

Be, if ye will, the scandal of God's fair universe;
We wash our hands forever of your sin and shame and curse.

A voice from lips whereon the coal from Freedom's shrine hath been,
Thrilled, as but yesterday, the hearts of Berkshire's mountain men:
The echoes of that solemn voice are sadly lingering still
In all our sunny valleys, on every wind-swept hill. 60

And when the prowling man-thief came hunting for his prey
Beneath the very shadow of Bunker's shaft of gray,
How, through the free lips of the son, the father's warning spoke;
How, from its bonds of trade and sect, the Pilgrim city broke!

A hundred thousand right arms were lifted up on high,
A hundred thousand voices sent back their loud reply;
Through the thronged towns of Essex the startling summons rang,
And up from bench and loom and wheel her young mechanics sprang!

The voice of free, broad Middlesex, of thousands as of one,
The shaft of Bunker calling to that of Lexington;
From Norfolk's ancient villages, from Plymouth's rocky bound 70
To where Nantucket feels the arms of ocean close her round;

From rich and rural Worcester, where through the calm repose
Of cultured vales and fringing woods the gentle Nashua flows,
To where Wachuset's wintry blasts the mountain larches stir,
Swelled up to Heaven the thrilling cry of 'God save Latimer!'

And sandy Barnstable rose up, wet with the salt sea spray;
And Bristol sent her answering shout down Narragansett Bay!

Along the broad Connecticut old Hampden felt the thrill,
And the cheer of Hampshire's woodmen swept down from Holyoke Hill. 80

The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons and daughters,
Deep calling unto deep aloud, the sound of many waters!
Against the burden of that voice what tyrant power shall stand?
No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her land!

Look to it well, Virginians! In calmness we have borne,
In answer to our faith and trust, your insult and your scorn;
You've spurned our kindest counsels; you've hunted for our lives;
And shaken round our hearths and homes your manacles and gyves!

We wage no war, we lift no arm, we fling no torch within
The fire-damps of the quaking mine beneath your soil of sin; 90
We leave ye with your bondmen, to wrestle, while ye can,
With the strong upward tendencies and godlike soul of man!

But for us and for our children, the vow which we have given
For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven;
No slave-hunt in our borders, — no pirate on our strand!
No fetters in the Bay State, — no slave upon our land!
December, 1842. January, 1843.

THE CHRISTIAN SLAVE¹

A CHRISTIAN! going, gone!
Who bids for God's own image? for his grace,
Which that poor victim of the market-place
Hath in her suffering won?

¹ In a publication of L. F. Tassistro, *Random Shots and Southern Breezes*, is a description of a slave auction at New Orleans, at which the auctioneer recommended the woman on the stand as 'A GOOD CHRISTIAN!' It was not uncommon to see advertisements of slaves for sale, in which they were described as pious or as members of the church. In one advertisement a slave was noted as 'a Baptist preacher.' (WHITTIER.)

My God! can such things be?
Hast Thou not said that whatsoe'er is done
Unto thy weakest and thy humblest one
Is even done to Thee?

In that sad victim, then,
Child of thy pitying love, I see Thee stand;
Once more the jest-word of a mocking band,
Bound, sold, and scourged again!

A Christian up for sale!
Wet with her blood your whips, o'ertask her frame,
Make her life loathsome with your wrong and shame,
Her patience shall not fail!

A heathen hand might deal
Back on your heads the gathered wrong of years
But her low, broken prayer and nightly tears
Ye neither heed nor feel. 20

Can well thy lesson o'er,
Thou prudent teacher, tell the toiling slave
No dangerous tale of Him who came to save
The outcast and the poor.

But wisely shut the ray
Of God's free Gospel from her simple heart,
And to her darkened mind alone impart
One stern command, Obey!

So shalt thou deftly raise
The market price of human flesh;¹ and while 30
On thee, their pampered guest, the planters smile,
Thy church shall praise.

Grave, reverend men shall tell
From Northern pulpits how thy work was blest,

¹ There was at the time when this poem was written an Association in Liberty County, Georgia, for the religious instruction of negroes. One of their annual reports contains an address by the Rev. Josiah Spry Law, in which the following passage occurs: 'There is a growing interest in this community in the religious instruction of negroes. There is a conviction that religious instruction promotes the quiet and order of the people, and the pecuniary interest of the owners.' (WHITTIER.)

While in that vile South Sodom first and best,
Thy poor disciples sell.

Oh, shame! the Moslem thrall,
Who, with his master, to the Prophet kneels,
While turning to the sacred Kebla feels
His fetters break and fall. 40

Cheers for the turbaned Bey
Of robber-peopled Tunis! he hath torn
The dark slave-dungeons open, and hath borne
Their inmates into day:

But our poor slave in vain
Turns to the Christian shrine his aching eyes;
Its rites will only swell his market price,
And rivet on his chain.

