)  
And ask myself: What did I give her?  
    The maiden a trifle gone-old,  
With the head of gray hair that was gold.  
    Ah, well, I suppose 'twas a dollar,  
And doubtless the change is correct,  
Though it's odd that it seems so much smaller  
    Than what I'd a right to expect.  
But you pay when you dine, I reflect.  
So I walk up the street—'twas a saunter  
    A score of years back, when I strolled  
From this door; and our talk was all banter  
    Those days when her hair was of gold,  
And the sea-fog less searching and cold.  
    I button my coat (for I'm shaken,  
    And fevered a trifle, and flushed  
With the wine that I ought to have taken,)  
    Time was, at this coat I'd have blushed,  
    Though truly, 'tis cleverly brushed.  
    A score? Why, that isn't so very  
    Much time to have lost from a life.  
There's reason enough to be merry:  
    I've not fallen down in the strife,  
But marched with the drum and the fife.  
If Hope, when she lured me and beckoned,  
    Had pushed at my shoulders instead,  
And Fame, on whose favors I reckoned,  
    Had laureled the worthiest head,  
I could garland the years that are dead.  
Believe me, I've held my own, mostly  
    Through all of this wild masquerade;  
But somehow the fog is more ghostly  
To-night, and the skies are more grayed,  
    Like the locks of the restaurant maid.  
    If ever I'd fainted and faltered  
    I'd fancy this did but appear;  
But the climate, I'm certain, has altered  
    Grown colder and more austere

Than it was in that earlier year.  
The lights, too, are strangely unsteady,  
That lead from the street to the quay.  
I think they'll go out—and I'm ready  
To follow. Out there in the sea  
The fog-bell is calling to me

### **A PARADOX.**

"If life were not worth having," said the preacher,  
"T would have in suicide one pleasant feature."  
"An error," said the pessimist, "you're making:  
What's not worth having cannot be worth taking."

### **FOR MERIT.**

To Parmentier Parisians raise  
A statue fine and large:  
He cooked potatoes fifty ways,  
Nor ever led a charge.  
"Palmarum qui meruit"—the rest  
You knew as well as I;  
And best of all to him that best  
Of sayings will apply.  
Let meaner men the poet's bays  
Or warrior's medal wear;  
Who cooks potatoes fifty ways  
Shall bear the palm—de terre.

### **A BIT OF SCIENCE.**

What! photograph in colors? 'Tis a dream  
And he who dreams it is not otherwise,  
If colors are vibration they but seem,  
And have no being. But if Tyndall lies,  
Why, come, then—photograph my lady's eyes.  
Nay, friend, you can't; the splendor of their blue,  
As on my own beclouded orbs they rest,  
To naught but vibratory motion's due,  
As heart, head, limbs and all I am attest.

How could her eyes, at rest themselves, be making  
In me so uncontrollable a shaking?

### **THE TABLES TURNED.**

Over the man the street car ran,  
And the driver did never grin.  
"O killer of men, pray tell me when  
Your laughter means to begin.  
"Ten years to a day I've observed you slay,  
And I never have missed before  
Your jubilant peals as your crunching wheels  
Were spattered with human gore.  
"Why is it, my boy, that you smother your joy,  
And why do you make no sign  
Of the merry mind that is dancing behind  
A solemn face than mine?"  
The driver replied: "I would laugh till I cried  
If I had bisected you;  
But I'd like to explain, if I can for the pain,  
'T is myself that I've cut in two."

### **TO A DEJECTED POET.**

Thy gift, if that it be of God,  
Thou hast no warrant to appraise,  
Nor say: "Here part, O Muse, our ways,  
The road too stony to be trod."  
Not thine to call the labor hard  
And the reward inadequate.  
Who haggles o'er his hire with Fate  
Is better bargainer than bard.  
What! count the effort labor lost  
When thy good angel holds the reed?  
It were a sorry thing indeed  
To stay him till thy palm be crossed.  
"The laborer is worthy"—nay,  
The sacred ministry of song  
Is rapture!—'t were a grievous wrong  
To fix a wages-rate for play.

## A FOOL.

Says Anderson, Theosophist:  
"Among the many that exist  
In modern halls,  
Some lived in ancient Egypt's clime  
And in their childhood saw the prime  
Of Karnak's walls."  
Ah, Anderson, if that is true  
'T is my conviction, sir, that you  
Are one of those  
That once resided by the Nile,  
Peer to the sacred Crocodile,  
Heir to his woes.  
My judgment is, the holy Cat  
Mews through your larynx (and your hat)  
These many years.  
Through you the godlike Onion brings  
Its melancholy sense of things,  
And moves to tears.  
In you the Bull divine again  
Bellows and paws the dusty plain,  
To nature true.  
I challenge not his ancient hate  
But, lowering my knurly pate,  
Lock horns with you.  
And though Reincarnation prove  
A creed too stubborn to remove,  
And all your school  
Of Theosophs I cannot scare  
All the more earnestly I swear  
That you're a fool.  
You'll say that this is mere abuse  
Without, in fraying you, a use.  
That's plain to see  
With only half an eye. Come, now,  
Be fair, be fair,—consider how  
It eases me!

## THE HUMORIST.

"What is that, mother?"

"The funny man, child.

His hands are black, but his heart is mild."

"May I touch him, mother?"

"'T were foolishly done:

He is slightly touched already, my son."

"O, why does he wear such a ghastly grin?"

"That's the outward sign of a joke within."

"Will he crack it, mother?"

"Not so, my saint;

'T is meant for the Saturday Livercomplaint."

"Does he suffer, mother?"

"God help him, yes!—

A thousand and fifty kinds of distress."

"What makes him sweat so?"

"The demons that lurk

In the fear of having to go to work."

"Why doesn't he end, then, his life with a rope?"

"Abolition of Hell has deprived him of hope."

## MONTEFIORE.

I saw—'twas in a dream, the other night  
A man whose hair with age was thin and white:  
One hundred years had bettered by his birth,  
And still his step was firm, his eye was bright.  
Before him and about him pressed a crowd.  
Each head in reverence was bared and bowed,  
And Jews and Gentiles in a hundred tongues  
Extolled his deeds and spoke his fame aloud.  
I joined the throng and, pushing forward, cried,  
"Montefiore!" with the rest, and vied  
In efforts to caress the hand that ne'er  
To want and worth had charity denied.  
So closely round him swarmed our shouting clan  
He scarce could breathe, and taking from a pan  
A gleaming coin he tossed it o'er our heads,  
And in a moment was a lonely man!

## **A WARNING.**

Cried Age to Youth: "Abate your speed!  
The distance hither's brief indeed."  
But Youth pressed on without delay  
The shout had reached but half the way.

## **DISCRETION.**

### **SHE:**

I'm told that men have sometimes got  
Too confidential, and  
Have said to one another what  
They—well, you understand.  
I hope I don't offend you, sweet,  
But are you sure that you're discreet?

### **HE:**

'Tis true, sometimes my friends in wine  
Their conquests do recall,  
But none can truly say that mine  
Are known to him at all.  
I never, never talk you o'er  
In truth, I never get the floor

## **AN EXILE.**

'Tis the census enumerator  
A-singing all forlorn:  
It's ho! for the tall potater,  
And ho! for the clustered corn.  
The whiffle-tree bends in the breeze and the fine  
Large eggs are a-ripening on the vine.  
"Some there must be to till the soil  
And the widow's weeds keep down.  
I wasn't cut out for rural toil  
But they won't let me live in town!  
They 're not so many by two or three,

As they think, but ah! they 're too many for me."  
Thus the census man, bowed down with care,  
Warbled his wood-note high.  
There was blood on his brow and blood in his hair,  
But he had no blood in his eye.

### **THE DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT.**

Baffled he stands upon the track  
The automatic switches clack.  
Where'er he turns his solemn eyes  
The interlocking signals rise.  
The trains, before his visage pale,  
Glide smoothly by, nor leave the rail.  
No splinter-spitted victim he  
Hears uttering the note high C.  
In sorrow deep he hangs his head,  
A-weary—would that he were dead.  
Now suddenly his spirits rise—  
A great thought kindles in his eyes.  
Hope, like a headlight's vivid glare,  
Splendors the path of his despair.  
His genius shines, the clouds roll back  
"I'll place obstructions on the track!"

### **PSYCHOGRAPHS.**

Says Gerald Massey: "When I write, a band  
Of souls of the departed guides my hand."  
How strange that poems cumbering our shelves,  
Penned by immortal parts, have none themselves!

### **TO A PROFESSIONAL EULOGIST.**

Newman, in you two parasites combine:  
As tapeworm and as graveworm too you shine.  
When on the virtues of the quick you've dwelt,  
The pride of residence was all you felt  
(What vain vulgarian the wish ne'er knew  
To paint his lodging a flamboyant hue?)

And when the praises of the dead you've sung,  
'Twas appetite, not truth, inspired your tongue;  
As ill-bred men when warming to their wine  
Boast of its merit though it be but brine.  
Nor gratitude incites your song, nor should  
Even charity would shun you if she could.  
You share, 'tis true, the rich man's daily dole,  
But what you get you take by way of toll.  
Vain to resist you—vermifuge alone  
Has power to push you from your robber throne.  
When to escape you he's compelled to die  
Hey! presto!—in the twinkling of an eye  
You vanish as a tapeworm, reappear  
As graveworm and resume your curst career.  
As host no more, to satisfy your need  
He serves as dinner your unaltered greed.  
O thrifty sycophant of wealth and fame,  
Son of servility and priest of shame,  
While naught your mad ambition can abate  
To lick the spittle of the rich and great;  
While still like smoke your eulogies arise  
To soot your heroes and inflame our eyes;  
While still with holy oil, like that which ran  
Down Aaron's beard, you smear each famous man,  
I cannot choose but think it very odd  
It ne'er occurs to you to fawn on God.

### **FOR WOUNDS.**

O bear me, gods, to some enchanted isle  
Where woman's tears can antidote her smile.

