What parts, what gems, what colors shine, — Ah, but I miss the grand design.

For what need I of book or priest, Or sibyl from the mummied East, When every star is Bethlehem star? I count as many as there are Cinquefoils or violets in the grass, So many saints and saviors, So many high behaviors Salute the bard who is alive And only sees what he doth give.

Corn the day-dawn into lines In which its proper splendor shines; Coin the moonlight into verse Which all its marvel shall rehearse,

Chasing with words fast-flowing things;
nor try
To plant thy shrivelled pedantry
On the shoulders of the sky.

His instant thought a poet spoke, And filled the age his fame; An inch of ground the lightning strook But lit the sky with flame.<sup>1</sup> 1840–1860.

# QUATRAINS AND TRANSLA-TIONS

#### POET

EVER the Poet from the land Steers his bark and trims his sail; Right out to sea his courses stand, New worlds to find in pinnace frail.

#### POET

To clothe the fiery thought In simple words succeeds, For still the craft of genius is To mask a king in weeds.<sup>2</sup>

1 Compare Emerson's 'Address at the Hundredth Anniversary of the Concord Fight: ' 'The thunderbolt falls on an inch of ground, but the light of it fills the horizon.'

2 Compare the essay on 'Beauty,' in The Conduct of Life: 'This art of omission is a chief secret of power, and, in general, it is a proof of high culture to say the greatest matters in the simplest way.'

#### BOTANIST

Go thou to thy learned task, I stay with the flowers of Spring: Do thou of the Ages ask What me the Hours will bring.

### GARDENER

TRUE Brahmin, in the morning meadows wet,
Expound the Vedas of the violet,
Or, hid in vines, peeping through many a loop,
See the plum redden, and the beurre stoop.

#### NORTHMAN

THE gale that wrecked you on the sand, It helped my rowers to row;
The storm is my best galley hand
And drives me where I go.

#### FROM ALCUIN

THE sea is the road of the bold, Frontier of the wheat-sown plains, The pit wherein the streams are rolled And fountain of the rains.

### EXCELSIOR

Over his head were the maple buds, And over the tree was the moon, And over the moon were the starry studs That drop from the angels' shoon. (May 1, 1838.)

#### BORROWING

## (FROM THE FRENCH)

Some of your hurts you have cured, And the sharpest you still have survived, But what torments of grief you endured From evils which never arrived!

## NATURE

Boon Nature yields each day a brag which we now first behold, And trains us on to slight the new, as if it were the old:

<sup>3</sup> Go to the forest, if God has made thee a poet, and make thy life clean and fragrant as thy office.

True Brahmin, in the morning meadows wet, Expound the Vedas in the violet.

Thy love must be thy art. . . . Nature also must teach thee rhetoric. She can teach thee not only to speak truth, but to speak it truly. (Journal, July, 1840.)

But blest is he, who, playing deep, yet haply asks not why,

Too busied with the crowded hour to fear

to live or die.

#### NATURE IN LEASTS

As sings the pine-tree in the wind, So sings in the wind a sprig of the pine; Her strength and soul has laughing France Shed in each drop of wine.

# CLIMACTERIC

I am not wiser for my age, Nor skilful by my grief; Life loiters at the book's first page,— Ah! could we turn the leaf.

### HERI, CRAS, HODIE

SHINES the last age, the next with hope is seen,

To-day slinks poorly off unmarked between: Future or Past no richer secret folds, O friendless Present! than thy bosom holds.

#### SACRIFICE

Though love repine, and reason chafe, There came a voice without reply,— ''T is man's perdition to be safe, When for the truth he ought to die.' 1

## CASELLA 2

Test of the poet is knowledge of love, For Eros is older than Saturn or Jove; Never was poet, of late or of yore, Who was not tremulous with love-lore.

<sup>1</sup> This quatrain was chosen by James Russell Lowell to be inscribed on the simple monument at Soldiers' Field in Cambridge, which was given as an athletic ground by Col. Henry Lee Higginson, in memory of his classmates and friends, Charles Russell Lowell, James Jackson Lowell, Robert Gould Shaw, James Savage, Jr., Edward Barry Dalton, and Stephen George Perkins, who died in the war or soon after.

