

### THE DAY'S RATION

WHEN I was born,  
From all the seas of strength Fate filled a chalice,  
Saying, 'This be thy portion, child; this chalice,  
Less than a lily's, thou shalt daily draw  
From my great arteries, — nor less, nor more.'  
All substances the cunning chemist Time  
Melts down into that liquor of my life, —  
Friends, foes, joys, fortunes, beauty and disgust.  
And whether I am angry or content,  
Indebted or insulted, loved or hurt,  
All he distils into sidereal wine  
And brims my little cup; heedless, alas!  
Of all he sheds how little it will hold,  
How much runs over on the desert sands.  
If a new Muse draw me with splendid ray,  
And I uplift myself into its heaven,  
The needs of the first sight absorb my blood,  
And all the following hours of the day  
Drag a ridiculous age.  
To-day, when friends approach, and every hour  
Brings book, or starbright scroll of genius,  
The little cup will hold not a bead more,  
And all the costly liquor runs to waste;  
Nor gives the jealous lord one diamond drop

### BLIGHT

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So to be husbanded for poorer days.  
Why need I volumes, if one word suffice?  
Why need I galleries, when a pupil's draught  
After the master's sketch fills and o'erfills  
My apprehension? Why seek Italy,  
Who cannot circumnavigate the sea  
Of thoughts and things at home, but still adjourn  
The nearest matters for a thousand days?

### BLIGHT

(GIVE me truths;  
For I am weary of the surfaces,  
And die of inanition. If I knew  
Only the herbs and simples of the wood,  
Rue, cinquefoil, gill, vervain and agrimony,  
Blue-vetch and trillium, hawkweed, sassafras,  
Milkweeds and murky brakes, quaint pipes and sun-  
dew,  
And rare and virtuous roots, which in these woods  
Draw untold juices from the common earth,  
Untold, unknown, and I could surely spell  
Their fragrance, and their chemistry apply  
By sweet affinities to human flesh,  
Driving the foe and stablishing the friend, —  
O, that were much, and I could be a part  
Of the round day, related to the sun

And planted world, and full executor  
 Of their imperfect functions.  
 But these young scholars, who invade our hills,  
 Bold as the engineer who fells the wood,  
 And travelling often in the cut he makes,  
 Love not the flower they pluck, and know it not,  
 And all their botany is Latin names.  
 The old men studied magic in the flowers,  
 And human fortunes in astronomy,  
 And an omnipotence in chemistry,  
 Preferring things to names, for these were men,  
 Were unitarians of the united world,  
 And, wheresoever their clear eye-beams fell,  
 They caught the footsteps of the SAME. (Our eyes  
 Are armed, but we are strangers to the stars,  
 And strangers to the mystic beast and bird,  
 And strangers to the plant and to the mine.)  
 The injured elements say, 'Not in us ;'  
 And night and day, ocean and continent,  
 Fire, plant and mineral say, 'Not in us ;'  
 And haughtily return us stare for stare.  
 For we invade them impiously for gain ;  
 We devastate them unreligiously,  
 And coldly ask their pottage, not their love.  
 Therefore they shove us from them, yield to us  
 Only what to our griping toil is due ;  
 But the sweet affluence of love and song,  
 The rich results of the divine consents  
 Of man and earth, of world beloved and lover,

The nectar and ambrosia, are withheld ;  
 And in the midst of spoils and slaves, we thieves  
 And pirates of the universe, shut out  
 Daily to a more thin and outward rind,  
 Turn pale and starve. Therefore, to our sick eyes,  
 The stunted trees look sick, the summer short,  
 Clouds shade the sun, which will not tan our hay,  
 And nothing thrives to reach its natural term ;  
 And life, shorn of its venerable length,  
 Even at its greatest space is a defeat,  
 And dies in anger that it was a dupe ;  
 And, in its highest noon and wantonness,  
 Is early frugal, like a beggar's child ;  
 Even in the hot pursuit of the best aims  
 And prizes of ambition, checks its hand,  
 Like Alpine cataracts frozen as they leaped,  
 Chilled with a miserly comparison  
 Of the toy's purchase with the length of life.