### **ELECTION DAY.**

Despots effete upon tottering thrones  
Unsteadily poised upon dead men's bones,  
Walk up! walk up! the circus is free,  
And this wonderful spectacle you shall see:  
Millions of voters who mostly are fools  
Demagogues' dupes and candidates' tools,  
Armies of uniformed mountebanks,

And braying disciples of brainless cranks.  
Many a week they've bellowed like beeves,  
Bitterly blackguarding, lying like thieves,  
    Libeling freely the quick and the dead  
    And painting the New Jerusalem red.  
Tyrants monarchical—emperors, kings,  
Princes and nobles and all such things  
    Noblemen, gentlemen, step this way:  
There's nothing, the Devil excepted, to pay,  
And the freaks and curios here to be seen  
Are very uncommonly grand and serene.  
    No more with vivacity they debate,  
    Nor cheerfully crack the illogical pate;  
No longer, the dull understanding to aid,  
The stomach accepts the instructive blade,  
Nor the stubborn heart learns what is what  
    From a revelation of rabbit-shot;  
    And vilification's flames—behold!  
Burn with a bickering faint and cold.  
Magnificent spectacle!—every tongue  
    Suddenly civil that yesterday rung  
(Like a clapper beating a brazen bell)  
    Each fair reputation's eternal knell;  
    Hands no longer delivering blows,  
And noses, for counting, arrayed in rows.  
Walk up, gentlemen—nothing to pay  
    The Devil goes back to Hell to-day.

### **THE MILITIAMAN.**

"O warrior with the burnished arms  
    With bullion cord and tassel  
    Pray tell me of the lurid charms  
    Of service and the fierce alarms:  
    The storming of the castle,  
The charge across the smoking field,  
    The rifles' busy rattle  
What thoughts inspire the men who wield  
The blade—their gallant souls how steeled  
    And fortified in battle."  
"Nay, man of peace, seek not to know

War's baleful fascination  
The soldier's hunger for the foe,  
His dread of safety, joy to go  
To court annihilation.  
Though calling bugles blow not now,  
Nor drums begin to beat yet,  
One fear unmans me, I'll allow,  
And poisons all my pleasure: How  
If I should get my feet wet!"

### **"A LITERARY METHOD."**

His poems Riley says that he indites  
Upon an empty stomach. Heavenly Powers,  
Feed him throat-full: for what the beggar writes  
Upon his empty stomach empties ours!

### **A WELCOME.**

Because you call yourself Knights Templar, and  
There's neither Knight nor Temple in the land,  
Because you thus by vain pretense degrade  
To paltry purposes traditions grand,  
Because to cheat the ignorant you say  
The thing that's not, elated still to sway  
The crass credulity of gaping fools  
And women by fantastical display,  
Because no sacred fires did ever warm  
Your hearts, high knightly service to perform  
A woman's breast or coffer of a man  
The only citadel you dare to storm,  
Because while railing still at lord and peer,  
At pomp and fuss-and-feathers while you jeer,  
Each member of your order tries to graft  
A peacock's tail upon his barren rear,  
Because that all these things are thus and so,  
I bid you welcome to our city. Lo!  
You're free to come, and free to stay, and free  
As soon as it shall please you, sirs—to go.

## A SERENADE.

"Sas agapo sas agapo,"  
He sang beneath her lattice.  
"Sas agapo'?" she murmured—"O,  
I wonder, now, what that is!"  
Was she less fair that she did bear  
So light a load of knowledge?  
Are loving looks got out of books,  
Or kisses taught in college?  
Of woman's lore give me no more  
Than how to love,—in many  
A tongue men brawl: she speaks them all  
Who says "I love," in any.

## THE WISE AND GOOD.

"O father, I saw at the church as I passed  
The populace gathered in numbers so vast  
That they couldn't get in; and their voices were low,  
And they looked as if suffering terrible woe."  
"Twas the funeral, child, of a gentleman dead  
For whom the great heart of humanity bled."  
"What made it bleed, father, for every day  
Somebody passes forever away?  
Do the newspaper men print a column or more  
Of every person whose troubles are o'er?"  
"O, no; they could never do that—and indeed,  
Though printers might print it, no reader would read.  
To the sepulcher all, soon or late, must be borne,  
But 'tis only the Wise and the Good that all mourn."  
"That's right, father dear, but how can our eyes  
Distinguish in dead men the Good and the Wise?"  
"That's easy enough to the stupidest mind:  
They're poor, and in dying leave nothing behind."  
"Seest thou in mine eye, father, anything green?  
And takest thy son for a gaping marine?  
Go tell thy fine tale of the Wise and the Good  
Who are poor and lamented to babes in the wood."  
And that horrible youth as I hastened away

Was building a wink that affronted the day.

### THE LOST COLONEL.

"'Tis a woeful yarn," said the sailor man bold  
Who had sailed the northern-lakes  
"No woefuler one has ever been told  
Exceptin' them called 'fakes.'"  
"Go on, thou son of the wind and fog,  
For I burn to know the worst!"  
But his silent lip in a glass of grog  
Was dreamily immersed.  
Then he wiped it on his sleeve and said:  
"It's never like that I drinks  
But what of the gallant gent that's dead  
I truly mournful thinks.  
"He was a soldier chap—leastways  
As 'Colonel' he was knew;  
An' he hailed from some'rs where they raise  
A grass that's heavenly blue.  
"He sailed as a passenger aboard  
The schooner 'Henery Jo.'  
O wild the waves and galeses roared,  
Like taggers in a show!  
"But he sat at table that calm an' mild  
As if he never had let  
His sperit know that the waves was wild  
An' everlastin' wet!  
"Jest set with a bottle afore his nose,  
As was labeled 'Total Eclipse'  
(The bottle was) an' he frequent rose  
A glass o' the same to his lips.  
"An' he says to me (for the steward slick  
Of the 'Henery Jo' was I):  
'This sailor life's the very old Nick  
On the lakes it's powerful dry!'  
"I says: 'Aye, aye, sir, it beats the Dutch.  
I hopes you'll outlast the trip.'  
But if I'd been him—an' I said as much  
I'd 'a' took a faster ship.  
"His laughture, loud an' long an' free,

Rang out o'er the tempest's roar.  
'You're an elegant reasoner,' says he,  
'But it's powerful dry ashore!'"  
"O mariner man, why pause and don  
A look of so deep concern?  
Have another glass—go on, go on,  
For to know the worst I burn."  
"One day he was leanin' over the rail,  
When his footing some way slipped,  
An' (this is the woefulest part o' my tale),  
He was accidental unshipped!  
"The empty boats was overboard hove,  
As he swum in the 'Henery's wake';  
But 'fore we had 'bouted ship he had drove  
From sight on the ragin' lake!"  
"And so the poor gentleman was drowned  
And now I'm apprised of the worst."  
"What! him? 'Twas an hour afore he was found  
In the yawl—stone dead o' thirst!"

### **FOR TAT.**

O, heavenly powers! will wonders never cease?  
Hair upon dogs and feathers upon geese!  
The boys in mischief and the pigs in mire!  
The drinking water wet! the coal on fire!  
In meadows, rivulets surpassing fair,  
Forever running, yet forever there!  
A tail appended to the gray baboon!  
A person coming out of a saloon!  
Last, and of all most marvelous to see,  
A female Yahoo flinging filth at me!  
If 'twould but stick I'd bear upon my coat  
May Little's proof that she is fit to vote.

## A DILEMMA.

Filled with a zeal to serve my fellow men,  
For years I criticised their prose and verges:  
Pointed out all their blunders of the pen,  
Their shallowness of thought and feeling; then  
Damned them up hill and down with hearty curses!  
They said: "That's all that he can do—just sneer,  
And pull to pieces and be analytic.  
Why doesn't he himself, eschewing fear,  
Publish a book or two, and so appear  
As one who has the right to be a critic?  
"Let him who knows it all forbear to tell  
How little others know, but show his learning."  
The public added: "Who has written well  
May censure freely"—quoting Pope. I fell  
Into the trap and books began out-turning,  
Books by the score—fine prose and poems fair,  
And not a book of them but was a terror,  
They were so great and perfect; though I swear  
I tried right hard to work in, here and there,  
(My nature still forbade) a fault or error.  
'Tis true, some wretches, whom I'd scratched, no doubt,  
Professed to find—but that's a trifling matter.  
Now, when the flood of noble books was out  
I raised o'er all that land a joyous shout,  
Till I was thought as mad as any hatter!  
(Why hatters all are mad, I cannot say.  
'T were wrong in their affliction to revile 'em,  
But truly, you'll confess 'tis very sad  
We wear the ugly things they make. Begad,  
They'd be less mischievous in an asylum!)

"Consistency, thou art a"—well, you're paste!  
When next I felt my demon in possession,  
And made the field of authorship a waste,  
All said of me: "What execrable taste,  
To rail at others of his own profession!"  
Good Lord! where do the critic's rights begin  
Who has of literature some clear-cut notion,  
And hears a voice from Heaven say: "Pitch in"?  
He finds himself—alas, poor son of sin

Between the devil and the deep blue ocean!

### **METEMPSYCHOSIS.**

Once with Christ he entered Salem,  
Once in Moab bullied Balaam,  
Once by Apuleius staged  
He the pious much enraged.  
And, again, his head, as beaver,  
Topped the neck of Nick the Weaver.  
Omar saw him (minus tether  
Free and wanton as the weather:  
Knowing naught of bit or spur)  
Stamping over Bahram-Gur.  
Now, as Altgeld, see him joy  
As Governor of Illinois!