God of all right! how long
Shall priestly robbers at thine altar stand, 50
Lifting in prayer to Thee the bloody hand
And haughty brow of wrong?

Oh, from the fields of cane,
From the low rice-swamp, from the trader's cell;
From the black slave-ship's foul and loathsome hell,
And coffle's weary chain;

Hoarse, horrible, and strong,
Rises to Heaven that agonizing cry,
Filling the arches of the hollow sky,
How long, O God, how long? 60
1843. 1843.

THE SHOEMAKERS¹

Ho! workers of the old time styled
The Gentle Craft of Leather!

¹ In his *Songs of Labor*, though Whittier wrote with most sympathy of the two trades at which he had himself worked, shoemaking (*cf.* Carpenter's *Whittier*, pp. 39-41) and farming (see 'The Huskers,' p. 278), there are lines in others of the *Songs* which cannot be spared from any selection of his poetry. Such are these from 'The Lumbermen':—

Keep who will the city's alleys,
Take the smooth-shorn plain;
Give to us the cedarn valleys,
Rocks and hills of Maine!

Young brothers of the ancient guild,
Stand forth once more together!
Call out again your long array,
In the olden merry manner!
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,
Fling out your blazoned banner!

Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone
How falls the polished hammer!
Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown
A quick and merry clamor.
Now shape the sole! now deftly curl
The glossy vamp around it,
And bless the while the bright-eyed girl
Whose gentle fingers bound it!

For you, along the Spanish main
A hundred keels are ploughing,
For you, the Indian on the plain
His lasso-coil is throwing;
For you, deep glens with hemlock dark
The woodman's fire is lighting;
For you, upon the oak's gray bark,
The woodman's axe is smiting.

For you, from Carolina's pine
The rosin-gum is stealing;
For you, the dark-eyed Florentine
Her silken skein is reeling;
For you, the dizzy goatherd roams
His rugged Alpine ledges;
For you, round all her shepherd homes,
Bloom England's thorny hedges.

The foremost still, by day or night,
On moated mound or heather,
Where'er the need of trampled right
Brought toiling men together;
Where the free burghers from the wall
Defied the mail-clad master,
Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,
No craftsmen rallied faster.

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,
Ye heed no idle scorner;
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,

In our North-land, wild and woody,
Let us still have part:
Rugged nurse and mother sturdy,
Hold us to thy heart!

or the beginning of 'The Drovers':—
Through heat and cold, and shower and sun,
Still onward cheerily driving!
There's life alone in duty done,
And rest alone in striving.

See also the beautiful 'Dedication' of the *Songs of Labor*, p. 282.

And duty done your honor.
Ye dare to trust, for honest fame,
The jury Time empanels,
And leave to truth each noble name
Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Hans Sachs, are living yet,
In strong and hearty German;
And Bloomfield's lay, and Gifford's wit,
And patriot fame of Sherman;
Still from his book, a mystic seer,
The soul of Behmen teaches,
And England's priestcraft shakes to hear
Of Fox's leathern breeches.

The foot is yours; where'er it falls,
It treads your well-wrought leather,
On earthen floor, in marble halls
On carpet, or on heather.
Still there the sweetest charm is found
Of matron grace or vestal's,
As Hebe's foot bore nectar round
Among the old celestials!

Rap, rap!— your stout and bluff bro-
gan,
With footsteps slow and weary,
May wander where the sky's blue span
Shuts down upon the prairie.
On Beauty's foot your slippers glance,
By Saratoga's fountains,
Or twinkle down the summer dance
Beneath the Crystal Mountains!

The red brick to the mason's hand,
The brown earth to the tiller's,
The shoe in yours shall wealth com-
mand,

Like fairy Cinderella's!
As they who shunned the household
maid

Beheld the crown upon her,
So all shall see your toil repaid
With hearth and home and honor.

Then let the toast be freely quaffed,
In water cool and brimming,—
'All honor to the good old Craft,
Its merry men and women!'
Call out again your long array,
In the old time's pleasant manner:
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,
Fling out his blazoned banner!

1845.

THE PINE TREE¹

LIFT again the stately emblem on the Bay
State's rusted shield,
Give to Northern winds the Pine-Tree on
our banner's tattered field.
Sons of men who sat in council with their
Bibles round the board,
Answering England's royal missive with a
firm, 'Thus saith the Lord!'
Rise again for home and freedom! set the
battle in array!
What the fathers did of old time we their
sons must do to-day.

