

Then Nan got a-tremble at nostril; she was
the daintiest doe;

In the print of her velvet flank on the
velvet fern

She reared, and rounded her ears in turn.
Then the buck leapt up, and his head as a
king's to a crown did go

Full high in the breeze, and he stood as if
Death had the form of a deer;

And the two slim does long lazily stretch-
ing arose,

For their day-dream slower came to a
close,

Till they woke and were still, breath-bound
with waiting and wonder and fear.

Then Alan the huntsman sprang over the
hillock, the hounds shot by,

The does and the ten-tined buck made a
marvellous bound,

The hounds swept after with never a
sound,

But Alan loud winded his horn in sign that
the quarry was nigh.

For at dawn of that day proud Maclean of
Lochbuy to the hunt had waxed
wild,

And he cursed at old Alan till Alan fared
off with the hounds

For to drive him the deer to the lower
glen-grounds:

'I will kill a red deer,' quoth Maclean,
'in the sight of the wife and the
child.'

So gayly he paced with the wife and the
child to his chosen stand;

But he hurried tall Hamish the hench-
man ahead: 'Go turn,' —

Cried Maclean, — 'if the deer seek to
cross to the burn,

Do thou turn them to me: nor fail, lest thy
back be red as thy hand.'

Now hard-fortuned Hamish, half blown of
his breath with the height of the
hill,

Was white in the face when the ten-tined
buck and the does

Drew leaping to burn-ward; huskily rose
His shouts, and his nether lip twitched, and
his legs were o'er-weak for his
will.

So the deer darted lightly by Hamish and
bounded away to the burn.

But Maclean never bating his watch tar-
ried waiting below;

Still Hamish hung heavy with fear for
to go

All the space of an hour; then he went, and
his face was greenish and stern,

And his eye sat back in the socket, and
shrunken the eye-balls shone,

As withdrawn from a vision of deeds it
were shame to see.

'Now, now, grim henchman, what is 't
with thee?'

Brake Maclean, and his wrath rose red as
a beacon the wind hath upblown.

'Three does and a ten-tined buck made
out,' spoke Hamish, full mild,

'And I ran for to turn, but my breath it
was blown, and they passed;

I was weak, for ye called ere I broke me
my fast.'

Cried Maclean: 'Now a ten-tined buck in
the sight of the wife and the child'

I had killed if the gluttonous kern had not
wrought me a snail's own wrong!

Then he sounded, and down came kins-
men and clansmen all:

'Ten blows, for ten tine, on his back let
fall,

And reckon no stroke if the blood follow
not at the bite of thong!'

So Hamish made bare, and took him his
strokes; at the last he smiled.

'Now I 'll to the burn,' quoth Maclean,
'for it still may be,

If a slimmer-paunched henchman will
hurry with me,

I shall kill me the ten-tined buck for a gift
to the wife and the child!'

Then the clansmen departed, by this path
and that; and over the hill

Sped Maclean with an outward wrath for
an inward shame;

And that place of the lashing full quiet
became;

And the wife and the child stood sad; and
bloody-backed Hamish sat still.

But look! red Hamish has risen; quick
about and about turns he.

'There is none betwixt me and the crag-
top!' he screams under breath.

Then, livid as Lazarus lately from death,
He snatches the child from the mother, and
clammers the crag toward the sea.

Now the mother drops breath; she is dumb,
and her heart goes dead for a space,

Till the motherhood, mistress of death,
shrieks, shrieks through the glen,

And that place of the lashing is live with
men,

And Maclean, and the gillie that told him,
dash up in a desperate race.

Not a breath's time for asking; an eye-
glance reveals all the tale untold.

They follow mad Hamish afar up the
crag toward the sea,

And the lady cries: 'Clansmen, run for
a fee!

Yon castle and lands to the two first hands
that shall hook him and hold

'Fast Hamish back from the brink!' — and
ever she flies up the steep,

And the clansmen pant, and they sweat,
and they jostle and strain.

But, mother, 't is vain; but, father, 't is
vain;

Stern Hamish stands bold on the brink, and
dangles the child o'er the deep.

Now a faintness falls on the men that run,
and they all stand still.

And the wife prays Hamish as if he were
God, on her knees,

Crying: 'Hamish! O Hamish! but please,
but please

For to spare him!' and Hamish still dangles
the child, with a wavering will.