### **THE SAINT AND THE MONK.**

Saint Peter at the gate of Heaven displayed  
The tools and terrors of his awful trade;  
The key, the frown as pitiless as night,  
That slays intending trespassers at sight,  
And, at his side in easy reach, the curled  
Interrogation points all ready to be hurled.  
Straight up the shining cloudway (it so chanced  
No others were about) a soul advanced  
A fat, orbicular and jolly soul  
With laughter-lines upon each rosy jowl  
A monk so prepossessing that the saint  
Admired him, breathless, until weak and faint,  
Forgot his frown and all his questions too,  
Forgoing even the customary "Who?"  
Threw wide the gate and, with a friendly grin,  
Said, "'Tis a very humble home, but pray walk in."  
The soul smiled pleasantly. "Excuse me, please  
Who's in there?" By insensible degrees  
The impudence dispelled the saint's esteem,  
As growing snores annihilate a dream.  
The frown began to blacken on his brow,  
His hand to reach for "Whence?" and "Why?" and "How?"

"O, no offense, I hope," the soul explained;  
 "I'm rather—well, particular. I've strained  
 A point in coming here at all; 'tis said  
 That Susan Anthony (I hear she's dead  
 At last) and all her followers are here.  
 As company, they'd be—confess it—rather queer."  
 The saint replied, his rising anger past:  
 "What can I do?—the law is hard-and-fast,  
 Albeit unwritten and on earth unknown  
 An oral order issued from the Throne.  
 By but one sin has Woman e'er incurred  
 God's wrath. To accuse Them Loud of that would be absurd."  
 That friar sighed, but, calling up a smile,  
 Said, slowly turning on his heel the while:  
 "Farewell, my friend. Put up the chain and bar  
 I'm going, so please you, where the pretty women are."

### **THE OPPOSING SEX.**

The Widows of Ashur  
 Are loud in their wailing:  
 "No longer the 'masher'  
 Sees Widows of Ashur!"  
 So each is a lasher  
 Of Man's smallest failing.  
 The Widows of Ashur  
 Are loud in their wailing.  
 The Cave of Adullam,  
 That home of reviling  
 No wooing can gull 'em  
 In Cave of Adullam.  
 No angel can lull 'em  
 To cease their defiling  
 The Cave of Adullam,  
 That home of reviling.  
 At men they are cursing  
 The Widows of Ashur;  
 Themselves, too, for nursing  
 The men they are cursing.  
 The praise they're rehearsing  
 Of every slasher

At men. They are cursing  
The Widows of Ashur.

### **A WHIPPER-IN.**

Dudley, great placeman, man of mark and note,  
Worthy of honor from a feeble pen  
Blunted in service of all true, good men,  
You serve the Lord—in courses, table d'hôte:  
Au, naturel, as well as à la Nick  
"Eat and be thankful, though it make you sick."  
O, truly pious caterer, forbear  
To push the Saviour and Him crucified  
(Brochette you'd call it) into their inside  
Who're all unused to such ambrosial fare.  
The stomach of the soul makes quick revulsion  
Of aught that it has taken on compulsion.  
I search the Scriptures, but I do not find  
That e'er the Spirit beats with angry wings  
For entrance to the heart, but sits and sings  
To charm away the scruples of the mind.  
It says: "Receive me, please; I'll not compel"  
Though if you don't you will go straight to Hell!  
Well, that's compulsion, you will say. 'T is true:  
We cower timidly beneath the rod  
Lifted in menace by an angry God,  
But won't endure it from an ape like you.  
Detested simian with thumb prehensile,  
Switch me and I would brain you with my pencil!  
Face you the Throne, nor dare to turn your back  
On its transplendency to flog some wight  
Who gropes and stumbles in the infernal night  
Your ugly shadow lays along his track.  
O, Thou who from the Temple scourged the sin,  
Behold what rascals try to scourge it in!

## JUDGMENT.

I drew aside the Future's veil  
And saw upon his bier  
The poet Whitman. Loud the wail  
And damp the falling tear.  
"He's dead—he is no more!" one cried,  
With sobs of sorrow crammed;  
"No more? He's this much more," replied  
Another: "he is damned!"

## THE FALL OF MISS LARKIN.

Hear me sing of Sally Larkin who, I'd have you understand,  
Played accordions as well as any lady in the land;  
And I've often heard it stated that her fingering was such  
That Professor Schweinenhauer was enchanted with her touch;  
And that beasts were so affected when her apparatus rang  
That they dropped upon their haunches and deliriously sang.  
This I know from testimony, though a critic, I opine,  
Needs an ear that is dissimilar in some respects to mine.  
She could sing, too, like a jaybird, and they say all eyes were wet  
When Sally and the ranch-dog were performing a duet  
Which I take it is a song that has to be so loudly sung  
As to overtax the strength of any single human lung.  
That, at least, would seem to follow from the tale I have to tell,  
Which (I've told you how she flourished) is how Sally Larkin fell.  
One day there came to visit Sally's dad as sleek and smart  
A chap as ever wandered there from any foreign part.  
Though his gentle birth and breeding he did not at all obtrude  
It was somehow whispered round he was a simon-pure Dude.  
Howsoe'er that may have been, it was conspicuous to see  
That he was a real Gent of an uncommon high degree.  
That Sally cast her tender and affectionate regards  
On this exquisite creation was, of course, upon the cards;  
But he didn't seem to notice, and was variously blind  
To her many charms of person and the merits of her mind,  
And preferred, I grieve to say it, to play poker with her dad,  
And acted in a manner that in general was bad.  
One evening—'twas in summer—she was holding in her lap  
Her accordion, and near her stood that melancholy chap,

Leaning up against a pillar with his lip in grog imbrued,  
Thinking, maybe, of that ancient land in which he was a Dude.  
Then Sally, who was melancholy too, began to hum  
And elongate the accordion with a preluding thumb.  
Then sighs of amorosity from Sally L. exhaled,  
And her music apparatus sympathetically wailed.  
"In the gloaming, O my darling!" rose that wild impassioned strain,  
And her eyes were fixed on his with an intensity of pain,  
Till the ranch-dog from his kennel at the postern gate came round,  
And going into session strove to magnify the sound.  
He lifted up his spirit till the gloaming rang and rang  
With the song that to his darling he impetuously sang!  
Then that musing youth, recalling all his soul from other scenes,  
Where his fathers all were Dudes and his mothers all Dudines,  
From his lips removed the beaker and politely, o'er the grog,  
Said: "Miss Larkin, please be quiet: you will interrupt the dog."

### **IN HIGH LIFE.**

Sir Impycu Lackland, from over the sea,  
Has led to the altar Miss Bloatie Bondee.  
The wedding took place at the Church of St. Blare;  
The fashion, the rank and the wealth were all there  
No person was absent of all whom one meets.  
Lord Mammon himself bowed them into their seats,  
While good Sir John Satan attended the door  
And Sexton Beelzebub managed the floor,  
Respectfully keeping each dog to its rug,  
Preserving the peace between poodle and pug.  
Twelve bridesmaids escorted the bride up the aisle  
To blush in her blush and to smile in her smile;  
Twelve groomsmen supported the eminent groom  
To scowl in his scowl and to gloom in his gloom.  
The rites were performed by the hand and the lip  
Of his Grace the Diocesan, Billingham Pip,  
Assisted by three able-bodied divines.  
He prayed and they grunted, he read, they made signs.  
Such fashion, such beauty, such dressing, such grace  
Were ne'er before seen in that heavenly place!  
That night, full of gin, and all blazing inside,  
Sir Impycu blackened the eyes of his bride.

## A BUBBLE.

Mrs. Mehitable Marcia Moore  
Was a dame of superior mind,  
With a gown which, modestly fitting before,  
Was greatly puffed up behind.  
The bustle she wore was ingeniously planned  
With an inspiration bright:  
It magnified seven diameters and  
Was remarkably nice and light.  
It was made of rubber and edged with lace  
And riveted all with brass,  
And the whole immense interior space  
Inflated with hydrogen gas.  
The ladies all said when she hove in view  
Like the round and rising moon:  
"She's a stuck up thing!" which was partly true,  
And men called her the Captive Balloon.  
To Manhattan Beach for a bath one day  
She went and she said: "O dear!  
If I leave off this what will people say?  
I shall look so uncommonly queer!"  
So a costume she had accordingly made  
To take it all nicely in,  
And when she appeared in that suit arrayed,  
She was greeted with many a grin.  
Proudly and happily looking around,  
She waded out into the wet,  
But the water was very, very profound,  
And her feet and her forehead met!  
As her bubble drifted away from the shore,  
On the glassy billows borne,  
All cried: "Why, where is Mehitable Moore?  
I saw her go in, I'll be sworn!"  
Then the bulb it swelled as the sun grew hot,  
Till it burst with a sullen roar,  
And the sea like oil closed over the spot  
Farewell, O Mehitable Moore!

## **A RENDEZVOUS.**

Nightly I put up this humble petition:  
"Forgive me, O Father of Glories,  
My sins of commission, my sins of omission,  
My sins of the Mission Dolores."

## **FRANCINE.**

Did I believe the angels soon would call  
You, my beloved, to the other shore,  
And I should never see you any more,  
I love you so I know that I should fall  
Into dejection utterly, and all  
Love's pretty pageantry, wherein we bore  
Twin banners bravely in the tumult's fore,  
Would seem as shadows idling on a wall.  
So daintily I love you that my love  
Endures no rumor of the winter's breath,  
And only blossoms for it thinks the sky  
Forever gracious, and the stars above  
Forever friendly. Even the fear of death  
Were frost wherein its roses all would die.

## **AN EXAMPLE.**

They were two deaf mutes, and they loved and they  
Resolved to be groom and bride;  
And they listened to nothing that any could say,  
Nor ever a word replied.  
From wedlock when warned by the married men,  
Maintain an invincible mind:  
Be deaf and dumb until wedded—and then  
Be deaf and dumb and blind.

## **REVENGE.**

A spitcat sate on a garden gate  
And a snapdog fared beneath;  
Careless and free was his mien, and he

Held a fiddle-string in his teeth.  
She marked his march, she wrought an arch  
Of her back and blew up her tail;  
And her eyes were green as ever were seen,  
And she uttered a woful wail.  
The spitcat's plaint was as follows: "It ain't  
That I am to music a foe;  
For fiddle-strings bide in my own inside,  
And I twang them soft and low.  
"But that dog has trifled with art and rifled  
A kitten of mine, ah me!  
That catgut slim was marauded from him:  
"Tis the string that men call E."  
Then she sounded high, in the key of Y,  
A note that cracked the tombs;  
And the missiles through the firmament flew  
From adjacent sleeping-rooms.  
As her gruesome yell from the gate-post fell  
She followed it down to earth;  
And that snapdog wears a placard that bears  
The inscription: "Blind from birth."