Tell us not of banks and tariffs, cease your
paltry pedler cries;
Shall the good State sink her honor that
your gambling stocks may rise?
Would ye barter man for cotton? That
your gains may sum up higher,
Must we kiss the feet of Moloch, pass our
children through the fire?
Is the dollar only real? God and truth and
right a dream?
Weighed against your lying ledgers must
our manhood kick the beam?

O my God! for that free spirit, which of
old in Boston town
Smote the Province House with terror,
struck the crest of Andros down!
For another strong-voiced Adams in the
city's streets to cry,
'Up for God and Massachusetts! Set your
feet on Mammon's lie!
Perish banks and perish traffic, spin your
cotton's latest pound,
But in Heaven's name keep your honor, keep
the heart o' the Bay State sound!'

Where's the man for Massachusetts?
Where's the voice to speak her free?
Where's the hand to light up bonfires from
her mountains to the sea?

¹ Written on hearing that the Anti-Slavery Resolves of Stephen C. Phillips had been rejected by the Whig Convention in Faneuil Hall, in 1846. (WHITTIER.)

Whittier sent the poem to Sumner in a letter in which he said: 'I have just read the proceedings of your Whig convention, and the lines enclosed are a feeble expression of my feelings. I look upon the rejection of Stephen C. Phillips's resolutions as an evidence that the end and aim of the managers of the convention was to go just far enough to scare the party and no farther. All thanks for the free voices of thyself, Phillips, Allen, and Adams. Notwithstanding the result you have not spoken in vain.' (Quoted in Pickard's *Life*, vol. i, p. 316.)

Beats her Pilgrim pulse no longer? Sits
she dumb in her despair?
Has she none to break the silence? Has
she none to do and dare?
O my God! for one right worthy to lift up
her rusted shield,
And to plant again the Pine-Tree in her
banner's tattered field!

1846.

1846.

FORGIVENESS

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul
wrong;
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,
One summer Sabbath day I strolled among
The green mounds of the village burial-
place;
Where, pondering how all human love and
hate
Find one sad level; and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrongdoer, each with meek-
ened face,
And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common
grave,
Whither all footsteps tend, whence none
depart,
Awed for myself, and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I
forgave!

1846?

(1849.)

BARCLAY OF URY²

Up the streets of Aberdeen,
By the kirk and college green,
Rode the Laird of Ury;

² Among the earliest converts to the doctrines of Friends in Scotland was Barclay of Ury, an old and distinguished soldier, who had fought under Gustavus Adolphus, in Germany. As a Quaker, he became the object of persecution and abuse at the hands of the magistrates and the populace. None bore the indignities of the mob with greater patience and nobleness of soul than this once proud gentleman and soldier. One of his friends, on an occasion of uncommon rudeness, lamented that he should be treated so harshly in his old age who had been so honored before. 'I find more satisfaction,' said Barclay, 'as well as honor, in being thus insulted for my religious principles, than when, a few years ago, it was usual for the magistrates, as I passed the city of Aberdeen, to meet me on the road and conduct me to public entertainment in their hall, and then escort me out again, to gain my favor.' (WHITTIER.)

Close behind him, close beside,
Foul of mouth and evil-eyed,
Pressed the mob in fury.

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

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

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

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

Who with ready weapon bare,
Fronting to the troopers there,
Cried aloud: 'God save us,
Call ye coward him who stood
Ankle deep in Lützen's blood,
With the brave Gustavus?'

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

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

'Woe's the day!' he sadly said,
With a slowly shaking head,

And a look of pity;
'Ury's honest lord reviled,
Mock of knave and sport of child,
In his own good city!

'Speak the word, and, master mine,
As we charged on Tilly's line,¹
And his Walloon lancers,
Smiting through their midst we'll teach
Civil look and decent speech
To these boyish prancers!'

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

'Give me joy that in his name
I can bear, with patient frame,
All these vain ones offer;
While for them He suffereth long,
Shall I answer wrong with wrong,
Scoffing with the scoffer?

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

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

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

'Through this dark and stormy night
Faith beholds a feeble light
Up the blackness streaking;

¹ The barbarities of Count De Tilly after the siege of Magdeburg made such an impression upon our forefathers that the phrase 'like old Tilly' is still heard sometimes in New England of any piece of special ferocity. (WHITTIER.)

Knowing God's own time is best,
In a patient hope I rest
For the full day-breaking!'

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

Not in vain, Confessor old,
Unto us the tale is told
Of thy day of trial;
Every age on him who strays
From its broad and beaten ways
Pours its seven-fold vial.