## MUSKETAQUID

*Conquered River*

BECAUSE I was content with these poor fields,  
 Low, open meads, slender and sluggish streams,  
 And found a home in haunts which others scorned,  
 The partial wood-gods overpaid my love,  
 And granted me the freedom of their state,  
 And in their secret senate have prevailed

With the dear, dangerous lords that rule our life,  
 Made moon and planets parties to their bond,  
 And through my rock-like, solitary wont  
 Shot million rays of thought and tenderness.  
 For me, in showers, in sweeping showers, the Spring  
 Visits the valley; — break away the clouds, —  
 I bathe in the morn's soft and silvered air,  
 And loiter willing by yon loitering stream.  
 Sparrows far off, and nearer, April's bird,  
 Blue-coated, — flying before from tree to tree,  
 Courageous sing a delicate overture  
 To lead the tardy concert of the year.  
 Onward and nearer rides the sun of May;  
 And wide around, the marriage of the plants  
 Is sweetly solemnized. Then flows amain  
 The surge of summer's beauty; dell and crag,  
 Hollow and lake, hillside and pine arcade,  
 Are touched with genius. Yonder ragged cliff  
 Has thousand faces in a thousand hours.

Beneath low hills, in the broad interval  
 Through which at will our Indian rivulet  
 Winds mindful still of sannup and of squaw,  
 Whose pipe and arrow oft the plough unburies,  
 Here in pine houses built of new-fallen trees,  
 Supplanters of the tribe, the farmers dwell.  
 Traveller, to thee, perchance, a tedious road,  
 Or, it may be, a picture; to these men,  
 The landscape is an armory of powers,

Which, one by one, they know to draw and use.  
 They harness beast, bird, insect, to their work;  
 They prove the virtues of each bed of rock,  
 And, like the chemist 'mid his loaded jars,  
 Draw from each stratum its adapted use  
 To drug their crops or weapon their arts withal.  
 They turn the frost upon their chemic heap,  
 They set the wind to winnow pulse and grain,  
 They thank the spring-flood for its fertile slime,  
 And, on cheap summit-levels of the snow,  
 Slide with the sledge to inaccessible woods  
 O'er meadows bottomless. So, year by year,  
 They fight the elements with elements  
 (That one would say, meadow and forest walked,  
 Transmuted in these men to rule their like),  
 And by the order in the field disclose  
 The order regnant in the yeoman's brain.

What these strong masters wrote at large in miles,  
 I followed in small copy in my acre;  
 For there's no rood has not a star above it;  
 The cordial quality of pear or plum  
 Ascends as gladly in a single tree  
 As in broad orchards resonant with bees;  
 And every atom poises for itself,  
 And for the whole. The gentle deities  
 Showed me the lore of colors and of sounds,  
 The innumerable tenements of beauty,  
 The miracle of generative force,

## MUSKETAQUID

Far-reaching concords of astronomy  
 Felt in the plants and in the punctual birds;  
 Better, the linked purpose of the whole,  
 And, chiefest prize, found I true liberty  
 In the glad home plain-dealing Nature gave.  
 The polite found me impolite; the great  
 Would mortify me, but in vain; for still  
 I am a willow of the wilderness,  
 Loving the wind that bent me. All my hurts  
 My garden spade can heal. A woodland walk,  
 A quest of river-grapes, a mocking thrush,  
 A wild-rose, or rock-loving columbine,  
 Salve my worst wounds.  
 For thus the wood-gods murmured in my ear:  
 'Dost love our manners? Canst thou silent lie?  
 Canst thou, thy pride forgot, like Nature pass  
 Into the winter night's extinguished mood?  
 Canst thou shine now, then darkle,  
 And being latent, feel thyself no less?  
 As, when the all-worshipped moon attracts the eye,  
 The river, hill, stems, foliage are obscure,  
 Yet envies none, none are unenviable.'

## DIRGE

CONCORD, 1838

I REACHED the middle of the mount  
 Up which the incarnate soul must climb,  
 And paused for them, and looked around,  
 With me who walked through space and time.

Five rosy boys with morning light  
 Had leaped from one fair mother's arms,  
 Fronted the sun with hope as bright,  
 And greeted God with childhood's psalms.

Knows he who tills this lonely field  
 To reap its scanty corn,  
 What mystic fruit his acres yield  
 At midnight and at morn?