Compare Emerson's two addresses referred to in the note on 'Voluntaries.' The best commentary, however, is Colonel Higginson's story of the lives and deaths of his comrades, in his addresses on the presentation of Soldiers' Field, 1890, and on Robert Gould

Shaw, 1897 (Four Addresses, Boston, 1992.)

<sup>2</sup> A famous singer of Florence. Dante tells of meeting him (Purgatory, Canto II, lines 76-133) and begging him to sing: 'HI a new law take not from thee memory or practice of the song of love which was wont to quiet all my longings, may it please thee therewith somewhat to comfort my soul.' (Norton's Translation.) Casella then sings Dante's Amer che nella mente mi ragiona ('Love, that within my mind discourses with me'), 'so sweetly, that the sweetness still within me sounds. My Master, and I, and the folk who were with

#### SHAKSPEARE

I SEE all human wits
Are measured but a few;
Unmeasured still my Shakspeare sits.
Lone as the blessed Jew.

#### HAFIZ

HER passions the shy violet From Hafiz never hides; Love-longings of the raptured bird The bird to him confides.

# ΑΔΑΚΡΥΝ ΝΕΜΟΝΤΑΙ ΑΙΩΝΑ

'A NEW commandment,' said the smiling Muse,

'I give my darling son, Thou shalt not preach';—

Luther, Fox, Behmen, Swedenborg, grew pale,

And, on the instant, rosier clouds upbore
Hafiz and Shakspeare with their shining
choirs.

#### FRIENDSHIP

THOU foolish Hafiz! Say, do churls Know the worth of Oman's pearls? Give the gem which dims the moon To the noblest, or to none.

On prince or bride no diamond stone
Half so gracious ever shone.
As the light of enterprise
Beaming from a young man's eyes.

Unbar the door, since thou the Opener art, Show me the forward way, since thou art guide,

I put no faith in pilot or in chart, Since they are transient, and thou dost abide.

IF Thought unlock her mysteries,
If Friendship on me smile,
I walk in marble galleries,
I talk with kings the while.

0-60 F

him, appeared so content as if naught else could touch the mind of any.'
Milton speaks of Casella in his 'Sonnet to Mr. Henry

Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing, Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

# THE BOHEMIAN HYMN<sup>1</sup>

In many forms we try
To utter God's infinity,
But the boundless hath no form,
And the Universal Friend
Doth as far transcend
An angel as a worm.

The great Idea baffles wit Language falters under it, It leaves the learned in the lurch; Nor art, nor power, nor toil can find The measure of the eternal Mind, Nor hymn, nor prayer, nor church.

### PAN

O WHAT are heroes, prophets, men, But pipes through which the breath of Pan doth blow

A momentary music. Being's tide Swells hitherward, and myriads of forms Live, robed with beauty, painted by the

Their dust, pervaded by the nerves of God, Throbs with an overmastering energy Knowing and doing. Ebbs the tide, they

White hollow shells upon the desert shore, But not the less the eternal wave rolls on To animate new millions, and exhale Races and planets, its enchanted foam.<sup>2</sup>

1883.

# THE ENCHANTER

In the deep heart of man a poet dwells
Who all the day of life his summer story
tells:

Scatters on every eye dust of his spells, Scent, form and color; to the flowers and

Wins the believing child with wondrous tales:

Touches a cheek with colors of romance, And crowds a history into a glance;

¹ Compare the essay on 'Plato:' 'Plato apprehended the cardinal facts. He could prostrate himself on the earth and cover his eyes whilst he adored that which cannot be numbered, or gauged, or known, or named... He even stood ready, as in the Parmenides, to demonstrate... that this Being exceeded the limits of intellect. No man ever more fully acknowledged the Ineffable.'

<sup>2</sup> Compare Bryant's 'Flood of Years.'

Gives beauty to the lake and fountain,
Spies oversea the fires of the mountain;
When thrushes ope their throat, 't is he
that sings,

And he that paints the oriole's fiery wings.