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

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

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

THE ANGELS OF BUENA VISTA¹

SPEAK and tell us, our Ximena, looking
northward far away,
O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the
Mexican array,

¹ A letter-writer from Mexico during the Mexican War, when detailing some of the incidents at the terrible fight of Buena Vista, mentioned that Mexican women were seen hovering near the field of death, for the purpose of giving aid and succor to the wounded. One poor woman was found surrounded by the maimed and suffering of both armies, ministering to the wants of Americans as well as Mexicans with impartial tenderness. (WHITTIER.)

Who is losing? who is winning? are they
far or come they near?
Look abroad, and tell us, sister, whither
rolls the storm we hear.

'Down the hills of Angostura still the storm
of battle rolls;
Blood is flowing, men are dying; God have
mercy on their souls!'
Who is losing? who is winning? 'Over
hill and over plain,
I see but smoke of cannon clouding through
the mountain rain.'

Holy Mother! keep our brothers! Look,
Ximena, look once more.
'Still I see the fearful whirlwind rolling
darkly as before,
Bearing on, in strange confusion, friend and
foeman, foot and horse,
Like some wild and troubled torrent sweep-
ing down its mountain course.'

Look forth once more, Ximena! 'Ah! the
smoke has rolled away;
And I see the Northern rifles gleaming
down the ranks of gray.
Hark! that sudden blast of bugles! there
the troop of Minon wheels;
There the Northern horses thunder, with
the cannon at their heels.

'Jesu, pity! how it thickens! now retreat
and now advance!
Right against the blazing cannon shivers
Puebla's charging lance!
Down they go, the brave young riders;
horse and foot together fall;
Like a ploughshare in the fallow, through
them ploughs the Northern ball.'

Nearer came the storm and nearer, rolling
fast and frightful on!
Speak, Ximena, speak and tell us, who has
lost, and who has won?
'Alas! alas! I know not; friend and foe
together fall,
O'er the dying rush the living: pray, my
sisters, for them all!

'Lo! the wind the smoke is lifting.
Blessed Mother, save my brain!
I can see the wounded crawling slowly out
from heaps of slain.

Now they stagger, blind and bleeding; now
they fall, and strive to rise;
Hasten, sisters, haste and save them, lest
they die before our eyes!

'O my heart's love! O my dear one! lay
thy poor head on my knee;
Dost thou know the lips that kiss thee?
Canst thou hear me? canst thou
see? ³⁰
O my husband, brave and gentle! O my
Bernal, look once more
On the blessed cross before thee! Mercy!
mercy! all is o'er!'

Dry thy tears, my poor Ximena; lay thy
dear one down to rest;
Let his hands be meekly folded, lay the
cross upon his breast;
Let his dirge be sung hereafter, and his
funeral masses said;
To-day, thou poor bereaved one, the living
ask thy aid.

Close beside her, faintly moaning, fair and
young, a soldier lay,
Torn with shot and pierced with lances,
bleeding slow his life away;
But, as tenderly before him the lorn Ximena
knelt,
She saw the Northern eagle shining on his
pistol-belt. ⁴⁰

With a stifled cry of horror straight she
turned away her head;
With a sad and bitter feeling looked she
back upon her dead;
But she heard the youth's low moaning, and
his struggling breath of pain,
And she raised the cooling water to his
 parching lips again.

Whispered low the dying soldier, pressed
her hand and faintly smiled;
Was that pitying face his mother's? did
she watch beside her child?
All his stranger words with meaning her
woman's heart supplied;
With her kiss upon his forehead, 'Mother!' ⁴⁰
murmured he, and died!

'A bitter curse upon them, poor boy, who
led thee forth,
From some gentle, sad-eyed mother, weep-
ing, lonely, in the North!' ⁵⁰

Spake the mournful Mexic woman, as she
laid him with her dead,
And turned to soothe the living, and bind
the wounds which bled.

Look forth once more, Ximena! 'Like a
cloud before the wind
Rolls the battle down the mountains,
leaving blood and death be-
hind;
Ah! they plead in vain for mercy; in the
dust the wounded strive;
Hide your faces, holy angels! O thou
Christ of God, forgive!'

Sink, O Night, among thy mountains! let
the cool, gray shadows fall;
Dying brothers, fighting demons, drop thy
curtain over all!
Through the thickening winter twilight,
wide apart the battle rolled,
In the sheath the sabre rested, and the can-
non's lips grew cold. ⁶⁰

But the noble Mexic women still their holy
task pursued,
Through that long, dark night of sor-
row, worn and faint and lacking
food.
Over weak and suffering brothers, with a
tender care they hung,
And the dying foeman blessed them in a
strange and Northern tongue.

