

To find the sitfast acres where you left them.
 Ah! the hot owner sees not Death, who adds
 Him to his land, a lump of mould the more.
 Hear what the Earth says:—

EARTH-SONG

‘ Mine and yours ;
 Mine, not yours.
 Earth endures ;
 Stars abide—
 Shine down in the old sea ;
 Old are the shores ;
 But where are old men ?
 I who have seen much,
 Such have I never seen.

‘ The lawyer’s deed
 Ran sure,
 In tail,
 To them, and to their heirs
 Who shall succeed,
 Without fail,
 Forevermore.

‘ Here is the land,
 Shaggy with wood,
 With its old valley,
 Mound and flood.
 But the heritors ?—

Fled like the flood’s foam.
 The lawyer, and the laws,
 And the kingdom,
 Clean swept herefrom.

‘ They called me theirs,
 Who so controlled me ;
 Yet every one
 Wished to stay, and is gone,
 How am I theirs,
 If they cannot hold me,
 But I hold them ?’

When I heard the Earth-song
 I was no longer brave ;
 My avarice cooled
 Like lust in the chill of the grave.

THE RHODORA:

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER ?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
 I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
 Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
 To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
 The purple petals, fallen in the pool,

Made the black water with their beauty gay;
 Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
 And court the flower that cheapens his array.
 Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
 This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
 Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
 (Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:)
 Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
 I never thought to ask, I never knew:
 But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
 The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

THE HUMBLE-BEE

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,
 Where thou art is clime for me.
 Let them sail for Porto Rique,
 Far-off heats through seas to seek;
 I will follow thee alone,
 Thou animated torrid-zone!
 Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
 Let me chase thy waving lines;
 Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
 Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
 Joy of thy dominion!

Sailor of the atmosphere;
 Swimmer through the waves of air;
 Voyager of light and noon;
 Epicurean of June;
 Wait, I prithee, till I come
 Within earshot of thy hum,—
 All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
 With a net of shining haze
 Silvers the horizon wall,
 And with softness touching all,
 Tints the human countenance
 With a color of romance,
 And infusing subtle heats,
 Turns the sod to violets,
 Thou, in sunny solitudes,
 Rover of the underwoods,
 The green silence dost displace
 With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
 Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
 Tells of countless sunny hours,
 Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
 Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
 In Indian wildernesses found;
 Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
 Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

THE HUMBLE-BEE

Aught unsavory or unclean
 Hath my insect never seen ;
 But violets and bilberry bells,
 Maple-sap and daffodels,
 Grass with green flag half-mast high,
 Succory to match the sky,
 Columbine with horn of honey,
 Scented fern, and agrimony,
 Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue
 And brier-roses, dwelt among ;
 All beside was unknown waste,
 All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
 Yellow-breeched philosopher !
 Seeing only what is fair,
 Sipping only what is sweet,
 Thou dost mock at fate and care,
 Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
 When the fierce northwestern blast
 Cools sea and land so far and fast,
 Thou already slumberest deep ;
 Woe and want thou canst outsleep ;
 Want and woe, which torture us,
 Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

BERRYING

'MAY be true what I had heard, —
 Earth's a howling wilderness,
 Truculent with fraud and force,'
 Said I, strolling through the pastures,
 And along the river-side.
 Caught among the blackberry vines,
 Feeding on the Ethiops sweet,
 Pleasant fancies overtook me.
 I said, 'What influence me preferred,
 Elect, to dreams thus beautiful ?'
 The vines replied, 'And didst thou deem
 No wisdom from our berries went ?'

THE SNOW-STORM

ANNOUNCED by all the trumpets of the sky,
 Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
 Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
 Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
 And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
 The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
 Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit

THE SNOW-STORM

Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

WOODNOTES

I

I

WHEN the pine tosses its cones
To the song of its waterfall tones,
Who speeds to the woodland walks?
To birds and trees who talks?
Cæsar of his leafy Rome,
There the poet is at home.
He goes to the river-side,—
Not hook nor line hath he;
He stands in the meadows wide,—
Nor gun nor scythe to see.
Sure some god his eye enchants:
What he knows nobody wants.
In the wood he travels glad,
Without better fortune had,
Melancholy without bad.
Knowledge this man prizes best
Seems fantastic to the rest:
Pondering shadows, colors, clouds,
Grass-buds and caterpillar-shrouds,
Boughs on which the wild bees settle,
Tints that spot the violet's petal,
Why Nature loves the number five,