The little Shakspeare in the maiden's
heart

Makes Romeo of a plough-boy on his cart; Opens the eye to Virtue's starlike meed And gives persuasion to a gentle deed.

1883

### EROS

They put their finger on their lip,
The Powers above:
The seas their islands clip,
The moons in ocean dip,
They love, but name not love.

1883.

# MUSIC<sup>3</sup>

LET me go where'er I will,
I hear a sky-born music still:
It sounds from all things old,
It sounds from all things young,
From all that's fair, from all that's foul,
Peals out a cheerful song.

It is not only in the rose, It is not only in the bird, Not only where the rainbow glows, Nor in the song of woman heard, But in the darkest, meanest things There alway, alway something sings.

'T is not in the high stars alone, Nor in the cup of budding flowers, Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone, Nor in the bow that smiles in showers, But in the mud and scum of things There alway, alway something sings.

1888

### THE TITMOUSE 4

You shall not be overbold When you deal with arctic cold,

<sup>3</sup> In 1883 this poem was printed among the 'Fragments on Nature and Life,' in an Appendix. It first appears as a separate poem, with title, in the Centenary Edition of 1904.

4 The snow still lies even with the tops of the walls across the Walden road, and, this afternoon, I waded through the woods to my grove. A chickadee came out to greet me, flew about within reach of my hands,

As late I found my lukewarm blood
Chilled wading in the snow-choked wood.
How should I fight? my foeman fine
Has million arms to one of mine:
East, west, for aid I looked in vain,
East, west, north, south, are his domain.
Miles off, three dangerous miles, is home;
Must borrow his winds who there would

Up and away for life! be fleet!—
The frost-king ties my fumbling feet,
Sings in my ears, my hands are stones,
Curdles the blood to the marble bones,
Tugs at the heart-strings, numbs the sense,
And hems in life with narrowing fence.
Well, in this broad bed lie and sleep,—
The punctual stars will vigil keep,—
Embalmed by purifying cold;
The winds shall sing their dead-march old, 20
The snow is no ignoble shroud,
The moon thy mourner, and the cloud.

Softly, — but this way fate was pointing, 'T was coming fast to such anointing, When piped a tiny voice hard by, Gay and polite, a cheerful cry, Chic-chic-a-dee-dee! saucy note Out of sound heart and merry throat, As if it said, 'Good day, good sir! Fine afternoon, old passenger! Happy to meet you in these places, Where January brings few faces.'

This poet, though he live apart,
Moved by his hospitable heart,
Sped, when I passed his sylvan fort,
To do the honors of his court,
As fits a feathered lord of land;
Flew near, with soft wing grazed my
hand,

perched on the nearest bough, flew down into the snow, rested there two seconds, then up again just over my head, and busied himself on the dead bark. I whistled to him through my teeth, and (I think, in response) he began at once to whistle. I promised him rumbs, and must not go again to these woods without them. I suppose the best food to carry would be the meet of shagbarks or Castile nuts. Thoreau tells me that they are very sociable with wood-choppers, and will take crumbs from their hands. (Journal, March 3, 1862.)

Compare Holmes's characteristic comment on this poem, in his Pages from an Old Volume of Life: 'The moral of the poem is as heroic as the verse is exquisite; but we must not forget the non-conducting quality of fur and feathers, and remember, if we are at all delicate to get

Wrapped in our virtue, and a good surtout, by way of additional security.' Hopped on the bough, then, darting low, Prints his small impress on the snow, Shows feats of his gymnastic play, Head downward, clinging to the spray.

Here was this atom in full breath, Hurling defiance at vast death; This scrap of valor just for play Fronts the north-wind in waistcoat gray, As if to shame my weak behavior; I greeted loud my little savior, 'You pet! what dost here? and what for? In these woods, thy small Labrador, At this pinch, wee San Salvador! What fire burns in that little chest So frolic, stout and self-possest? Henceforth I wear no stripe but thine; Ashes and jet all hues outshine. Why are not diamonds black and gray, To ape thy dare-devil array? And I affirm, the spacious North Exists to draw thy virtue forth. I think no virtue goes with size; The reason of all cowardice Is, that men are overgrown, And, to be valiant, must come down To the titmouse dimension.'