Not wholly lost, O Father! is this evil
world of ours;
Upward, through its blood and ashes, spring
afresh the Eden flowers;
From its smoking hell of battle, Love and
Pity send their prayer,
And still thy white-winged angels hover
dimly in our air! ^{1847.}

THE HUSKERS

It was late in mild October, and the long
autumnal rain
Had left the summer harvest-fields all
green with grass again;
The first sharp frosts had fallen, leaving all
the woodlands gay
With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the
meadow-flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the
sun rose broad and red,
At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened
as he sped;
Yet even his noontide glory fell chastened
and subdued,
On the cornfields and the orchards and
softly pictured wood.

And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping
to the night,
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with
yellow light; ¹⁰
Slanting through the painted beeches, he
glorified the hill;
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay
brighter, greener still.

And shouting boys in woodland haunts
caught glimpses of that sky,
Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and
laughed, they knew not why;
And school-girls, gay with aster-flowers,
beside the meadow brooks,
Mingled the glow of autumn with the sun-
shine of sweet looks.

From spire and barn looked westerly the
patient weathercocks;
But even the birches on the hill stood mo-
tionless as rocks.
No sound was in the woodlands, save the
squirrel's dropping shell,
And the yellow leaves among the boughs,
low rustling as they fell. ²⁰

The summer grains were harvested; the
stubble-fields lay dry,
Where June winds rolled, in light and
shade, the pale green waves of
rye;
But still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys
fringed with wood,
Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy
corn crop stood.

Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain,
through husks that, dry and sere,
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone
out the yellow ear;
Beneath, the turnip lay concealed, in many
a verdant fold,
And glistened in the slanting light the
pumpkin's sphere of gold.

There wrought the busy harvesters; and
many a creaking wain
Bore slowly to the long barn-floor its load
of husk and grain; ³⁰
Till broad and red, as when he rose, the
sun sank down, at last,
And like a merry guest's farewell, the day
in brightness passed.

And lo! as through the western pines, on
meadow, stream, and pond,
Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all
afire beyond,
Slowly o'er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder
glory shone,
And the sunset and the moonrise were
mingled into one!

As thus into the quiet night the twilight
lapsed away,
And deeper in the brightening moon the
tranquil shadows lay;
From many a brown old farm-house, and
hamlet without name,
Their milking and their home-tasks done,
the merry huskers came. ⁴⁰

Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from
pitchforks in the mow,
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the
pleasant scene below;
The growing pile of husks behind, the
golden ears before,
And laughing eyes and busy hands
and brown cheeks glimmering
o'er.

Half hidden, in a quiet nook, serene of look
and heart,
Talking their old times over, the old men
sat apart;
While up and down the unhusked pile, or
nestling in its shade,
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout,
the happy children played.

Urged by the good host's daughter, a
maiden young and fair,
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and
pride of soft brown hair, ⁵⁰
The master of the village school, sleek of
hair and smooth of tongue,
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a
husking-ballad sung.

THE CORN SONG

Heap high the farmer's wintry hoard !
 Heap high the golden corn !
 No richer gift has Autumn poured
 From out her lavish horn !

Let other lands, exulting, glean
 The apple from the pine,
 The orange from its glossy green,
 The cluster from the vine ; . 60

We better love the hardy gift
 Our rugged vales bestow,
 To cheer us when the storm shall drift
 Our harvest-fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers
 Our ploughs their furrows made,
 While on the hills the sun and showers
 Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain
 Beneath the sun of May,
 And frightened from our sprouting grain
 The robber crows away. 70

All through the long, bright days of June
 Its leaves grew green and fair,
 And waved in hot midsummer's noon
 Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with autumn's moonlit eves,
 Its harvest-time has come,
 We pluck away the frosted leaves,
 And bear the treasure home. 80

There, when the snows about us drift,
 And winter winds are cold,
 Fair hands the broken grain shall sift,
 And knead its meal of gold.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk
 Around their costly board;
 Give us the bowl of samp and milk,
 By homespun beauty poured !

Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth
 Sends up its smoky curls, 90
 Who will not thank the kindly earth,
 And bless our farmer girls !

Then shame on all the proud and vain,
 Whose folly laughs to scorn
 The blessing of our hardy grain,
 Our wealth of golden corn !

Let earth withhold her goodly root,
 Let mildew blight the rye,
 Give to the worm the orchard's fruit,
 The wheat-field to the fly : 100

But let the good old crop adorn
 The hills our fathers trod ;
 Still let us, for his golden corn,
 Send up our thanks to God ! 1847.