## **THE GENESIS OF EMBARRASSMENT.**

When Adam first saw Eve he said:  
"O lovely creature, share my bed."  
Before consenting, she her gaze  
Fixed on the greensward to appraise,  
As well as vision could avouch,  
The value of the proffered couch.  
And seeing that the grass was green  
And neatly clipped with a machine—  
Observing that the flow'rs were rare  
Varieties, and some were fair,  
The posts of precious woods, besprent  
With fragrant balsams, diffluent,  
And all things suited to her worth,  
She raised her angel eyes from earth  
To his and, blushing to confess,  
Murmured: "I love you, Adam—yes."  
Since then her daughters, it is said,

Look always down when asked to wed.

### **IN CONTUMACIAM.**

Och! Father McGlynn,  
Ye appear to be in  
Fer a bit of a bout wid the Pope;  
An' there's divil a doubt  
But he's knockin' ye out  
While ye're hangin' onto the rope.  
An' soon ye'll lave home  
To thtravel to Rome,  
For its bound to Canossa ye are.  
Persistin' to shtay  
When ye're ordered away  
Bedad! that is goin' too far!

### **RE-EDIFIED.**

Lord of the tempest, pray refrain  
From leveling this church again.  
Now in its doom, as so you've willed it,  
We acquiesce. But you'll rebuild it.

### **A BULLETIN.**

"Lothario is very low,"  
So all the doctors tell.  
Nay, nay, not so—he will be, though,  
If ever he get well.

### **FROM THE MINUTES.**

When, with the force of a ram that discharges its ponderous body  
Straight at the rear elevation of the luckless culler of simples,  
The foot of Herculean Kilgore—statesman of surname suggestive  
Or carnage unspeakable!—lit like a missile prodigious  
Upon the Congressional door with a monstrous and mighty momentum,  
Causing that vain ineffective bar to political freedom  
To fly from its hinges, effacing the nasal excrescence of Dingley,

That luckless one, decently veiling the ruin with ready bandanna,  
 Lamented the loss of his eminence, sadly with sobs as follows:  
 "Ah, why was I ever elected to the halls of legislation,  
 So soon to be shown the door with pitiless emphasis? Truly,  
 I've leaned on a broken Reed, and the same has gone back on me meanly.  
 Where now is my prominence, erstwhile in council conspicuous, patent?  
 Alas, I did never before understand what I now see clearly,  
 To wit, that Democracy tends to level all human distinctions!"  
 His fate so untoward and sad the Pine-tree statesman, bewailing,  
 Stood in the corridor there while Democrats freed from confinement  
 Came trooping forth from the chamber, dissembling all, as they passed him,  
 Hilarious sentiments painful indeed to observe, and remarking:  
 "O friend and colleague of the Speaker, what ails the unjoyous proboscis?"

### **WOMAN IN POLITICS.**

What, madam, run for School Director? You?  
 And want my vote and influence? Well, well,  
 That beats me! Gad! where are we drifting to?  
 In all my life I never have heard tell  
 Of such sublime presumption, and I smell  
 A nigger in the fence! Excuse me, madam;  
 We statesmen sometimes speak like the old Adam.  
 But now you mention it—well, well, who knows?  
 We might, that's certain, give the sex a show.  
 I have a cousin—teacher. I suppose  
 If I stand in and you 're elected—no?  
 You'll make no bargains? That's a pretty go!  
 But understand that school administration  
 Belongs to Politics, not Education.  
 We'll pass the teacher deal; but it were wise  
 To understand each other at the start.  
 You know my business—books and school supplies;  
 You'd hardly, if elected, have the heart  
 Some small advantage to deny me—part  
 Of all my profits to be yours. What? Stealing?  
 Please don't express yourself with so much feeling.  
 You pain me, truly. Now one question more.  
 Suppose a fair young man should ask a place  
 As teacher—would you (pardon) shut the door  
 Of the Department in his handsome face

Until—I know not how to put the case  
Would you extort a kiss to pay your favor?  
Good Lord! you laugh? I thought the matter graver.  
Well, well, we can't do business, I suspect:  
A woman has no head for useful tricks.  
My profitable offers you reject  
And will not promise anything to fix  
The opposition. That's not politics.  
Good morning. Stay—I'm chaffing you, conceitedly.  
Madam, I mean to vote for you—repeatedly

### **TO AN ASPIRANT.**

What! you a Senator—you, Mike de Young?  
Still reeking of the gutter whence you sprung?  
Sir, if all Senators were such as you,  
Their hands so crimson and so slender, too,  
(Shaped to the pocket for commercial work,  
For literary, fitted to the dirk)  
So black their hearts, so lily-white their livers,  
The toga's touch would give a man the shivers.

### **A BALLAD OF PIKEVILLE.**

Down in Southern Arizona where the Gila monster thrives,  
And the "Mescalero," gifted with a hundred thousand lives,  
Every hour renounces one of them by drinking liquid flame  
The assassinating wassail that has given him his name;  
Where the enterprising dealer in Caucasian hair is seen  
To hold his harvest festival upon his village-green,  
While the late lamented tenderfoot upon the plain is spread  
With a sanguinary circle on the summit of his head;  
Where the cactuses (or cacti) lift their lances in the sun,  
And incautious jackass-rabbits come to sorrow as they run,  
Lived a colony of settlers—old Missouri was the State  
Where they formerly resided at a prehistoric date.  
Now, the spot that had been chosen for this colonizing scheme  
Was as waterless, believe me, as an Arizona stream.  
The soil was naught but ashes, by the breezes driven free,  
And an acre and a quarter were required to sprout a pea.  
So agriculture languished, for the land would not produce,

And for lack of water, whisky was the beverage in use  
Costly whisky, hauled in wagons many a weary, weary day,  
Mostly needed by the drivers to sustain them on their way.  
Wicked whisky! King of Evils! Why, O, why did God create  
Such a curse and thrust it on us in our inoffensive state?  
Once a parson came among them, and a holy man was he;  
With his ailing stomach whisky wouldn't anywise agree;  
So he knelt upon the mesa and he prayed with all his chin  
That the Lord would send them water or incline their hearts to gin.  
Scarcely was the prayer concluded ere an earthquake shook the land,  
And with copious effusion springs burst out on every hand!  
Merrily the waters gurgled, and the shock which gave them birth  
Fitley was by some declared a temperance movement of the earth.  
Astounded by the miracle, the people met that night  
To celebrate it properly by some religious rite;  
And 'tis truthfully recorded that before the moon had sunk  
Every man and every woman was devotionally drunk.  
A half a standard gallon (says history) per head  
Of the best Kentucky prime was at that ceremony shed.  
O, the glory of that country! O, the happy, happy folk.  
By the might of prayer delivered from Nature's broken yoke!  
Lo! the plains to the horizon all are yellowing with rye,  
And the corn upon the hill-top lifts its banners to the sky!  
Gone the wagons, gone the drivers, and the road is grown to grass,  
Over which the incalcescent Bourbon did aforetime pass.  
Pikeville (that's the name they've given, in their wild, romantic way,  
To that irrigation district) now distills, statistics say,  
Something like a hundred gallons, out of each recurrent crop,  
To the head of population—and consumes it, every drop!

### **A BUILDER.**

I saw the devil—he was working free:  
A customs-house he builded by the sea.  
"Why do you this?" The devil raised his head;  
"Churches and courts I've built enough," he said.

## AN AUGURY.

Upon my desk a single spray,  
With starry blossoms fraught.  
I write in many an idle way,  
Thinking one serious thought.  
"O flowers, a fine Greek name ye bear,  
And with a fine Greek grace."  
Be still, O heart, that turns to share  
The sunshine of a face.  
"Have ye no messages—no brief,  
Still sign: 'Despair', or 'Hope'?"  
A sudden stir of stem and leaf  
A breath of heliotrope!

## LUSUS POLITICUS.

Come in, old gentleman. How do you do?  
Delighted, I'm sure, that you've called.  
I'm a sociable sort of a chap and you  
Are a pleasant-appearing person, too,  
With a head agreeably bald.  
That's right—sit down in the scuttle of coal  
And put up your feet in a chair.  
It is better to have them there:  
And I've always said that a hat of lead,  
Such as I see you wear,  
Was a better hat than a hat of glass.  
And your boots of brass  
Are a natural kind of boots, I swear.  
"May you blow your nose on a paper of pins?"  
Why, certainly, man, why not?  
I rather expected you'd do it before,  
When I saw you poking it in at the door.  
It's dev'lish hot—  
The weather, I mean. "You are twins"?  
Why, that was evident at the start,  
From the way that you paint your head  
In stripes of purple and red,  
With dots of yellow.  
That proves you a fellow

With a love of legitimate art.  
"You've bitten a snake and are feeling bad"?  
That's very sad,  
But Longfellow's words I beg to recall:  
Your lot is the common lot of all.  
"Horses are trees and the moon is a sneeze"?  
That, I fancy, is just as you please.  
Some think that way and others hold  
The opposite view;  
I never quite knew,  
For the matter o' that,  
When everything's been said  
May I offer this mat  
If you will stand on your head?  
I suppose I look to be upside down  
From your present point of view.  
It's a giddy old world, from king to clown,  
And a topsy-turvy, too.  
But, worthy and now uninverted old man,  
You're built, at least, on a normal plan  
If ever a truth I spoke.  
Smoke?  
Your air and conversation  
Are a liberal education,  
And your clothes, including the metal hat  
And the brazen boots—what's that?  
"You never could stomach a Democrat  
Since General Jackson ran?  
You're another sort, but you predict  
That your party'll get consummately licked?"  
Good God! what a queer old man!