In the long sunny afternoon  
 The plain was full of ghosts;  
 I wandered up, I wandered down,  
 Beset by pensive hosts.

The winding Concord gleamed below,  
 Pouring as wide a flood  
 As when my brothers, long ago,  
 Came with me to the wood.

But they are gone, — the holy ones  
 Who trod with me this lovely vale;  
 The strong, star-bright companions  
 Are silent, low and pale.

My good, my noble, in their prime,  
 Who made this world the feast it was,  
 Who learned with me the lore of time,  
 Who loved this dwelling-place!

They took this valley for their toy,  
 They played with it in every mood;  
 A cell for prayer, a hall for joy, —  
 They treated Nature as they would.

They colored the horizon round;  
 Stars flamed and faded as they bade,  
 All echoes hearkened for their sound, —  
 They made the woodlands glad or mad.

I touch this flower of silken leaf,  
 Which once our childhood knew;  
 Its soft leaves wound me with a grief  
 Whose balsam never grew.

Hearken to yon pine-warbler  
 Singing aloft in the tree!  
 Hearest thou, O traveller,  
 What he singeth to me?

Not unless God made sharp thine ear  
 With sorrow such as mine,  
 Out of that delicate lay could'st thou  
 Its heavy tale divine.

'Go, lonely man,' it saith;  
 'They loved thee from their birth;  
 Their hands were pure, and pure their faith, —  
 There are no such hearts on earth.'

'Ye drew one mother's milk,  
 One chamber held ye all;  
 A very tender history  
 Did in your childhood fall.'

'You cannot unlock your heart,  
 The key is gone with them;  
 The silent organ loudest chants  
 The master's requiem.'

### THRENODY

THE South-wind brings  
 Life, sunshine and desire,  
 And on every mount and meadow  
 Breathes aromatic fire;  
 But over the dead he has no power,  
 The lost, the lost, he cannot restore;  
 And, looking over the hills, I mourn  
 The darling who shall not return.

I see my empty house,  
 I see my trees repair their boughs;  
 And he, the wondrous child,  
 Whose silver warble wild  
 Outvalued every pulsing sound  
 Within the air's cerulean round,—  
 The hyacinthine boy, for whom  
 Morn well might break and April bloom,  
 The gracious boy, who did adorn  
 The world whereinto he was born,  
 And by his countenance repay  
 The favor of the loving Day,—  
 Has disappeared from the Day's eye;  
 Far and wide she cannot find him;  
 My hopes pursue, they cannot bind him.

### THRENODY

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Returned this day, the South-wind searches,  
 And finds young pines and budding birches;  
 But finds not the budding man;  
 Nature, who lost, cannot remake him;  
 Fate let him fall, Fate can't retake him;  
 Nature, Fate, men, him seek in vain.

And whither now, my truant wise and sweet,  
 O, whither tend thy feet?  
 I had the right, few days ago,  
 Thy steps to watch, thy place to know:  
 How have I forfeited the right?  
 Hast thou forgot me in a new delight?  
 I hearken for thy household cheer,  
 O eloquent child!  
 Whose voice, an equal messenger,  
 Conveyed thy meaning mild.  
 What though the pains and joys  
 Whereof it spoke were toys  
 Fitting his age and ken,  
 Yet fairest dames and bearded men,  
 Who heard the sweet request,  
 So gentle, wise and grave,  
 Bended with joy to his behest  
 And let the world's affairs go by,  
 A while to share his cordial game,  
 Or mend his wicker wagon-frame,  
 Still plotting how their hungry ear  
 That winsome voice again might hear;

For his lips could well pronounce  
Words that were persuasions.

Gentlest guardians marked serene  
His early hope, his liberal mien;  
Took counsel from his guiding eyes  
To make this wisdom earthly wise.  
Ah, vainly do these eyes recall  
The school-march, each day's festival,  
When every morn my bosom glowed  
To watch the convoy on the road;  
The babe in willow wagon closed,  
With rolling eyes and face composed;  
With children forward and behind,  
Like Cupids studiously inclined;  
And he the chieftain paced beside,  
The centre of the troop allied,  
With sunny face of sweet repose,  
To guard the babe from fancied foes.  
The little captain innocent  
Took the eye with him as he went;  
Each village senior paused to scan  
And speak the lovely caravan.  
From the window I look out  
To mark thy beautiful parade,  
Stately marching in cap and coat  
To some tune by fairies played;—  
A music heard by thee alone  
To works as noble led thee on.