PROEM¹

I LOVE the old melodious lays
 Which softly melt the ages through,
 The songs of Spenser's golden days,
 Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
 Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest
 morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
 To breathe their marvellous notes I try ;
 I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
 In silence feel the dewy showers,
 And drink with glad, still lips the blessing
 of the sky. 10

The rigor of a frozen clime,
 The harshness of an untaught ear,
 The jarring words of one whose rhyme
 Beat often Labor's hurried time,
 Or Duty's rugged march through storm
 and strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
 No rounded art the lack supplies ;
 Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
 Or softer shades of Nature's face,
 I view her common forms with unanointed
 eyes. 20

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
 The secrets of the heart and mind ;
 To drop the plummet-line below
 Our common world of joy and woe,
 A more intense despair or brighter hope to
 find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
 Of human right and weal is shown ;

¹ The first important collected edition of Whittier's poems was a large and beautiful volume published in 1848 (dated 1849). This 'Proem' was written to introduce it.

A hate of tyranny intense,
 And hearty in its vehemence,
 As if my brother's pain and sorrow were
 my own. 30

O Freedom ! if to me belong
 Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
 Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
 Still with a love as deep and strong
 As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on
 thy shrine ! 1848.

THE LAKESIDE

THE shadows round the inland sea
 Are deepening into night ;
 Slow up the slopes of Ossipee
 They chase the lessening light.
 Tired of the long day's blinding heat,
 I rest my languid eye,
 Lake of the Hills ! where, cool and sweet,
 Thy sunset waters lie !¹

Along the sky, in wavy lines,
 O'er isle and reach and bay, 10
 Green-belted with eternal pines,
 The mountains stretch away.
 Below, the maple masses sleep
 Where shore with water blends,
 While midway on the tranquil deep
 The evening light descends.

So seemed it when yon hill's red crown,²
 Of old, the Indian trod,
 And, through the sunset air, looked down
 Upon the Smile of God.³ 20
 To him of light and shade the laws
 No forest skeptic taught ;

¹ The 'Lake of the Hills' is Lake Winnepesaukee. One of Whittier's favorite resorts was West Ossipee, at the foot of the Ossipee Mountains, just northeast of the lake. See Pickard's *Whittier-Land*, pp. 109-115 ; his *Life of Whittier*, vol. ii, p. 609 ; and Whittier's 'Among the Hills' and 'Summer by the Lakeside.'

² Mt. Chocorua, north of West Ossipee, the most picturesque, though by no means the highest, of the mountains of New England. Its cone is formed of a peculiar reddish stone known as 'Chocorua granite.' For the legend of the Indian chief from whom it was named, see Thomas Starr King's *The White Hills*, or Sweetser's *White Mountains*, p. 341. See also Whittier's 'How They Climbed Chocorua' in *Whittier-Land*, pp. 111-114. One of Longfellow's early poems, 'Jecokoya,' had the Indian chief Chocorua for its hero.

³ The name Winnepesaukee is popularly thought to mean 'The Smile of the Great Spirit.' Students of the Indian languages, however, agree that its real meaning is 'Beautiful Water in a High Place.'

Their living and eternal Cause
 His truer instinct sought.

He saw these mountains in the light
 Which now across them shines ;
 This lake, in summer sunset bright,
 Walled round with sombering pines.
 God near him seemed ; from earth and skies
 His loving voice he heard, 30
 As, face to face, in Paradise,
 Man stood before the Lord.

Thanks, O our Father ! that, like him,
 Thy tender love I see,
 In radiant hill and woodland dim,
 And tinted sunset sea.
 For not in mockery dost Thou fill
 Our earth with light and grace ;
 Thou hid'st no dark and cruel will
 Behind Thy smiling face ! 40
 1849.

OUR STATE¹

THE South-land boasts its teeming cane,
 The prairied West its heavy grain,
 And sunset's radiant gates unfold
 On rising marts and sands of gold !

Rough, bleak, and hard, our little State
 Is scant of soil, of limits strait ;
 Her yellow sands are sands alone,
 Her only mines are ice and stone !

From Autumn frost to April rain,
 Too long her winter woods complain ;
 From budding flower to falling leaf,
 Her summer time is all too brief.

Yet, on her rocks, and on her sands,
 And wintry hills, the school-house stands,
 And what her rugged soil denies,
 The harvest of the mind supplies.

The riches of the Commonwealth
 Are free, strong minds, and hearts of health ;
 And more to her than gold or grain,
 The cunning hand and cultured brain.

For well she keeps her ancient stock,
 The stubborn strength of Pilgrim Rock ;
 And still maintains, with milder laws,
 And clearer light, the Good Old Cause !

¹ Originally called 'Dedication of a School-house.'

Nor heeds the skeptic's puny hands,
While near her school the church-spire
stands;
Nor fears the blinded bigot's rule,
While near her church-spire stands the
school.

1849.