### **BEREAVEMENT.**

A Countess (so they tell the tale)  
Who dwelt of old in Arno's vale,  
Where ladies, even of high degree,  
Know more of love than of A.B.C,  
Came once with a prodigious bribe  
Unto the learned village scribe,  
That most discreet and honest man

Who wrote for all the lover clan,  
Nor e'er a secret had betrayed  
Save when inadequately paid.  
"Write me," she sobbed—"I pray thee do  
A book about the Prince di Giu  
A book of poetry in praise  
Of all his works and all his ways;  
The godlike grace of his address,  
His more than woman's tenderness,  
His courage stern and lack of guile,  
The loves that wantoned in his smile.  
So great he was, so rich and kind,  
I'll not within a fortnight find  
His equal as a lover. O,  
My God! I shall be drowned in woe!"  
"What! Prince di Giu has died!" exclaimed  
The honest man for letters famed,  
The while he pocketed her gold;  
"Of what'?—if I may be so bold."  
Fresh storms of tears the lady shed:  
"I stabbed him fifty times," she said.

### **AN INSCRIPTION**

#### **FOR A STATUE OF NAPOLEON, AT WEST POINT.**

A famous conqueror, in battle brave,  
Who robbed the cradle to supply the grave.  
His reign laid quantities of human dust:  
He fell upon the just and the unjust.

### **A PICKBRAIN.**

What! imitate me, friend? Suppose that you  
With agony and difficulty do  
What I do easily—what then? You've got  
A style I heartily wish I had not.  
If I from lack of sense and you from choice  
Grieve the judicious and the unwise rejoice,  
No equal censure our deserts will suit

We both are fools, but you're an ape to boot!

### **CONVALESCENT.**

"By good men's prayers see Grant restored!"  
Shouts Talmage, pious creature!  
Yes, God, by supplication bored  
From every droning preacher,  
Exclaimed: "So be it, tiresome crew  
But I've a crow to pick with you."

### **THE NAVAL CONSTRUCTOR.**

He looked upon the ships as they  
All idly lay at anchor,  
Their sides with gorgeous workmen gay  
The riveter and planker—  
Republicans and Democrats,  
Statesmen and politicians.  
He saw the swarm of prudent rats  
Swimming for land positions.  
He marked each "belted cruiser" fine,  
Her poddy life-belts floating  
In tether where the hungry brine  
Impinged upon her coating.  
He noted with a proud regard,  
As any of his class would,  
The poplar mast and poplar yard  
Above the hull of bass-wood.  
He saw the Eastlake frigate tall,  
With quaintly carven gable,  
Hip-roof and dormer-window—all  
With ivy formidable.  
In short, he saw our country's hope  
In best of all conditions—  
Equipped, to the last spar and rope,  
By working politicians.  
He boarded then the noblest ship  
And from the harbor glided.  
"Adieu, adieu!" fell from his lip.  
Verdict: "He suicided."

## **DETECTED.**

In Congress once great Mowther shone,  
Debating weighty matters;  
Now into an asylum thrown,  
He vacuously chatters.  
If in that legislative hall  
His wisdom still he 'd vented,  
It never had been known at all  
That Mowther was demented.

## **BIMETALISM.**

Ben Bulger was a silver man,  
Though not a mine had he:  
He thought it were a noble plan  
To make the coinage free.  
"There hain't for years been sech a time,"  
Said Ben to his bull pup,  
"For biz—the country's broke and I'm  
The hardest kind of up.  
"The paper says that that's because  
The silver coins is sea'ce,  
And that the chaps which makes the laws  
Puts gold ones in their place.  
"They says them nations always be  
Most prosperatin' where  
The wolume of the currency  
Ain't so disgustin' rare."  
His dog, which hadn't breakfasted,  
Dissented from his view,  
And wished that he could swell, instead,  
The volume of cold stew.  
"Nobody'd put me up," said Ben,  
"With patriot galoots  
Which benefits their feller men  
By playin' warios roots;  
"But havin' all the tools about,  
I'm goin' to commence

A-turnin' silver dollars out  
Wuth eighty-seven cents.  
"The feller takin' 'em can't whine:  
(No more, likewise, can I):  
They're better than the genooine,  
Which mostly satisfy.  
"It's only makin' coinage free,  
And mebbly might augment  
The wolume of the currency  
A noomerous per cent."  
I don't quite see his error nor  
Malevolence prepense,  
But fifteen years they gave him for  
That technical offense.

### **THE RICH TESTATOR.**

He lay on his bed and solemnly "signed,"  
Gasping—perhaps 'twas a jest he meant:  
"This of a sound and disposing mind  
Is the last ill-will and contestament."

### **TWO METHODS.**

To bucks and ewes by the Good Shepherd fed  
The Priest delivers masses for the dead,  
And even from estrays outside the fold  
Death for the masses he would not withhold.  
The Parson, loth alike to free or kill,  
Forsakes the souls already on the grill,  
And, God's prerogative of mercy shamming,  
Spares living sinners for a harder damning.

### **FOUNDATIONS OF THE STATE**

Observe, dear Lord, what lively pranks  
Are played by sentimental cranks!  
First this one mounts his hinder hoofs  
And brays the chimneys off the roofs;  
Then that one, with exalted voice,

Expounds the thesis of his choice,  
Our understandings to bombard,  
Till all the window panes are starred!  
A third augments the vocal shock  
Till steeples to their bases rock,  
Confessing, as they humbly nod,  
They hear and mark the will of God.  
A fourth in oral thunder vents  
His awful penury of sense  
Till dogs with sympathetic howls,  
And lowing cows, and cackling fowls,  
Hens, geese, and all domestic birds,  
Attest the wisdom of his words.  
Crank thus their intellects deflate  
Of theories about the State.  
This one avers 'tis built on Truth,  
And that on Temperance. This youth  
Declares that Science bears the pile;  
That graybeard, with a holy smile,  
Says Faith is the supporting stone;  
While women swear that Love alone  
Could so unflinchingly endure  
The heavy load. And some are sure  
The solemn vow of Christian Wedlock  
Is the indubitable bedrock.  
Physicians once about the bed  
Of one whose life was nearly sped  
Blew up a disputatious breeze  
About the cause of his disease:  
This, that and t' other thing they blamed.  
"Tut, tut!" the dying man exclaimed,  
"What made me ill I do not care;  
You've not an ounce of it, I'll swear.  
And if you had the skill to make it  
I'd see you hanged before I'd take it!"

## **AN IMPOSTER.**

Must you, Carnegie, evermore explain  
Your worth, and all the reasons give again  
Why black and red are similarly white,  
And you and God identically right?  
Still must our ears without redress submit  
To hear you play the solemn hypocrite  
Walking in spirit some high moral level,  
Raising at once his eye-balls and the devil?  
Great King of Cant! if Nature had but made  
Your mouth without a tongue I ne'er had prayed  
To have an earless head. Since she did not,  
Bear me, ye whirlwinds, to some favored spot  
Some mountain pinnacle that sleeps in air  
So delicately, mercifully rare  
That when the fellow climbs that giddy hill,  
As, for my sins, I know at last he will,  
To utter twaddle in that void inane  
His soundless organ he will play in vain.

## **UNEXPOUNDED.**

On Evidence, on Deeds, on Bills,  
On Copyhold, on Loans, on Wills,  
Lawyers great books indite;  
The creaking of their busy quills  
I've never heard on Right.

## **FRANCE.**

Unhappy State! with horrors still to strive:  
Thy Hugo dead, thy Boulanger alive;  
A Prince who'd govern where he dares not dwell,  
And who for power would his birthright sell  
Who, anxious o'er his enemies to reign,  
Grabs at the scepter and conceals the chain;  
While pugnacious factions mutually strive  
By cutting throats to keep the land alive.  
Perverse in passion, as in pride perverse

To all a mistress, to thyself a curse;  
Sweetheart of Europe! every sun's embrace  
Matures the charm and poison of thy grace.  
Yet time to thee nor peace nor wisdom brings:  
In blood of citizens and blood of kings  
The stones of thy stability are set,  
And the fair fabric trembles at a threat.

### **THE EASTERN QUESTION.**

Looking across the line, the Grecian said:  
"This border I will stain a Turkey red."  
The Moslem smiled securely and replied:  
"No Greek has ever for his country dyed."  
While thus each patriot guarded his frontier,  
The Powers stole all the country in his rear.

### **A GUEST.**

Death, are you well? I trust you have no cough  
That's painful or in any way annoying  
No kidney trouble that may carry you off,  
Or heart disease to keep you from enjoying  
Your meals—and ours. 'T were very sad indeed  
To have to quit the busy life you lead.  
You've been quite active lately for so old  
A person, and not very strong-appearing.  
I'm apprehensive, somehow, that my bold,  
Bad brother gave you trouble in the spearing.  
And my two friends—I fear, sir, that you ran  
Quite hard for them, especially the man.  
I crave your pardon: 'twas no fault of mine;  
If you are overworked I'm sorry, very.  
Come in, old man, and have a glass of wine.  
What shall it be—Marsala, Port or Sherry?  
What! just a mug of blood? That's funny grog  
To ask a friend for, eh? Well, take it, hog!

## **A FALSE PROPHECY.**

Dom Pedro, Emperor of far Brazil  
(Whence coffee comes and the three-cornered nut),  
They say that you're imperially ill,  
And threatened with paralysis. Tut-tut!  
Though Emperors are mortal, nothing but  
A nimble thunderbolt could catch and kill  
A man predestined to depart this life  
By the assassin's bullet, bomb or knife.  
Sir, once there was a President who freed  
Ten million slaves; and once there was a Czar  
Who freed five times as many serfs. Sins breed  
The means of punishment, and tyrants are  
Hurled headlong out of the triumphal car  
If faster than the law allows they speed.  
Lincoln and Alexander struck a rut;  
You freed slaves too. Paralysis—tut-tut!