'T is good will makes intelligence,
And I began to catch the sense
Of my bird's song: 'Live out of doors
In the great woods, on prairie floors.
I dine in the sun; when he sinks in the sea,
I too have a hole in a hollow tree;
And I like less when Summer beats
With stifling beams on these retreats,
Than noontide twilights which snow makes
With tempest of the blinding flakes.
For well the soul, if stout within,
Can arm impregnably the skin;
And polar frost my frame defied,
Made of the air that blows outside.'

With glad remembrance of my debt,
I homeward turn; farewell, my pet!
When here again thy pilgrim comes,
He shall bring store of seeds and crumbs.
Doubt not, so long as earth has bread,
Thou first and foremost shalt be fed;
The Providence that is most large
Takes hearts like thine in special charge,
Helps who for their own need are strong,
And the sky doats on cheerful song.
Henceforth I prize thy wiry chant
O'er all that mass and minster vaunt;

For men mis-hear thy call in Spring, As 't would accost some frivolous wing, Crying out of the hazel copse, Phe-be! And, in winter, Chic-a-dee-dee! I think old Cæsar must have heard In northern Gaul my dauntless bird. And, echoed in some frosty wold, Borrowed thy battle-numbers bold. And I will write our annals new. And thank thee for a better clew. I, who dreamed not when I came here To find the antidote of fear, Now hear thee say in Roman key. Pæan! Veni, vidi, vici. 1862. 1862.

## BOSTON HYMN

READ IN MUSIC HALL, JANUARY I, 18631

THE word of the Lord by night
To the watching Pilgrims came,
As they sat by the seaside,
And filled their hearts with flame.

God said, I am tired of kings, I suffer them no more; Up to my ear the morning brings The outrage of the poor.

Think ye I made this ball
A field of havoc and war,
Where tyrants great and tyrants small
Might harry the weak and poor?

My angel, — his name is Freedom, — Choose him to be your king; He shall cut pathways east and west And fend you with his wing.

Lo! I uncover the land
Which I hid of old time in the West,
As the sculptor uncovers the statue
When he has wrought his best;

I show Columbia, of the rocks Which dip their foot in the seas And soar to the air-borne flocks Of clouds and the boreal fleece.

I will divide my goods; Call in the wretch and slave:

<sup>1</sup> The day when the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. The Proclamation was issued on September 22, 1862.

None shall rule but the humble, And none but Toil shall have.

I will have never a noble, No lineage counted great; Fishers and choppers and ploughmen Shall constitute a state.

Go, cut down trees in the forest And trim the straightest boughs; Cut down trees in the forest And build me a wooden house.

Call the people together,
The young men and the sires,
The digger in the harvest-field,
Hireling and him that hires;

And here in a pine state-house They shall choose men to rule In every needful faculty, In church and state and school.

Lo, now! if these poor men Can govern the land and sea And make just laws below the sun, As planets faithful be.

And ye shall succor men;
'T is nobleness to serve;
Help them who cannot help again:
Beware from right to swerve.

I break your bonds and masterships, And I unchain the slave: Free be his heart and hand henceforth As wind and wandering wave.

60

I cause from every creature His proper good to flow: As much as he is and doeth, So much he shall bestow.

But, laying hands on another To coin his labor and sweat, He goes in pawn to his victim For eternal years in debt.

To-day unbind the captive, So only are ye unbound; Lift up a people from the dust, Trump of their rescue, sound!

Pay ransom to the owner And fill the bag to the brim. Who is the owner? The slave is owner, And ever was. Pay him.

O North! give him beauty for rags, And honor, O South! for his shame; Nevada! coin thy golden crags With Freedom's image and name.

Up! and the dusky race
That sat in darkness long, —
Be swift their feet as antelopes,
And as behemoth strong.

Come, East and West and North, By races, as snow-flakes, And carry my purpose forth, Which neither halts nor shakes.

My will fulfilled shall be, For, in daylight or in dark, My thunderbolt has eyes to see His way home to the mark.