On a sudden he turns; with a sea-hawk
scream, and a gibe, and a song,

Cries: 'So; I will spare ye the child if, in
sight of ye all,

Ten blows on Maclean's bare back shall
fall,

And ye reckon no stroke if the blood follow
not at the bite of the thong!'

Then Maclean he set hardly his tooth to his
lip that his tooth was red,

Breathed short for a space, said: 'Nay,
but it never shall be!

Let me hurl off the damnable hound in
the sea!

But the wife: 'Can Hamish go fish us the
child from the sea, if dead?'

'Say yea! — Let them lash me, Hamish?'

— 'Nay!' — 'Husband, the lashing
will heal;

But, oh, who will heal me the bonny
sweet bairn in his grave?

Could ye cure me my heart with the
death of a knave?

Quick! Love! I will bare thee — so —
kneel!' Then Maclean 'gan slowly
to kneel

With never a word, till presently down-
ward he jerked to the earth.

Then the henchman — he that smote
Hamish — would tremble and lag;

'Strike, hard!' quoth Hamish, full stern,
from the crag;

Then he struck him, and 'One!' sang
Hamish, and danced with the child
in his mirth.

And no man spake beside Hamish; he
counted each stroke with a song.

When the last stroke fell, then he moved
him a pace down the height,

And he held forth the child in the heart-
aching sight

Of the mother, and looked all pitiful grave,
as repenting a wrong.

And there as the motherly arms stretched
out with the thanksgiving prayer —

And there as the mother crept up with a
fearful swift pace,

Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie's
face —

In a flash fierce Hamish turned round and
lifted the child in the air,

And sprang with the child in his arms from
the horrible height in the sea,

Shrill screeching, 'Revenge!' in the
wind-rush; and pallid Maclean,

Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,
Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and
locked hold of dead roots of a tree,

And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood
from his back drip-dripped in the
brine,

And a sea-hawk flung down a skeleton
fish as he flew,
And the mother stared white on the
waste of blue,
And the wind drove a cloud to seaward,
and the sun began to shine.
1878. 1878.

HOW LOVE LOOKED FOR HELL¹

To heal his heart of long-time pain
One day Prince Love for to travel was
fain
With Ministers Mind and Sense.
'Now what to thee most strange may be?'
Quoth Mind and Sense. 'All things above,
One curious thing I first would see —
Hell,' quoth Love.

Then Mind rode in and Sense rode out:
They searched the ways of man about.
First frightfully groaneth Sense. 10
'T is here, 't is here,' and spurreth in fear
To the top of the hill that hangeth above
And plucketh the Prince: 'Come, come,
't is here —'
'Where?' quoth Love —

'Not far, not far,' said shivering Sense
As they rode on. 'A short way hence,
— But seventy paces hence:
Look, King, dost see where suddenly
This road doth dip from the height above?
Cold blew a mouldy wind by me' 20
'Cold?' quoth Love)

'As I rode down, and the River was black,
And yon-side, lo! an endless wrack
And rabble of souls,' sighed Sense,
'Their eyes upturned and begged and
burned
In brimstone lakes, and a Hand above
Beat back the hands that upward
yearned —'
'Nay!' quoth Love —

'Yea, yea, sweet Prince; thyself shalt see,
Wilt thou but down this slope with me; 30
'T is palpable,' whispered Sense.
At the foot of the hill a living rill
Shone, and the lilies shone white above;

¹ This poem is quoted, with interesting comment, in Professor Josiah Royce's *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*. In Lanier's *Poems* this is No. iii of 'Street-Cries.'

'But now 't was black, 't was a river, this
rill,
'Black?' quoth Love)

'Ay, black, but lo! the lilies grow,
And yon-side where was woe, was woe, —
Where the rabble of souls,' cried
Sense,
'Did shrivel and turn and beg and burn,
Thrust back in the brimstone from above —
Is banked of violet, rose, and fern:' 41
'How?' quoth Love:

'For lakes of pain, yon pleasant plain
Of woods and grass and yellow grain
Doth ravish the soul and sense:
And never a sigh beneath the sky,
And folk that smile and gaze above' —
'But saw'st thou here, with thine own
eye,
Hell?' quoth Love.