## **STEPHEN DORSEY.**

Fly, heedless stranger, from this spot accurst,  
Where rests in Satan an offender first  
In point of greatness, as in point of time,  
Of new-school rascals who proclaim their crime.  
Skilled with a frank loquacity to blab  
The dark arcana of each mighty grab,  
And famed for lying from his early youth,  
He sinned secure behind a veil of truth.  
Some lock their lips upon their deeds; some write  
A damning record and conceal from sight;  
Some, with a lust of speaking, die to quell it.  
His way to keep a secret was to tell it.

## **STEPHEN J. FIELD.**

Here sleeps one of the greatest students  
Of jurisprudence.  
Nature endowed him with the gift  
Of the jurist's thrift.  
All points of law alike he threw  
The dice to settle.  
Those honest cubes were loaded true  
With railway metal.

## **GENERAL B.F. BUTLER.**

Thy flesh to earth, thy soul to God,  
We gave, O gallant brother;  
And o'er thy grave the awkward squad  
Fired into one another!  
Beneath this monument which rears its head.  
A giant note of admiration—dead,  
His life extinguished like a taper's flame.  
John Ericsson is lying in his fame.  
Behold how massive is the lofty shaft;  
How fine the product of the sculptor's craft;  
The gold how lavishly applied; the great  
Man's statue how impressive and sedate!  
Think what the cost—was! It would ill become  
Our modesty to specify the sum;  
Suffice it that a fair per cent, we're giving  
Of what we robbed him of when he was living.  
Of Corporal Tanner the head and the trunk  
Are here in unconsecrated ground duly sunk.  
His legs in the South claim the patriot's tear,  
But, stranger, you needn't be blubbering here.  
Jay Gould lies here. When he was newly dead  
He looked so natural that round his bed  
The people stood, in silence all, to weep.  
They thought, poor souls! that he did only sleep.  
Here Ingalls, sorrowing, has laid  
The tools of his infernal trade  
His pen and tongue. So sharp and rude  
They grew—so slack in gratitude,

His hand was wounded as he wrote,  
And when he spoke he cut his throat.  
Within this humble mausoleum  
Poor Guiteau's flesh you'll find.  
His bones are kept in a museum,  
And Tillman has his mind.  
Stranger, uncover; here you have in view  
The monument of Chauncey M. Depew.  
Eater and orator, the whole world round  
For feats of tongue and tooth alike renowned.  
Pauper in thought but prodigal in speech,  
Nothing he knew excepting how to teach.  
But in default of something to impart  
He multiplied his words with all his heart:  
When least he had to say, instructive most  
A clam in wisdom and in wit a ghost.  
Dining his way to eminence, he rowed  
With knife and fork up water-ways that flowed  
From lakes of favor—pulled with all his force  
And found each river sweeter than the source.  
Like rats, obscure beneath a kitchen floor,  
Gnawing and rising till obscure no more,  
He ate his way to eminence, and Fame  
Inscribes in gravy his immortal name.  
A trencher-knight, he, mounted on his belly,  
So spurred his charger that its sides were jelly.  
Grown desperate at last, it reared and threw him,  
And Indigestion, overtaking, slew him.  
Here the remains of Schuyler Colfax lie;  
Born, all the world knows when, and Heaven knows why.  
In '71 he filled the public eye,  
In '72 he bade the world good-bye,  
In God's good time, with a protesting sigh,  
He came to life just long enough to die.  
Of Morgan here lies the unspirited clay,  
Who secrets of Masonry swore to betray.  
He joined the great Order and studied with zeal  
The awful arcana he meant to reveal.  
At last in chagrin by his own hand he fell  
There was nothing to learn, there was nothing to tell

## **A HYMN OF THE MANY.**

God's people sorely were oppressed,  
I heard their lamentations long;  
I hear their singing, clear and strong,  
I see their banners in the West!  
The captains shout the battle-cry,  
The legions muster in their might;  
They turn their faces to the light,  
They lift their arms, they testify:  
"We sank beneath the Master's thong,  
Our chafing chains were ne'er undone;  
Now clash your lances in the sun  
And bless your banners with a song!  
"God bides his time with patient eyes  
While tyrants build upon the land;  
He lifts his face, he lifts his hand,  
And from the stones his temples rise.  
"Now Freedom waves her joyous wing  
Beyond the foemen's shields of gold.  
March forward, singing, for, behold,  
The right shall rule while God is king!"

## **ONE MORNING.**

Because that I am weak, my love, and ill,  
I cannot follow the impatient feet  
Of my desire, but sit and watch the beat  
Of the unpitying pendulum fulfill  
The hour appointed for the air to thrill  
And brighten at your coming. O my sweet,  
The tale of moments is at last complete  
The tryst is broken on the gusty hill!  
O lady, faithful-footed, loyal-eyed,  
The long leagues silence me; yet doubt me not;  
Think rather that the clock and sun have lied  
And all too early, you have sought the spot.  
For lo! despair has darkened all the light,  
And till I see your face it still is night.

## AN ERROR.

Good for he's old? Ah, Youth, you do not dream  
How sweet the roses in the autumn seem!  
AT THE "NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT."

You 're grayer than one would have thought you:  
The climate you have over there  
In the East has apparently brought you  
Disorders affecting the hair,  
Which—pardon me—seems a thought spare.  
You'll not take offence at my giving  
Expression to notions like these.  
You might have been stronger if living  
Out here in our sanative breeze.  
It's unhealthy here for disease.  
No, I'm not as plump as a pullet.  
But that's the old wound, you see.  
Remember my paunching a bullet?  
And how that it didn't agree  
With—well, honest hardtack for me.  
Just pass me the wine—I've a helly  
And horrible kind of drouth!  
When a fellow has that in his belly  
Which didn't go in at his mouth  
He's hotter than all Down South!  
Great Scott! what a nasty day that was  
When every galoot in our crack  
Division who didn't lie flat was  
Dissuaded from further attack  
By the bullet's felicitous whack.  
'Twas there that our major slept under  
Some cannon of ours on the crest,  
Till they woke him by stilling their thunder,  
And he cursed them for breaking his rest,  
And died in the midst of his jest.  
That night—it was late in November  
The dead seemed uncommonly chill  
To the touch; and one chap I remember  
Who took it exceedingly ill  
When I dragged myself over his bill.

Well, comrades, I'm off now—good morning.  
Your talk is as pleasant as pie,  
But, pardon me, one word of warning:  
Speak little of self, say I.  
That's my way. God bless you. Good-bye.

### **THE KING OF BORES.**

Abundant bores afflict this world, and some  
Are bores of magnitude that-come and—no,  
They're always coming, but they never go  
Like funeral pageants, as they drone and hum  
Their lurid nonsense like a muffled drum,  
Or bagpipe's dread unnecessary flow.  
But one superb tormentor I can show  
Prince Fiddlefaddle, Duc de Feefawfum.  
He the johndonkey is who, when I pen  
Amorous verses in an idle mood  
To nobody, or of her, reads them through  
And, smirking, says he knows the lady; then  
Calls me sly dog. I wish he understood  
This tender sonnet's application too.

### **HISTORY.**

What wrecked the Roman power? One says vice,  
Another indolence, another dice.  
Emascle says polygamy. "Not so,"  
Says Impycu—"twas luxury and show."  
The parson, lifting up a brow of brass,  
Swears superstition gave the coup de grâce,  
Great Allison, the statesman-chap affirms  
'Twas lack of coins (croaks Medico: "'T was worms")  
And John P. Jones the swift suggestion collars,  
Averting the no coins were silver dollars.  
Thus, through the ages, each presuming quack  
Turns the poor corpse upon its rotten back,  
Holds a new "autopsy" and finds that death  
Resulted partly from the want of breath,  
But chiefly from some visitation sad  
That points his argument or serves his fad.

They're all in error—never human mind  
The cause of the disaster has divined.  
What slew the Roman power? Well, provided  
You'll keep the secret, I will tell you. I did.

### **THE HERMIT.**

To a hunter from the city,  
Overtaken by the night,  
Spake, in tones of tender pity  
For himself, an aged wight:  
"I have found the world a fountain  
Of deceit and Life a sham.  
I have taken to the mountain  
And a Holy Hermit am.  
"Sternly bent on Contemplation,  
Far apart from human kind  
In the hill my habitation,  
In the Infinite my mind.  
"Ten long years I've lived a dumb thing,  
Growing bald and bent with dole.  
Vainly seeking for a Something  
To engage my gloomy soul.  
"Gentle Pilgrim, while my roots you  
Eat, and quaff my simple drink,  
Please suggest whatever suits you  
As a Theme for me to Think."  
Then the hunter answered gravely:  
"From distraction free, and strife,  
You could ponder very bravely  
On the Vanity of Life."  
"O, thou wise and learned Teacher,  
You have solved the Problem well  
You have saved a grateful creature  
From the agonies of hell.  
"Take another root, another  
Cup of water: eat and drink.  
Now I have a Subject, brother,  
Tell me What, and How, to think."

## TO A CRITIC OF TENNYSON.

Affronting fool, subdue your transient light;  
When Wisdom's dull dares Folly to be bright:  
If Genius stumble in the path to fame,  
'Tis decency in dunces to go lame.

## THE YEARLY LIE.

A merry Christmas? Prudent, as I live!  
You wish me something that you need not give.  
Merry or sad, what does it signify?  
To you 't is equal if I laugh, or die.  
Your hollow greeting, like a parrot's jest,  
Finds all its meaning in the ear addressed.  
Why "merry" Christmas? Faith, I'd rather frown  
Than grin and caper like a tickled clown.  
When fools are merry the judicious weep;  
The wise are happy only when asleep.  
A present? Pray you give it to disarm  
A man more powerful to do you harm.  
'T was not your motive? Well, I cannot let  
You pay for favors that you'll never get.  
Perish the savage custom of the gift,  
Founded in terror and maintained in thrift!  
What men of honor need to aid their weal  
They purchase, or, occasion serving, steal.  
Go celebrate the day with turkeys, pies,  
Sermons and psalms, and, for the children, lies.  
Let Santa Claus descend again the flue;  
If Baby doubt it, swear that it is true.  
"A lie well stuck to is as good as truth,"  
And God's too old to legislate for youth.  
Hail Christmas! On my knees and fowl I fall:  
For greater grace and better gravy call.  
Vive l'Humbug!—that's to say, God bless us all!