Now Love and Pride, alas! in vain,  
Up and down their glances strain.  
The painted sled stands where it stood;  
The kennel by the corded wood;  
His gathered sticks to stanch the wall  
Of the snow-tower, when snow should fall;  
The ominous hole he dug in the sand,  
And childhood's castles built or planned;  
His daily haunts I well discern,—  
The poultry-yard, the shed, the barn,—  
And every inch of garden ground  
Paced by the blessed feet around,  
From the roadside to the brook  
Whereinto he loved to look.  
Step the meek fowls where erst they ranged;  
The wintry garden lies unchanged;  
The brook into the stream runs on;  
But the deep-eyed boy is gone.

On that shaded day,  
Dark with more clouds than tempests are,  
When thou didst yield thy innocent breath  
In birdlike heavings unto death,  
Night came, and Nature had not thee;  
I said, 'We are mates in misery.'  
The morrow dawned with needless glow;  
Each snowbird chirped, each fowl must crow;  
Each tramper started; but the feet  
Of the most beautiful and sweet

Of human youth had left the hill  
 And garden, — they were bound and still.  
 There's not a sparrow or a wren,  
 There's not a blade of autumn grain,  
 Which the four seasons do not tend  
 And tides of life and increase lend;  
 And every chick of every bird,  
 And weed and rock-moss is preferred.  
 O ostrich-like forgetfulness!  
 O loss of larger in the less!  
 Was there no star that could be sent,  
 No watcher in the firmament,  
 No angel from the countless host  
 That loiters round the crystal coast,  
 Could stoop to heal that only child,  
 Nature's sweet marvel undefiled,  
 And keep the blossom of the earth,  
 Which all her harvests were not worth?  
 Not mine, — I never called thee mine,  
 But Nature's heir, — if I repine,  
 And seeing rashly torn and moved  
 Not what I made, but what I loved,  
 Grow early old with grief that thou  
 Must to the wastes of Nature go, —  
 'T is because a general hope  
 Was quenched, and all must doubt and grope.  
 For flattering planets seemed to say  
 This child should ills of ages stay,  
 By wondrous tongue, and guided pen,

Bring the flown Muses back to men.  
 Perchance not he but Nature ailed,  
 The world and not the infant failed.  
 It was not ripe yet to sustain  
 A genius of so fine a strain,  
 Who gazed upon the sun and moon  
 As if he came unto his own,  
 And, pregnant with his grander thought,  
 Brought the old order into doubt.  
 His beauty once their beauty tried;  
 They could not feed him, and he died,  
 And wandered backward as in scorn,  
 To wait an æon to be born.  
 Ill day which made this beauty waste,  
 Plight broken, this high face defaced!  
 Some went and came about the dead;  
 And some in books of solace read;  
 Some to their friends the tidings say;  
 Some went to write, some went to pray;  
 One tarried here, there hurried one;  
 But their heart abode with none.  
 Covetous death bereaved us all,  
 To aggrandize one funeral.  
 The eager fate which carried thee  
 Took the largest part of me:  
 For this losing is true dying;  
 This is lordly man's down-lying,  
 This his slow but sure reclining,  
 Star by star his world resigning.



O child of paradise,  
 Boy who made dear his father's home,  
 In whose deep eyes  
 Men read the welfare of the times to come,  
 I am too much bereft.  
 The world dishonored thou hast left.  
 O truth's and nature's costly lie!  
 O trusted broken prophecy!  
 O richest fortune sourly crossed!  
 Born for the future, to the future lost!