'I saw true hell with mine own eye, 50
True hell, or light hath told a lie,
True, verily,' quoth stout Sense.
Then Love rode round and searched the
ground,
The caves below, the hills above;
'But I cannot find where thou hast found
Hell,' quoth Love.

There, while they stood in a green wood
And marvelled still on Ill and Good,
Came suddenly Minister Mind.
'In the heart of sin doth hell begin: 60
'T is not below, 't is not above,
It lieth within, it lieth within.'
'Where?' quoth Love)

'I saw a man sit by a corse;
Hell's in the murderer's breast: remorse!
Thus clamored his mind to his mind:
Not fleshly dole is the sinner's goal,
Hell's not below, nor yet above,
'T is fixed in the ever-damnèd soul' —
'Fixed?' quoth Love — 70

'Fixed: follow me, would'st thou but see:
He weepeth under yon willow tree,
Fast chained to his corse,' quoth
Mind.
Full soon they passed, for they rode fast,
Where the piteous willow bent above.
'Now shall I see at last, at last,
Hell,' quoth Love.

There when they came Mind suffered
shame:

'These be the same and not the same,'
A-wondering whispered Mind. 80
Lo, face by face two spirits pace
Where the blissful willow waves above:
One saith: 'Do me a friendly grace' —
'Grace!' quoth Love)

'Read me two Dreams that linger long,
Dim as returns of old-time song
That flicker about the mind.
I dreamed (how deep in mortal sleep!)
I struck thee dead, then stood above,
With tears that none but dreamers weep;' 91
'Dreams,' quoth Love;

'In dreams, again, I plucked a flower
That clung with pain and stung with
power,
Yea, nettled me, body and mind.'
'T was the nettle of sin, 't was medicine;
No need nor seed of it here Above;
In dreams of hate true loves begin.'
'True,' quoth Love.

'Now strange,' quoth Sense, and 'Strange,'
quoth Mind,
'We saw it, and yet 't is hard to find, 100
— But we saw it,' quoth Sense and
Mind.
Stretched on the ground, beautiful-
crowned
Of the piteous willow that wreathed above,
'But I cannot find where ye have found
Hell,' quoth Love.'
1878-79. 1884.

TO BAYARD TAYLOR¹

To range, deep-wrapt, along a heavenly
height,
O'erseeing all that man but under-
sees;
To loiter down lone alleys of delight,
And hear the beating of the hearts of
trees,

¹ On Lanier's friendship with Bayard Taylor, see Professor Mims's *Lanier* and the *Letters of Sidney Lanier*, pp. 117-215.

Lanier's beautiful picture of the Elysium of the Poets should be compared with Richard Hovey's, in 'Seaward: a Threnody on the Death of Thomas William Parsons.'

And think the thoughts that lilies speak in
white
By greenwood pools and pleasant pas-
sages;

With healthy dreams a-dream in flesh and
soul,
To pace, in mighty meditations drawn,
From out the forest to the open knoll
Where much thyme is, whence blissful
leagues of lawn 10
Betwixt the fringing woods to southward
roll
By tender inclinations; mad with dawn,

Ablaze with fires that flame in silver dew
When each small globe doth glass the
morning-star,
Long ere the sun, sweet-smitten through
and through
With dappled revelations read afar,
Suffused with saintly ecstasies of blue
As all the holy eastern heavens are, —

To fare thus fervid to what daily toil
Employs thy spirit in that larger Land 20
Where thou art gone; to strive, but not to
moil
In nothings that do mar the artist's hand,
Not drudge unriched, as grain rots back to
soil, —
No profit out of death, — going, yet still
at stand, —

Giving what life is here in hand to-day
For that that's in to-morrow's bush, per-
chance, —

Of this year's harvest none in the barn to lay,
All sowed for next year's crop, — a dull
advance

In curves that come but by another way
Back to the start, — a thriftless thrift of
ants 30

Whose winter wastes their summer; O my
Friend,
Freely to range, to muse, to toil, is thine:
Thine, now, to watch with Homer sails that
bend
Unstained by Helen's beauty o'er the
brine
Tow'rds some clean Troy no Hector need
defend
Nor flame devour; or, in some mild
moon's shine,