## **COOPERATION.**

No more the swindler singly seeks his prey;  
To hunt in couples is the modern way  
A rascal, from the public to purloin,  
An honest man to hide away the coin.

## **AN APOLOGUE.**

A traveler observed one day  
A loaded fruit-tree by the way.  
And reining in his horse exclaimed:  
"The man is greatly to be blamed  
Who, careless of good morals, leaves  
Temptation in the way of thieves.  
Now lest some villain pass this way  
And by this fruit be led astray  
To bag it, I will kindly pack  
It snugly in my saddle-sack."  
He did so; then that Salt o' the Earth  
Rode on, rejoicing in his worth.

## **DIAGNOSIS.**

Cried Allen Forman: "Doctor, pray  
Compose my spirits' strife:  
O what may be my chances, say,  
Of living all my life?  
"For lately I have dreamed of high  
And hempen dissolution!  
O doctor, doctor, how can I  
Amend my constitution?"  
The learned leech replied: "You're young  
And beautiful and strong  
Permit me to inspect your tongue:  
H'm, ah, ahem!—'tis long."

## FALLEN.

O, hadst thou died when thou wert great,  
When at thy feet a nation knelt  
To sob the gratitude it felt  
And thank the Saviour of the State,  
Gods might have envied thee thy fate!  
Then was the laurel round thy brow,  
And friend and foe spoke praise of thee,  
While all our hearts sang victory.  
Alas! thou art too base to bow  
To hide the shame that brands it now.

## DIES IRAE.

Dies irae! dies ilia!  
Solvat saeculum in favilla  
Teste David cum Sibylla.  
Quantus tremor est futurus,  
Quando Judex est venturus.  
Cuncta stricte discussurus.  
Tuba mirum spargens sonum  
Per sepulchra regionem,  
Coget omnes ante thronum.  
Mors stupebit, et Natura,  
Quum resurget creatura  
Judicanti responsura.  
Liber scriptus proferetur,  
In quo totum continetur,  
Unde mundus judicetur.  
Judex ergo quum sedebit,  
Quicquid latet apparebit,  
Nil inultum remanebit.  
Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,  
Quem patronem rogaturus,  
Quum vix justus sit securus?  
Rex tremendae majestatis,  
Qui salvandos salvas gratis;  
Salva me, Fons pietatis  
Recordare, Jesu pie  
Quod sum causa tuae viae;

Ne me perdas illa die.  
Quarens me sedisti lassus  
Redimisti crucem passus,  
Tantus labor non sit cassus.  
Juste Judex ultionis,  
Donum fac remissionis  
Ante diem rationis.  
Ingemisco tanquam reus,  
Culpa rubet vultus meus;  
Supplicanti parce, Deus.  
Qui Mariam absolvisti  
Et latronem exaudisti,  
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.  
Preces meae non sunt dignae,  
Sed tu bonus fac benigne  
Ne perenni cremer igne.  
Inter oves locum praesta.  
Et ab haedis me sequestra,  
Statuens in parte dextra.  
Confutatis maledictis,  
Flammis acribus addictis,  
Voca me cum benedictis.  
Oro supplex et acclinis,  
Cor contritum quasi cinis;  
Gere curam mei finis.  
Lacrymosa dies illa  
Qua resurgent et favilla,  
Judicandus homo reus  
Huic ergo parce, Deus!

## THE DAY OF WRATH.

Day of Satan's painful duty!  
Earth shall vanish, hot and sooty;  
So says Virtue, so says Beauty.  
Ah! what terror shall be shaping  
When the Judge the truth's undraping!  
Cats from every bag escaping!  
Now the trumpet's invocation  
Calls the dead to condemnation;  
All receive an invitation.  
Death and Nature now are quaking,  
And the late lamented, waking,  
In their breezy shrouds are shaking.  
Lo! the Ledger's leaves are stirring,  
And the Clerk, to them referring,  
Makes it awkward for the erring.  
When the Judge appears in session,  
We shall all attend confession,  
Loudly preaching non-suppression.  
How shall I then make romances  
Mitigating circumstances?  
Even the just must take their chances.  
King whose majesty amazes.  
Save thou him who sings thy praises;  
Fountain, quench my private blazes.  
Pray remember, sacred Savior,  
Mine the playful hand that gave your  
Death-blow. Pardon such behavior.  
Seeking me fatigue assailed thee,  
Calvary's outlook naught availed thee:  
Now 't were cruel if I failed thee.  
Righteous judge and learned brother,  
Pray thy prejudices smother  
Ere we meet to try each other.  
Sighs of guilt my conscience gushes,  
And my face vermilion flushes;  
Spare me for my pretty blushes.  
Thief and harlot, when repenting,  
Thou forgav'st—be complimenting  
Me with sign of like relenting.

If too bold is my petition  
I'll receive with due submission  
My dismissal—from perdition.  
When thy sheep thou hast selected  
From the goats, may I, respected,  
Stand amongst them undetected.  
When offenders are indicted,  
And with trial-flames ignited,  
Elsewhere I'll attend if cited.  
Ashen-hearted, prone, and prayerful,  
When of death I see the air full,  
Lest I perish, too, be careful.  
On that day of lamentation,  
When, to enjoy the conflagration.  
Men come forth, O, be not cruel.  
Spare me, Lord—make them thy fuel.

### **ONE MOOD'S EXPRESSION.**

See, Lord, fanatics all arrayed  
For revolution!  
To foil their villainous crusade  
Unsheathe again the sacred blade  
Of persecution.  
What though through long disuse 't is grown  
A trifle rusty?  
'Gainst modern heresy, whose bone  
Is rotten, and the flesh fly-blown,  
It still is trusty.  
Of sterner stuff thine ancient foes,  
Unapprehensive,  
Sprang forth to meet thy biting blows;  
Our zealots chiefly to the nose  
Assume the offensive.  
Then wield the blade their necks to hack,  
Nor ever spare one.  
Thy crowns of martyrdom unpack,  
But see that every martyr lack  
The head to wear one.  
**SOMETHING IN THE PAPERS.**

"What's in the paper?" Oh, it's dev'lish dull:  
There's nothing happening at all—a lull  
After the war-storm. Mr. Someone's wife  
Killed by her lover with, I think, a knife.  
A fire on Blank Street and some babies—one,  
Two, three or four, I don't remember, done  
To quite a delicate and lovely brown.  
A husband shot by woman of the town  
The same old story. Shipwreck somewhere south.  
The crew, all saved—or lost. Uncommon drouth  
Makes hundreds homeless up the River Mud  
Though, come to think, I guess it was a flood.  
'T is feared some bank will burst—or else it won't  
They always burst, I fancy—or they don't;  
Who cares a cent?—the banker pays his coin  
And takes his chances: bullet in the groin  
But that's another item—suicide  
Fool lost his money (serve him right) and died.  
Heigh-ho! there's noth—Jerusalem! what's this:  
Tom Jones has failed! My God, what an abyss  
Of ruin!—owes me seven hundred clear!  
Was ever such a damned disastrous year!

### **IN THE BINNACLE.**

The Church's compass, if you please,  
Has two or three (or more) degrees  
Of variation;  
And many a soul has gone to grief  
On this or that or t'other reef  
Through faith unreckoning or brief  
Miscalculation.  
Misguidance is of perils chief  
To navigation.  
The obsequious thing makes, too, you'll mark,  
Obeisance through a little arc  
Of declination;  
For Satan, fearing witches, drew  
From Death's pale horse, one day, a shoe,  
And nailed it to his door to undo

Their machination.  
Since then the needle dips to woo  
His habitation.

### **HUMILITY.**

Great poets fire the world with fagots big  
That make a crackling racket,  
But I'm content with but a whispering twig  
To warm some single jacket.

### **ONE PRESIDENT.**

"What are those, father?" "Statesmen, my child  
Lacrymose, unparliamentary, wild."  
"What are they that way for, father?" "Last fall,  
'Our candidate's better,' they said, 'than all!'"  
"What did they say he was, father?" "A man  
Built on a straight incorruptible plan  
Believing that none for an office would do  
Unless he were honest and capable too."  
"Poor gentlemen—so disappointed!" "Yes, lad,  
That is the feeling that's driving them mad;  
They're weeping and wailing and gnashing because  
They find that he's all that they said that he was."

### **THE BRIDE.**

"You know, my friends, with what a brave carouse  
I made a second marriage in my house  
Divorced old barren Reason from my bed  
And took the Daughter of the Vine to spouse."  
So sang the Lord of Poets. In a gleam  
Of light that made her like an angel seem,  
The Daughter of the Vine said: "I myself  
Am Reason, and the Other was a Dream."

## **STRAINED RELATIONS.**

Says England to Germany: "Africa's ours."

Says Germany: "Ours, I opine."

Says Africa: "Tell me, delectable Pow'rs,  
What is it that ought to be mine?"

## **THE MAN BORN BLIND.**

A man born blind received his sight  
By a painful operation;  
And these are things he saw in the light  
Of an infant observation.  
He saw a merchant, good and wise.  
And greatly, too, respected,  
Who looked, to those imperfect eyes,  
Like a swindler undetected.  
He saw a patriot address  
A noisy public meeting.  
And said: "Why, that's a calf. I guess.  
That for the teat is bleating."  
A doctor stood beside a bed  
And shook his summit sadly.  
"O see that foul assassin!" said  
The man who saw so badly.  
He saw a lawyer pleading for  
A thief whom they'd been jailing,  
And said: "That's an accomplice, or  
My sight again is failing."  
Upon the Bench a Justice sat,  
With nothing to restrain him;  
"'Tis strange," said the observer, "that  
They ventured to unchain him."  
With theologic works supplied,  
He saw a solemn preacher;  
"A burglar with his kit," he cried,  
"To rob a fellow creature."  
A bluff old farmer next he saw  
Sell produce in a village,  
And said: "What, what! is there no law  
To punish men for pillage?"