The deep Heart answered, 'Weepst thou?  
 Worthier cause for passion wild  
 If I had not taken the child.  
 And deemest thou as those who pore,  
 With aged eyes, short way before, —  
 Think'st Beauty vanished from the coast  
 Of matter, and thy darling lost?  
 Taught he not thee — the man of eld,  
 Whose eyes within his eyes beheld  
 Heaven's numerous hierarchy span  
 The mystic gulf from God to man?  
 To be alone wilt thou begin  
 When worlds of lovers hem thee in?  
 To-morrow, when the masks shall fall  
 That dizen Nature's carnival,  
 The pure shall see by their own will,  
 Which overflowing Love shall fill,

'T is not within the force of fate  
 The fate-conjoined to separate.  
 But thou, my votary, weepst thou?  
 I gave thee sight — where is it now?  
 I taught thy heart beyond the reach  
 Of ritual, bible, or of speech;  
 Wrote in thy mind's transparent table,  
 As far as the incommunicable;  
 Taught thee each private sign to raise  
 Lit by the supersolar blaze.  
 Past utterance, and past belief,  
 And past the blasphemy of grief,  
 The mysteries of Nature's heart;  
 And though no Muse can these impart,  
 Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,  
 And all is clear from east to west.

'I came to thee as to a friend;  
 Dearest, to thee I did not send  
 Tutors, but a joyful eye,  
 Innocence that matched the sky,  
 Lovely locks, a form of wonder,  
 Laughter rich as woodland thunder,  
 That thou might'st entertain apart  
 The richest flowering of all art:  
 And, as the great all-loving Day  
 Through smallest chambers takes its way,  
 That thou might'st break thy daily bread

With prophet, savior and head;  
 That thou might'st cherish for **thine own**  
 The riches of sweet Mary's Son,  
 Boy-Rabbi, Israel's paragon.  
 And thoughtest thou such guest  
 Would in thy hall take up his rest?  
 Would rushing life forget her laws,  
 Fate's glowing revolution pause?  
 High omens ask diviner guess;  
 Not to be conned to tediousness  
 And know my higher gifts unbind  
 The zone that girds the incarnate mind.  
 When the scanty shores are full  
 With Thought's perilous, whirling pool;  
 When frail Nature can no more,  
 Then the Spirit strikes the hour:  
 My servant Death, with solving rite,  
 Pours finite into infinite.  
 Wilt thou freeze love's tidal flow,  
 Whose streams through Nature circling go?  
 Nail the wild star to its track  
 On the half-climbed zodiac?  
 Light is light which radiates,  
 Blood is blood which circulates,  
 Life is life which generates,  
 And many-seeming life is one,—  
 Wilt thou transfix and make it none?  
 Its onward force too starkly pent  
 In figure, bone and lineament?

Wilt thou, uncalled, interrogate,  
 Talker! the unreplying Fate?  
 Nor see the genius of the whole  
 Ascendant in the private soul,  
 Beckon it when to go and come,  
 Self-announced its hour of doom?  
 Fair the soul's recess and shrine,  
 Magic-built to last a season;  
 Masterpiece of love benign,  
 Fairer that expansive reason  
 Whose omen 't is, and sign.  
 Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know  
 What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?  
 Verdict which accumulates  
 From lengthening scroll of human fates,  
 \*Voice of earth to earth returned,  
 Prayers of saints that inly burned,—  
 Saying, *What is excellent,*  
*As God lives, is permanent;*  
*Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;*  
*Heart's love will meet thee again.*  
 Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye  
 Up to his style, and manners of the sky.  
 Not of adamant and gold  
 Built he heaven stark and cold;  
 No, but a nest of bending reeds,  
 Flowering grass and scented weeds;  
 Or like a traveller's fleeing tent,  
 Or bow above the tempest bent;

## CONCORD HYMN

Built of tears and sacred flames,  
 And virtue reaching to its aims;  
 Built of furtherance and pursuing,  
 Not of spent deeds, but of doing.  
 Silent rushes the swift Lord  
 Through ruined systems still restored,  
 Broadsowing, bleak and void to bless,  
 Plants with worlds the wilderness;  
 Waters with tears of ancient sorrow  
 Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow.  
 House and tenant go to ground,  
 Lost in God, in Godhead found.'

## CONCORD HYMN

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE  
 MONUMENT, JULY 4, 1837

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
 Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
 Here once the embattled farmers stood  
 And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;  
 Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;  
 And Time the ruined bridge has swept  
 Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

## CONCORD HYMN

On this green bank, by this soft stream,  
 We set to-day a votive stone;  
 That memory may their deed redeem,  
 When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare  
 To die, and leave their children free,  
 Bid Time and Nature gently spare  
 The shaft we raise to them and thee.