Where amiable winds the whistle heed,
To sail with Shelley o'er a bluer sea,
And mark Prometheus, from his fetters
freed,
Pass with Deucalion over Italy, ⁴⁰
While bursts the flame from out his eager
reed
Wild-stretching towards the West of
destiny;

Or, prone with Plato, Shakspeare, and a
throng
Of bards beneath some plane-tree's cool
eclipse
To gaze on glowing meads where, lingering
long,
Psyche's large Butterfly her honey sips;
Or, mingling free in choirs of German
song,
To learn of Goethe's life from Goethe's
lips;

These, these are thine, and we, who still are
dead,
Do yearn — nay, not to kill thee back
again ⁵⁰
Into this charnel life, this lowlihead,
Not to the dark of sense, the blinking
brain,
The hugg'd delusion drear, the hunger fed
On husks of guess, the monarchy of pain,

The cross of love, the wrench of faith, the
shame
Of science that cannot prove proof is, the
twist
Of blame for praise and bitter praise for
blame,
The silly stake and tether round the
wrist
By fashion fixed, the virtue that doth claim
The gains of vice, the lofty mark that's
missed ⁶⁰

By all the mortal space 'twixt heaven and
hell,
The soul's sad growth o'er stationary
friends
Who hear us from our height not well, not
well,
The slant of accident, the sudden bends
Of purpose tempered strong, the gambler's
spell,
The son's disgrace, the plan that e'er
depends

On others' plots, the tricks that passion
plays
(I loving you, you him, he none at all),
The artist's pain — to walk his blood-stained
ways,
A special soul, yet judged as general —
The endless grief of art, the sneer that
slays, ⁷¹
The war, the wound, the groan, the fun-
eral pall —

Not into these, bright spirit, do we yearn
To bring thee back, but oh, to be, to be
Unbound of all these gyves, to stretch, to
spurn
The dark from off our dolorous lids, to
see
Our spark, Conjecture, blaze and sunwise
burn,
And suddenly to stand again by thee !

Ah, not for us, not yet, by thee to stand:
For us, the fret, the dark, the thorn, the
chill; ⁸⁰
For us, to call across unto thy Land,
'Friend, get thee to the minstrels' holy
hill,
And kiss those brethren for us, mouth and
hand,
And make our duty to our master Will.'
1879. ^{1879.}

MARSH SONG — AT SUNSET

OVER the monstrous shambling sea,
Over the Caliban sea,
Bright Ariel-cloud, thou lingerest:
Oh wait, oh wait, in the warm red West, —
Thy Prospero I'll be.

Over the humped and fishy sea,
Over the Caliban sea
O cloud in the West, like a thought in the
heart
Of pardon, loose thy wing, and start,
And do a grace for me.

Over the huge and huddling sea,
Over the Caliban sea,
Bring hither my brother Antonio, — Man, —
My injurer: night breaks the ban:
Brother, I pardon thee.
1879-80. ^{1882.}

SUNRISE ¹

IN my sleep I was fain of their fellowship,
fain
Of the live-oak, the marsh, and the
main.
The little green leaves would not let me
alone in my sleep;
Up-breathed from the marshes, a message
of range and of sweep,
Interwoven with waftures of wild sea-
liberties, drifting,
Came through the lapped leaves sifting,
sifting,
Came to the gates of sleep.
Then my thoughts, in the dark of the
dungeon-keep
Of the Castle of Captives hid in the City
of Sleep,
Upstarted, by twos and by threes assem-
bling: ¹⁰
The gates of sleep fell a-trembling
Like as the lips of a lady that forth falter
yes,
Shaken with happiness:
The gates of sleep stood wide.

I have waked, I have come, my beloved !
I might not abide:
I have come ere the dawn, O beloved, my
live-oaks, to hide
In your gospelling glooms, — to be
As a lover in heaven, the marsh my marsh
and the sea my sea.

Tell me, sweet burly-bark'd, man-bodied
Tree
That mine arms in the dark are embracing,
dost know ²⁰
From what fount are these tears at thy feet
which flow ?
They rise not from reason, but deeper in-
consequent deeps.
Reason's not one that weeps.
What logic of greeting lies

¹ 'Sunrise,' Mr. Lanier's latest completed poem, was written while his sun of life seemed fairly at the setting, and the hand which first pencilled its lines had not strength to carry nourishment to the lips. . . . 'Sunrise,' the culminating poem, the highest vision of Sidney Lanier, was dedicated through his latest request to that friend who indeed came into his life only near its close, yet was at first meeting recognized by the poet as 'the father of his spirit,' George Westfeldt. When words were very few and the poem was unread, even by any friend, the earnest bidding came: 'Send him my "Sunrise," that he may know how entirely we are one in thought.' (*Poems*, 1884.)