ICHABOD¹

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Reville him not, the Tempter hath
A snare for all;

¹ This poem was the outcome of the surprise and grief and forecast of evil consequences which I felt on reading the Seventh of March speech of Daniel Webster in support of the 'Compromise,' and the Fugitive Slave Law. No partisan or personal enmity dictated it. On the contrary my admiration of the splendid personality and intellectual power of the great senator was never stronger than when I laid down his speech, and, in one of the saddest moments of my life, penned my protest. . . .

But death softens all resentments, and the consciousness of a common inheritance of frailty and weakness modifies the severity of judgment. Years after, in 'The Lost Occasion,' I gave utterance to an almost universal regret that the great statesman did not live to see the flag which he loved trampled under the feet of Slavery, and, in view of this desecration, make his last days glorious in defence of 'Liberty and Union, one and inseparable.' (WHITTIER.)

'Ichabod' and 'The Lost Occasion' (p. 348) should necessarily be read together. The best possible comment on the two poems, from the point of view of to-day, is that of Professor Carpenter: 'Those whom Whittier knew best in later life relate that he came eventually to feel that Webster was perhaps right and he wrong; that compromise meant weary years of waiting, but that the further and consistent pursuit of such a policy might have successfully avoided the evils of war and of reconstruction. However that may be, the verses [of 'Ichabod'] are, in their awful scorn, the most powerful that he ever wrote. Right or wrong, he spoke for a great part of the North and West, nay, for the world. For the poem, in much the same fashion as Browning's 'Lost Leader,' is becoming disassociated with any special name, and may thus remain a most remarkable expression — the most terrible in our literature — of the aversion which any mass of people may feel, especially in a democracy, for the once-worshipped leader whose acts and words, in matters of the greatest public weal, seem to retrograde.' (Carpenter's *Whittier*, pp. 221-222.)

Compare Emerson's 'Webster,' p. 61, and the note on it; and Holmes's 'The Statesman's Secret,' and 'The Birthday of Daniel Webster.' See also Pickard's *Life of Whittier*, vol. 1, pp. 327-328.

For the meaning of the title, see 1 Samuel iv, 19-22: 'And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel.' It may have been suggested by an anonymous article of Lowell's on Daniel Webster, in the *Anti-Slavery Standard* (June, 1846), in which he says: 'Shall not the Recording Angel write Ichabod after the name of this man in the great book of Doom?' (Scudder's *Life of Lowell*, vol. 1, p. 201.)

And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

10

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

20

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains;
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

30

Then pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

1850. 1850.

SONGS OF LABOR, DEDICATION

I WOULD the gift I offer here
Might grace from thy favor take,
And, seen through Friendship's atmosphere,
On softened lines and coloring, wear
The unaccustomed light of beauty, for thy sake.

Few leaves of Fancy's spring remain:
But what I have I give to thee,
The o'er-sunned bloom of summer's plain,
And paler flowers, the latter rain
Calls from the westering slope of life's
autumnal lea.

10

WORDSWORTH

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF HIS
MEMOIRS

DEAR friends, who read the world aright,
And in its common forms discern
A beauty and a harmony
The many never learn!

Kindred in soul of him who found
In simple flower and leaf and stone
The impulse of the sweetest lays
Our Saxon tongue has known, —

Accept this record of a life
As sweet and pure, as calm and good,
As a long day of blandest June
In green field and in wood.

How welcome to our ears, long pained
By strife of sect and party noise,
The brook-like murmur of his song
Of nature's simple joys!

The violet by its mossy stone,
The primrose by the river's brim,
And chance-sown daffodil, have found
Immortal life through him.

The sunrise on his breezy lake,
The rosy tints his sunset brought,
World-seen, are gladdening all the vales
And mountain-peaks of thought.

Art builds on sand; the works of pride
And human passion change and fall;
But that which shares the life of God
With Him surviveth all.

1851.

BENEDICITE

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

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

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

Above the fallen groves of green,
Where youth's enchanted forest stood
Dry root and mossed trunk between,
A sober after-growth is seen,
As springs the pine where falls the gay-
leafed maple wood!

Yet birds will sing, and breezes play
Their leaf-harps in the sombre tree;
And through the bleak and wintry
day
It keeps its steady green alway, —
So, even my after-thoughts may have a
charm for thee.

20

Art's perfect forms no moral need,
And beauty is its own excuse;¹
But for the dull and flowerless weed
Some healing virtue still must plead,
And the rough ore must find its honors in
its use.

So haply these, my simple lays
Of homely toil, may serve to show
The orchard bloom and tasselled maize
That skirt and gladden duty's ways,
The unsung beauty hid life's common
things below.