# VOLUNTARIES

I

Low and mournful be the strain, Haughty thought be far from me; Tones of penitence and pain, Moanings of the tropic sea; Low and tender in the cell Where a captive sits in chains, Crooning ditties treasured well From his Afric's torrid plains. Sole estate his sire bequeathed, — Hapless sire to hapless son, — Was the wailing song he breathed, And his chain when life was done.

What his fault, or what his crime?
Or what ill planet crossed his prime?
Heart too soft and will too weak
To front the fate that crouches near,—
Dove beneath the vulture's beak;—
Will song dissuade the thirsty spear?
Dragged from his mother's arms and
breast,
Displaced, disfurnished here,
His wistful toil to do his best

Great men in the Senate sate, Sage and hero, side by side,

Chilled by a ribald jeer.

Building for their sons the State,
Which they shall rule with pride.
They forbore to break the chain
Which bound the dusky tribe,
Checked by the owners' fierce disdain,
Lured by 'Union' as the bribe.
Destiny sat by, and said,
'Pang for pang your seed shall pay,
Hide in false peace your coward head,
I bring round the harvest day.'

T

FREEDOM all winged expands, Nor perches in a narrow place; Her broad van seeks unplanted lands; She loves a poor and virtuous race. Clinging to a colder zone Whose dark sky sheds the snowflake down. The snowflake is her banner's star, Her stripes the boreal streamers are. Long she loved the Northman well; Now the iron age is done, She will not refuse to dwell With the offspring of the Sun; Foundling of the desert far, Where palms plume, siroccos blaze, He roves unburt the burning ways In climates of the summer star. 50 He has avenues to God Hid from men of Northern brain, Far beholding, without cloud, What these with slowest steps attain. If once the generous chief arrive To lead him willing to be led, For freedom he will strike and strive, And drain his heart till he be dead.

### III

In an age of fops and toys,
Wanting wisdom, void of right,
Who shall nerve heroic boys
To hazard all in Freedom's fight,
Break sharply off their jolly games,
Forsake their comrades gay
And quit proud homes and youthful dames
For famine, toil and fray?
Yet on the nimble air benign
Speed nimbler messages,
That waft the breath of grace divine
To hearts in sloth and ease.
To so nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,

When Duty whispers low, Thou must, The youth replies, I can.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV

OH, well for the fortunate soul Which Music's wings infold. Stealing away the memory Of sorrows new and old! Yet happier he whose inward sight, Stayed on his subtile thought, Shuts his sense on toys of time, To vacant bosoms brought. But best befriended of the God He who, in evil times, Warned by an inward voice, Heeds not the darkness and the dread, Biding by his rule and choice, Feeling only the fiery thread Leading over heroic ground, Walled with mortal terror round, To the aim which him allures. And the sweet heaven his deed secures. Peril around, all else appalling, Cannon in front and leaden rain Him duty through the clarion calling To the van called not in vain.

Stainless soldier on the walls,
Knowing this,—and knows no more,—
Whoever fights, whoever falls,
Justice conquers evermore,
Justice after as before,—
And he who battles on her side,
God, though he were ten times slain,
Crowns him victor glorified,
Victor over death and pain.

#### V

BLOOMS the laurel which belongs
To the valiant chief who fights;
I see the wreath, I hear the songs
Lauding the Eternal Rights,
Victors over daily wrongs:
Awful victors, they misguide
Whom they will destroy,
And their coming triumph hide
In our downfall, or our joy:

<sup>1</sup> These lines, a moment after they were written, seemed as if they had been carved on marble for a thousand years. (HOLMES, Life of Emerson.)

Compare Emerson's 'Address at the Dedication of the Soldiers' Monument in Concord,' especially the paragraph beginning: 'All sorts of men went to the war;' and his 'Harvard Commemoration Speech, July 21, 1865.' They reach no term, they never sleep, In equal strength through space abide; Though, feigning dwarfs, they crouch and creep,

The strong they slay, the swift outstride: Fate's grass grows rank in valley clods, And rankly on the castled steep,—
Speak it firmly, these are gods,
All are ghosts beside.

1863.

## MY GARDEN<sup>2</sup>

IF I could put my woods in song And tell what's there enjoyed, All men would to my gardens throng, And leave the cities void.