Betwixt dear over-beautiful trees and the
rain of the eyes ?

O cunning green leaves, little masters ! like
as ye gloss
All the dull-tissued dark with your lumi-
nous darks that emboss
The vague blackness of night into pattern
and plan,

So
(But would I could know, but would I
could know), ³⁰
With your question embroid'ring the dark
of the question of man, —
So, with your silences purfing this silence
of man
While his cry to the dead for some know-
ledge is under the ban,
Under the ban, —
So, ye have wrought me
Designs on the night of our knowledge, —
yea, ye have taught me,
So,
That haply we know somewhat more
than we know.

Ye lispers, whisperers, singers in storms,
Ye consciences murmuring faiths un-
der forms, ⁴⁰
Ye ministers meet for each passion
that grieves,
Friendly, sisterly, sweetheart leaves,
Oh, rain me down from your darks that
contain me
Wisdoms ye winnow from winds that pain
me, —
Sift down tremors of sweet-within-sweet
That advise me of more than they bring, —
repeat
Me the woods-smell that swiftly but now
brought breath
From the heaven-side bank of the river of
death, —
Teach me the terms of silence, — preach
me
The passion of patience, — sift me, — im-
peach me, — ⁵⁰
And there, oh there
As ye hang with your myriad palms up-
turned in the air,
Pray me a myriad prayer.

My gossip, the owl, — is it thou
That out of the leaves of the low-hanging
bough,

As I pass to the beach, art stirred?
Dumb woods, have ye uttered a bird?
.
Reverend Marsh, low-couched along the sea,
Old chemist, rapt in alchemy,
Distilling silence, — lo, 60
That which our father-age had died to
know —
The menstruum that dissolves all matter
— thou
Hast found it: for this silence, filling now
The globed clarity of receiving space,
This solves us all: man, matter, doubt, dis-
grace,
Death, love, sin, sanity,
Must in yon silence' clear solution lie.
Too clear! That crystal nothing who'll
peruse?
The blackest night could bring us brighter
news.
Yet precious qualities of silence haunt 70
Round these vast margins, ministrant.
Oh, if thy soul's at latter gasp for space,
With trying to breathe no bigger than thy
race
Just to be fellow'd, when that thou hast
found
No man with room, or grace enough of
bound
To entertain that New thou tell'st, thou
art, —
'Tis here, 'tis here thou canst unhand thy
heart
And breathe it free, and breathe it free,
By rangy marsh, in lone sea-liberty.
The tide's at full: the marsh with flooded
streams 80
Glimmers, a limpid labyrinth of dreams.
Each winding creek in grave entrancement
lies
A rhapsody of morning-stars. The skies
Shine scant with one forked galaxy, —
The marsh brags ten: looped on his breast
they lie.
Oh, what if a sound should be made!
Oh, what if a bound should be laid
To this bow-and-string tension of beauty
and silence a-spring, —
To the bend of beauty the bow, or the hold
of silence the string!
I fear me, I fear me yon dome of diapha-
nous gleam 90

Will break as a bubble o'er-blown in a
dream, —
Yon dome of too-tenuous tissues of space
and of night,
Over-weighted with stars, over-freighted
with light,
Over-sated with beauty and silence, will
seem
But a bubble that broke in a dream,
If a bound of degree to this grace be
laid,
Or a sound or a motion made.
But no: it is made: list! somewhere, —
mystery, where?
In the leaves? in the air?
In my heart? is a motion made: 100
'T is a motion of dawn, like a flicker of
shade on shade.
In the leaves 't is palpable: low multitu-
dinous stirring
Upwinds through the woods; the little ones,
softly conferring,
Have settled my lord's to be looked for;
so; they are still;
But the air and my heart and the earth are
a-thrill, —
And look where the wild duck sails round
the bend of the river, —
And look where a passionate shiver
Expectant is bending the blades
Of the marsh-grass in serial shimmers and
shades, —
And invisible wings, fast fleeting, fast
fleeting, 110
Are beating
The dark overhead as my heart beats, —
and steady and free
Is the ebb-tide flowing from marsh to sea
(Run home, little streams,
With your lapfulls of stars and dreams),
And a sailor unseen is hoisting a-peak,
For list, down the inshore curve of the creek
How merrily flutters the sail, —
And lo, in the East! Will the East unveil?
The East is unveiled, the East hath con-
fessed 120
A flush: 't is dead; 't is alive: 't is dead, ere
the West
Was aware of it: nay, 't is abiding, 't is un-
withdrawn:
Have a care, sweet Heaven! 'T is Dawn.
Now a dream of a flame through that dream
of a flush is unrolled.