30

Haply from them the toiler, bent
Above his forge or plough, may gain
A manlier spirit of content,
And feel that life is wisest spent
Where the strong working hand makes
strong the working brain.

The doom which to the guilty pair
Without the walls of Eden came,
Transforming sinless ease to care
And rugged toil, no more shall bear
The burden of old crime, or mark of pri-
mal shame.

40

A blessing now, a curse no more;
Since He, whose name we breathe with
awe,
The coarse mechanic vesture wore,
A poor man toiling with the poor,
In labor, as in prayer, fulfilling the same
law.

1850.

¹ For the idea of this line, I am indebted to Emerson, in his inimitable sonnet to the Rhodora, —

If eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.
(WHITTIER.)

Fair Nature's book together read, 10
The old wood-paths that knew our tread,
The maple shadows overhead, —

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

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

O'er lapse of time and change of scene,
The weary waste which lies between 20
Thyself and me, my heart I lean.

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

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

If, then, a fervent wish for thee
The gracious heavens will heed from me,
What should, dear heart, its burden be? 30

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

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

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

1851.

APRIL

The spring comes slowly up this way. — *Christabel*.

'T is the noon of the spring-time, yet never
a bird
In the wind-shaken elm or the maple is
heard;
For green meadow-grasses wide levels of
snow,
And blowing of drifts where the crocus
should blow;
Where wind-flower and violet, amber and
white,

On south-sloping brooksides should smile
in the light,

O'er the cold winter-beds of their late-
waking roots

The frosty flake eddies, the ice-crystal
shoots;

And, longing for light, under wind-driven
heaps,

Round the boles of the pine-wood the
ground-laurel creeps, 10

Unkissed of the sunshine, unbaptized of
showers,

With buds scarcely swelled, which should
burst into flowers!

We wait for thy coming, sweet wind of the
south!

For the touch of thy light wings, the kiss
of thy mouth;

For the yearly evangel thou bearest from
God,

Resurrection and life to the graves of the
sod!

Up our long river-valley, for days, have not
ceased

The wail and the shriek of the bitter north-
east,

Raw and chill, as if winnowed through ices
and snow,

All the way from the land of the wild Es-
quimaux, 20

Until all our dreams of the land of the
blest,

Like that red hunter's, turn to the sunny
southwest.

O soul of the spring-time, its light and its
breath,

Bring warmth to this coldness, bring life
to this death;

Renew the great miracle; let us behold
The stone from the mouth of the sepulchre
rolled,

And Nature, like Lazarus, rise, as of old!

Let our faith, which in darkness and cold-
ness has lain,

Revive with the warmth and the brightness
again,

And in blooming of flower and budding of
tree 30

The symbols and types of our destiny
see;

The life of the spring-time, the life of the
whole,

And, as sun to the sleeping earth, love to
the soul!

1852.

ASTRÆA

Jove means to settle
Astræa in her seat again,
And let down from his golden chain
An age of better metal.
BEN JONSON, 1615.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Fraud fail, craft perish, forth
The money-changers driven,
And God's will done on earth,
As now in heaven!

1852.

FIRST-DAY THOUGHTS

IN calm and cool and silence, once again
I find my old accustomed place among
My brethren, where, perchance, no hu-
man tongue
Shall utter words; where never hymn is
sung,
Nor deep-toned organ blown, nor censer
swung,
Nor dim light falling through the pictured
pane!

There, syllabled by silence, let me hear
The still small voice which reached the
prophet's ear;

Read in my heart a still diviner law
Than Israel's leader on his tables saw!
There let me strive with each besetting
sin,

Recall my wandering fancies, and re-
strain

The sore disquiet of a restless brain;
And, as the path of duty is made plain,
May grace be given that I may walk
therein,

Not like the hireling, for his selfish
gain,

With backward glances and reluctant tread,
Making a merit of his coward dread,
But, cheerful, in the light around me
thrown,

Walking as one to pleasant service led;
Doing God's will as if it were my own,
Yet trusting not in mine, but in his strength
alone!

1852.

THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION
DAY

THE proudest now is but my peer,
The highest not more high;
To-day, of all the weary year,
A king of men am I.
To-day alike are great and small,
The nameless and the known;
My palace is the people's hall,
The ballot-box my throne!

Who serves to-day upon the list
Beside the served shall stand; 10
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,
The gloved and dainty hand!
The rich is level with the poor,
The weak is strong to-day;
And sleekest broadcloth counts no more
Than homespun frock of gray.

To-day let pomp and vain pretence
My stubborn right abide;
I set a plain man's common sense
Against the pedant's pride. 20
To-day shall simple manhood try
The strength of gold and land;
The wide world has not wealth to buy
The power in my right hand!