A dame, tall, fair and stately, passed,  
Who many charms united;  
He thanked his stars his lot was cast  
Where sepulchers were whited.  
He saw a soldier stiff and stern,  
"Full of strange oaths" and toddy;  
But was unable to discern  
A wound upon his body.  
Ten square leagues of rolling ground  
To one great man belonging,  
Looked like one little grassy mound  
With worms beneath it thronging.  
A palace's well-carven stones,  
Where Dives dwelt contented,  
Seemed built throughout of human bones  
With human blood cemented.  
He watched the yellow shining thread  
A silk-worm was a-spinning;  
"That creature's coining gold." he said,  
"To pay some girl for sinning."  
His eyes were so untrained and dim  
All politics, religions,  
Arts, sciences, appeared to him  
But modes of plucking pigeons.  
And so he drew his final breath,  
And thought he saw with sorrow  
Some persons weeping for his death  
Who'd be all smiles to-morrow.

### **A NIGHTMARE.**

I dreamed that I was dead. The years went by:  
The world forgot that such a man as I  
Had ever lived and written: other names  
Were hailed with homage, in their turn to die.  
Out of my grave a giant beech upgrew.  
Its roots transpierced my body, through and through,  
My substance fed its growth. From many lands  
Men came in troops that giant tree to view.  
'T was sacred to my memory and fame  
My monument. But Allen Forman came,

Filled with the fervor of a new untruth,  
And carved upon the trunk his odious name!

### **A WET SEASON.**

Horas non numero nisi serenas.

The rain is fierce, it flogs the earth,  
And man's in danger.

O that my mother at my birth  
Had borne a stranger!

The flooded ground is all around.  
The depth uncommon.

How blest I'd be if only she  
Had borne a salmon.

If still denied the solar glow  
'T were bliss ecstatic

To be amphibious—but O,  
To be aquatic!

We're worms, men say, o' the dust, and they  
That faith are firm of.

O, then, be just: show me some dust  
To be a worm of.

The pines are chanting overhead  
A psalm uncheering.

It's O, to have been for ages dead  
And hard of hearing!

Restore, ye Pow'rs, the last bright hours  
The dial reckoned;

'Twas in the time of Egypt's prime  
Rameses II.

## THE CONFEDERATE FLAGS.

Tut-tut! give back the flags—how can you care  
    You veterans and heroes?  
Why should you at a kind intention swear  
    Like twenty Neroes?  
Suppose the act was not so otherwise  
    Suppose it was illegal  
Is 't well on such a question to arise  
    And pinch the Eagle?  
Nay, let's economize his breath to scold  
    And terrify the alien  
Who tackles him, as Hercules of old  
    The bird Stymphalian.  
Among the rebels when we made a breach  
    Was it to get their banners?  
That was but incidental—'t was to teach  
    Them better manners.  
They know the lesson well enough to-day;  
    Now, let us try to show them  
That we 're not only stronger far than they.  
    (How we did mow them!)  
But more magnanimous. You see, my lads,  
    'T was an uncommon riot;  
The warlike tribes of Europe fight for "fads,"  
    We fought for quiet.  
If we were victors, then we all must live  
    With the same flag above us;  
'Twas all in vain unless we now forgive  
    And make them love us.  
Let kings keep trophies to display above  
    Their doors like any savage;  
The freeman's trophy is the foeman's love,  
    Despite war's ravage.  
"Make treason odious?" My friends, you'll find  
    You can't, in right and reason,  
While "Washington" and "treason" are combined  
    "Hugo" and "treason."  
All human governments must take the chance  
    And hazard of sedition.  
O, wretch! to pledge your manhood in advance

To blind submission.  
It may be wrong, it may be right, to rise  
In warlike insurrection:  
The loyalty that fools so dearly prize  
May mean subjection.  
Be loyal to your country, yes—but how  
If tyrants hold dominion?  
The South believed they did; can't you allow  
For that opinion?  
He who will never rise though rulers plods  
His liberties despising  
How is he manlier than the sans culottes  
Who's always rising?  
Give back the foolish flags whose bearers fell  
Too valiant to forsake them.  
Is it presumptuous, this counsel? Well,  
I helped to take them.

### **HAEC FABULA DOCET.**

A rat who'd gorged a box of bane  
And suffered an internal pain,  
Came from his hole to die (the label  
Required it if the rat were able)  
And found outside his habitat  
A limpid stream. Of bane and rat  
'T was all unconscious; in the sun  
It ran and prattled just for fun.  
Keen to allay his inward throes,  
The beast immersed his filthy nose  
And drank—then, bloated by the stream,  
And filled with superheated steam,  
Exploded with a rascal smell,  
Remarking, as his fragments fell  
Astonished in the brook: "I'm thinking  
This water's damned unwholesome drinking!"

## EXONERATION.

When men at candidacy don't connive,  
From that suspicion if their friends would free 'em,  
The teeth and nails with which they did not strive  
Should be exhibited in a museum.

## AZRAEL.

The moon in the field of the keel-plowed main  
Was watching the growing tide:  
A luminous peasant was driving his wain,  
And he offered my soul a ride.  
But I nourished a sorrow uncommonly tall,  
And I fixed him fast with mine eye.  
"O, peasant," I sang with a dying fall,  
"Go leave me to sing and die."  
The water was weltering round my feet,  
As prone on the beach they lay.  
I chanted my death-song loud and sweet;  
"Kioodle, ioodle, iay!"  
Then I heard the swish of erecting ears  
Which caught that enchanted strain.  
The ocean was swollen with storms of tears  
That fell from the shining swain.  
"O, poet," leapt he to the soaken sand,  
"That ravishing song would make  
The devil a saint." He held out his hand  
And solemnly added: "Shake."  
We shook. "I crave a victim, you see,"  
He said—"you came hither to die."  
The Angel of Death, 't was he! 't was he!  
And the victim he crove was I!  
'T was I, Fred Emerson Brooks, the bard;  
And he knocked me on the head.  
O Lord! I thought it exceedingly hard,  
For I didn't want to be dead.  
"You'll sing no worsen for that," said he,  
And he drove with my soul away,  
O, death-song singers, be warned by me,  
Kioodle, ioodle, iay!

## AGAIN.

Well, I've met her again—at the Mission.  
She'd told me to see her no more;  
It was not a command—a petition;  
I'd granted it once before.  
Yes, granted it, hoping she'd write me.  
Repenting her virtuous freak  
Subdued myself daily and nightly  
For the better part of a week.  
And then ('twas my duty to spare her  
The shame of recalling me) I  
Just sought her again to prepare her  
For an everlasting good-bye.  
O, that evening of bliss—shall I ever  
Forget it?—with Shakespeare and Poe!  
She said, when 'twas ended: "You're never  
To see me again. And now go."  
As we parted with kisses 'twas human  
And natural for me to smile  
As I thought, "She's in love, and a woman:  
She'll send for me after a while."  
But she didn't; and so—well, the Mission  
Is fine, picturesque and gray;  
It's an excellent place for contrition  
And sometimes she passes that way.  
That's how it occurred that I met her,  
And that's ah there is to tell  
Except that I'd like to forget her  
Calm way of remarking: "I'm well."  
It was hardly worth while, all this keying  
My soul to such tensions and stirs  
To learn that her food was agreeing  
With that little stomach of hers.

## **HOMO PODUNKENSIS.**

As the poor ass that from his paddock strays  
Might sound abroad his field-companions' praise,  
    Recounting volubly their well-bred leer,  
Their port impressive and their wealth of ear,  
    Mistaking for the world's assent the clang  
    Of echoes mocking his accurst harangue;  
So the dull clown, untraveled though at large,  
    Visits the city on the ocean's marge,  
    Expands his eyes and marvels to remark  
Each coastwise schooner and each alien bark;  
Prates of "all nations," wonders as he stares  
That native merchants sell imported wares,  
Nor comprehends how in his very view  
    A foreign vessel has a foreign crew;  
Yet, faithful to the hamlet of his birth,  
    Swears it superior to aught on earth,  
    Sighs for the temples locally renowned  
The village school-house and the village pound  
    And chinks upon the palaces of Rome  
The peasant sentiments of "Home, Sweet Home!"

## **A SOCIAL CALL.**

Well, well, old Father Christmas, is it you,  
With your thick neck and thin pretense of virtue?  
Less redness in the nose—nay, even some blue  
    Would not, I think, particularly hurt you.  
When seen close to, not mounted in your car,  
You look the drunkard and the pig you are.  
    No matter, sit you down, for I am not  
    In a gray study, as you sometimes find me.  
    Merry? O, no, nor wish to be, God wot,  
    But there's another year of pain behind me.  
That's something to be thankful for: the more  
    There are behind, the fewer are before.  
I know you, Father Christmas, for a scamp,  
But Heaven endowed me at my soul's creation  
    With an affinity to every tramp  
That walks the world and steals its admiration.

For admiration is like linen left  
Upon the line—got easiest by theft.  
Good God! old man, just think of it! I've stood,  
With brains and honesty, some five-and-twenty  
Long years as champion of all that's good,  
And taken on the mazzard thwacks a-plenty.  
Yet now whose praises do the people bawl?  
Those of the fellows whom I live to maul!  
Why, this is odd!—the more I try to talk  
Of you the more my tongue grows egotistic  
To prattle of myself! I'll try to balk  
Its waywardness and be more altruistic.  
So let us speak of others—how they sin,  
And what a devil of a state they 're in!  
That's all I have to say. Good-bye, old man.  
Next year you possibly may find me scolding  
Or miss me altogether: Nature's plan  
Includes, as I suppose, a final folding  
Of these poor empty hands. Then drop a tear  
To think they'll never box another ear