To the zenith ascending, a dome of un-
dazzling gold
Is builded, in shape as a bee-hive, from out
of the sea:
The hive is of gold undazzling, but oh, the
Bee,
The star-fed Bee, the build-fire Bee,
Of dazzling gold is the great Sun-
Bee
That shall flash from the hive-hole over the
sea. 130
Yet now the dew-drop, now the morning
gray,
Shall live their little lucid sober day
Ere with the sun their souls exhale
away.
Now in each pettiest personal sphere of
dew
The summ'd morn shines complete as in
the blue
Big dew-drop of all heaven: with these lit
shrines
O'er-silvered to the farthest sea-confines,
The sacramental marsh one pious plain
Of worship lies. Peace to the ante-reign
Of Mary Morning, blissful mother mild, 140
Minded of nought but peace, and of a
child.
Not slower than Majesty moves, for a mean
and a measure
Of motion, — not faster than dateless Olym-
pian leisure
Might pace with unblown ample garments
from pleasure to pleasure, —
The wave-serrate sea-rim sinks unjarring,
unreeling,
Forever revealing, revealing, reveal-
ing,
Edgewise, bladewise, halfwise, wholewise,
— 't is done!
Good-morrow, lord Sun!
With several voice, with ascription one,
The woods and the marsh and the sea and
my soul 150
Unto thee, whence the glittering stream of
all morrows doth roll,
Cry good and past-good and most heavenly
morrow, lord Sun.
O Artisan born in the purple, — Workman
Heat, —
Parter of passionate atoms that travail to
meet

And be mixed in the death-cold oneness, —
innermost Guest
At the marriage of elements, — fellow of
publicans, — blest
King in the blouse of flame, that loiterest
o'er
The idle skies yet laborest fast ever-
more, —
Thou, in the fine forge-thunder, thou, in the
beat
Of the heart of a man, thou Motive, —
Laborer Heat: 160
Yea, Artist, thou, of whose art yon sea's all
news,
With his inshore greens and manifold mid-
sea blues,
Pearl-glint, shell-tint, ancientest perfectest
hues
Ever shaming the maidens, — lily and rose
Confess thee, and each mild flame that
glows
In the clarified virginal bosoms of stones
that shine,
It is thine, it is thine:
Thou chemist of storms, whether driving
the winds a-swirl
Or a-flicker the subtler essences polar that
whirl
In the magnet earth; — yea, thou with a
storm for a heart, 170
Rent with debate, many-spotted with ques-
tion, part
From part oft sundered, yet ever a globed
light,
Yet ever the artist, ever more large and
bright
Than the eye of a man may avail of: —
manifold One,
I must pass from thy face, I must pass
from the face of the Sun:
Old Want is awake and agog, every wrinkle
a-frown;
The worker must pass to his work in the
terrible town:
But I fear not, nay, and I fear not the thing
to be done;
I am strong with the strength of my lord
the Sun:
How dark, how dark soever the race that
must needs be run, 180
I am lit with the Sun.
Oh, never the mast-high run of the seas
Of traffic shall hide thee,

Never the hell-colored smoke of the factories

Hide thee,

Never the reek of the time's fen-politics

Hide thee,

And ever my heart through the night shall
with knowledge abide thee,

And ever by day shall my spirit, as one
that hath tried thee,

Labor, at leisure, in art, — till yonder
beside thee

My soul shall float, friend Sun,
The day being done.

December, 1880.

1882.

LIST OF REFERENCES