In my plot no tulips blow,— Snow-loving pines and oaks instead; And rank the savage maples grow From Spring's faint flush to Autumn red.

My garden is a forest ledge
Which older forests bound;
The banks slope down to the blue lakeedge,
Then plunge to depths profound.

Here once the Deluge ploughed, Laid the terraces, one by one; Ebbing later whence it flowed, They bleach and dry in the sun.

The sowers make haste to depart, —
The wind and the birds which sowed it;
Not for fame, nor by rules of art,
Planted these, and tempests flowed it. 20

Waters that wash my garden-side Play not in Nature's lawful web, They heed not moon or solar tide,— Five years elapse from flood to ebb.

Hither hasted, in old time, Jove, And every god, — none did refuse; And be sure at last came Love, And after Love, the Muse. Keen ears can catch a syllable,
As if one spake to another,
In the hemlocks tall, untamable,
And what the whispering grasses smother.

Acolian harps in the pine
Ring with the song of the Fates;
Infant Bacchus in the vine,
Far distant yet his chorus waits.

Canst thou copy in verse one chime
Of the wood-bell's peal and cry,
Write in a book the morning's prime,
Or match with words that tender sky?

Wonderful verse of the gods, Of one import, of varied tone; They chant the bliss of their abodes To man imprisoned in his own.

Ever the words of the gods resound; But the porches of man's ear Seldom in this low life's round Are unsealed, that he may hear.

Wandering voices in the air And murmurs in the wold Speak what I cannot declare, Yet cannot all withhold.

When the shadow fell on the lake, The whirlwind in ripples wrote Air-bells of fortune that shine and break, And omens above thought.

But the meanings cleave to the lake, Cannot be carried in book or urn; Go thy ways now, come later back, On waves and hedges still they burn.

These the fates of men forecast, Of better men than live to-day; If who can read them comes at last He will spell in the sculpture, 'Stay.'

## TERMINUS 1

It is time to be old, To take in sail:—

<sup>1</sup> In the last days of the year 1866, when I was returning from a long stay in the Western States, I met my father in New York just starting for his usual win-

The god of bounds, Who sets to seas a shore, Came to me in his fatal rounds, And said: 'No more! No farther shoot Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root. Fancy departs: no more invent; Contract thy firmament To compass of a tent. There's not enough for this and that, Make thy option which of two; Economize the failing river, Not the less revere the Giver, Leave the many and hold the few. Timely wise accept the terms, Soften the fall with wary foot; A little while Still plan and smile, And, - fault of novel germs, -Mature the unfallen fruit. Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires, Bad husbands of their fires, Who, when they gave thee breath, Failed to bequeath The needful sinew stark as once, The Baresark marrow to thy bones, But left a legacy of ebbing veins, Inconstant heat and nerveless reins, -Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb, Amid the gladiators, halt and numb.'

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
'Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed.'

40
1866. 1867.

ter lecturing trip, in those days extending beyond the Mississippi. We spent the night together at the St. Denis Hotel, and as we sat by the fire, he read me two or three of his poems for the new May-Day volume, among them 'Terminus.' It almost startled me. No thought of his ageing had ever come to me, and there he sat, with no apparent abstement of bodily vigor, and young in spirit, recognizing with serene acquiescence his failing forces; I think he smiled as he read. He recognized, as none of us did, that his working days were nearly done. They lasted about five years longer, although he lived, in comfortable health, yet ten years beyond those of his activity. Almost at the time when he wrote 'Terminus' he wrote in his journal:—
'Within I do not find wrinkles and used heart, but

'Within I do not find wrinkles and used heart, but unspent youth.' (E. W. EMERSON, in the Centenary Edition.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Emerson wrote to Carlyle, May 14, 1846: 'I, too, have a new plaything, the best I ever had, — a woodlot. Last fall I bought a piece of more than forty acres, on the border of a little lake half a mile wide and more, called Walden Pond; — a place to which my feet have for years been accustomed to bring me once or twice a week at all seasons.' See the whole letter, in the Carlyle-Emerson Correspondence, vol. ii, pp. 123-125.